

Rutgers University Football Media Conference

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Coach Greg Schiano

Press Conference

GREG SCHIANO: Kind of a different week, right, with practice today, but try to help you with your answers. Just looking at Washington, very talented team. Obviously played for the national championship last year. Had a lot of guys leave, a lot of guys come in.

You know, starts I think with their quarterback, Will Rogers. He is performing at an incredibly high level right now. Completing 77% of his passes, has not thrown an interception all year, in four games.

You know, Coach Fisch is an excellent head coach, excellent offensive coordinator, and really good with the quarterbacks. You can see the affect he's had in his career. Earlier Will has thrown interceptions.

So early when I heard he was going there I said, oh, okay, maybe we'll get a few. He's not playing that way now. Very, very good with the football, and obviously accurate as maybe anybody in the country right now. I don't know home guys are at 77% completion.

So really going to be a challenge there.

Coleman, the running back, big, really, really effective. I think he's averaging just under seven yards a carry. In this level of football that's outstanding.

Wide outs, 12 I think is Boston. Boston is a good player.

Everybody is a little bit short on time now, right? So we tried to combine Sunday and Monday and get our stuff done. I'm a little behind as well, but I've watched quite a bit and I think the receiving corp is very effective. The kid, No. 5, I think his name is Jackson, he's really good. He and Boston, both guys we're going to have to know where they are.

Tight ends, had an injury and kind of doing it by committee. They like to use the tight end, so we got to be prepared for that.

Defensively it's a unique -- Steven Belichick obviously who



we all know well, Rutgers guy; really, really proud of what he's doing. My goodness, they're No. 1 in the league in defense. He gave up I think 100 something yards, low hundreds to Northwestern.

But when you look at the categories, it's either one or two for more most categories. I think the lowest they are in the league is five. So like unbelievable job that he's done. Proud of him.

But I don't want to be proud of him Friday night. I want to be proud of him after Friday night. But he certainly is an excellent coach. What they do is unique. No one else really plays defense like that. It's unique, very much like the New England package.

He's put his own slant on it, but it's a challenge. They got some good players. Their front, their interior front is very stout. It's going to be hard to get movement there. They got some edge guys. I'm not sure what's going on with No. 5, Durfee. He's a really disruptive force. I don't know. He didn't play last game. We'll see.

Their secondary is really good. I put on the tape and looking for completions. There are not a lot of completions out there. They do an excellent job of covering, playing with really good technique and mix it up. They really mix up the fronts. They present several different fronts, looks to you that they're going to really test our rules.

And then once you get it right with the rules you are going to have to block them physically. So it's a double challenge. Then in the kicking game they're very solid. They have veteran players both punting and place kicking. The punter is somewhere around 43 yard average.

So it's a very good football team. You know, they got caught in that rivalry game and they have control of it. But they're really good, so we got our hands full. But you know what? We're getting better, and we're at home again, back home Friday night, 8:00, blackout. It's going to be a great environment, and I look forward to being part of it. Questions?

Q. You got Tyreem back last week. What's that's mean to your defense and what do you expect from



him moving forward?

GREG SCHIANO: I think we can do everything we want in practice and I can take him and do special drills to get him feeling confident. There is nothing like playing in a game for confidence. He played 40 something plays; played well.

Is it what we saw at the end with 'Reem? No, but he's going to get there quickly. You can see it. We need to just keep bringing him along slowly. Can't force it. But he's such a good force for us out there.

But I'm glad that DJ and Moses got all those reps, certainly going to serve us well.

Q. On Athan, did you see him throw up on the field live?

GREG SCHIANO: No, not live.

Q. Do you know what happened?

GREG SCHIANO: After the half and we were hydrating like crazy. It was hot, really hot. We were in the sun all day. I think he probably just drank too much and then you go out there and run. That was some -- that had some good arch on it.

Q. He did make a joke that you say to always leave it all out on the field, and that's what he did. Looking back on film, what did you take from his performance and how he led the offense in the game?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, really only had one or two throws that he would want back. We were fortunate one of them wasn't an interception. But he played really well. He threw the ball well. He commanded the offense well. I thought our receivers and tight ends did a good job of catching the ball, too.

I think they're starting to click a little bit there, which is a good thing. It helps everything if you can throw the ball effectively. Protection was really good at times and then a little bit spotty at other times.

He got hit too much. He won't last the year if he gets hit like that.

Q. You have any idea where tickets sales stand at this point? I know that is not exactly your purview.

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, that's not mine.

Q. And then just what it's going to be like running out

of the tunnel for this game.

GREG SCHIANO: I've been doing this for a long time. I'm sure for the players it's going to be a great environment. I imagine a packed house. That's what my expectation is. Yeah, exciting game. Two Big10 teams that are two teams that are getting better, and be a great matchup.

Q. Coach, when you're looking at the tape from Saturday, the performance of a Ian Strong. He looked great obviously; the 63 yard catch helped set you guys up for the game-winning field goal. Just thoughts about his performance the other day?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, really thought he took a step up in his game Saturday. I think that was a great play. I think the third down completion on the second drive after we recovered the fumble, that drive is done at that point if he doesn't make it. Incredible catch on a lowball.

Yeah, I think he made some big plays in that game for us that allowed us to win.

Q. What are your recollections of Steve Belichick when you had him in that year? Did you see signs at that point that he could follow in his father's footsteps?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, that's what he wanted to do, right? So he helped us out coaching, and he was playing but he was like a player/coach. He was breaking down film, doing special projects for us. One thing he did that I laugh about all the time. I used to call the defenses and I used to signal them myself.

We had multiple signals for each defense. I told Steve, on game day, do me a favor. You stand right there and you know the calls, if I signal the same signal two times in a row, just let me know about it.

Well, the first time I signaled it two times in a row with the same signal he punched me in the ribs so damn hard. I'm like, what the heck are you doing? He's like, you told me. I said, I know, you can just tap me. You don't need to line me out.

You could see then. Obviously he grew up around the on the game his whole life. He really decided that is what he wanted to do, so it was kind of an internship in coaching. And then the great success he had at New England, Super Bowl champions and all those things and running a defense there.

It's not a shock to me how well they're doing defensively. As a matter of fact, that's what I thought he would do. But I

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am proud of him.

Q. You've coached in a couple short weeks the last couple years. What in your opinion does a coaching staff like to emphasize the most when it comes to preparing when you have one less day?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, it's got to be up here. You really got to trust your training. We will have a physical day tomorrow, but that will be it. Today wasn't physical at all. It's all mental. You got to get yourself ready.

Again, trust your training. That's what we preach to our guys all the time. Why do you do all this hard work? So you can trust it on game day and go out and just play and, like I say, let the chips fall where they may.

So it's really important in the short weeks because you're not going to get a ton of physical training. You better be sharp mentally, know your assignments.

And this is a tough one. This is a tough game to play on a short week offensively because of so many things they do defensively. On offense they do a lot of good stuff, don't get me wrong, but it's stuff we do and stuff we see a lot of.

Defense it's not stuff we see a lot of. It's unique.

Q. You were in the NFL; you did the cross-country thing. Washington has to do it this weekend; you guys don't have to do it for a couple weeks now. How hard is that on the team to travel all the way across the country?

GREG SCHIANO: Everybody has a system for it. I know Jedd is a very, smart experienced guy. He will have a plan; they'll execute the plan. Just like we will when we have to go west.

It's all part of playing on the road, whether it's downtown or across the country. You have a plan and you execute it. That's what they'll do.

Q. What have you seen from Kenny Fletcher three games in, and then where he's going to continue to need to adjust as he learns the position even more?

GREG SCHIANO: I think that's just it. The only thing -- physically he's very gifted, as you can see. The moment is not too big for him. He played rush end for us in games, so certainly not too big for him. He is a talented individual. He has to learn the position. Just doesn't have enough cumulative repetitions. He's doing pretty good job for a guy that doesn't have that many repetitions.

I'm anxious and excited to see him get better and better. Nobody is working harder and nobody wants to do it right more than him. Coach Vallone and he have a great relationship and I just continue seeing that get better.

Q. You mentioned when Mo went down he was the Alpha. Have you seen anybody try to step into that role and pick up the slack where he is absent?

GREG SCHIANO: That's a really good question, Bobby. Yeah, I would probably say Kyle. Kyle was the Alpha on the offense and I think he's tried to become the Alpha on the team. And the other guy is Athan, the quarterback, is doing a good job with that.

Q. Have you spoken to Bill Belichick this week or this season knowing you'll play against Steven?

GREG SCHIANO: No. We talk from time to time. I just make sure he's taken care of when he comes and that's all.

Q. He'll be here on...

GREG SCHIANO: I think so. We don't know. Knowing him, not going to miss a good game.

Q. Christian Dremel led you guys in receiving last year. I don't think he has a catch this season. Same with Naseim Brantley. Why do you think that is and how have they been dealing with a reduced role?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, Christian is playing; just hasn't got the touches yet. Naseim didn't play last year. He has to continue to work his way into the lineup. It's a competitive room. Very hard to break into it.

Q. This year Montgomery had that great play on special teams that forced the fumble; led to some early momentum. Seems like a guy that has carved out a role through hard work. What's his story in the big picture and is he a guy that exemplifies the...

GREG SCHIANO: He's definitely a hard worker. Gives such of great effort every single practice. We grade that every practice and he has a perfect score as far as his effort goes. That's a hard thing to do. That means you're consciously being intentional about how hard you play. When guys do that, I reward that. I think that's special practice you can do that.

And he's a guy that we rely on special teams right now. The good thing about Nas is he's a utility receiver. He knows every position. He is very smart. He's been a guy that we ever need to we can throw him in wherever we need to. Yeah, valuable member of the team.

