

Rutgers University Football Media Conference

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Greg Schiano

Postgame Press Conference

Rutgers 21, Washington 18

GREG SCHIANO: Thanks for sticking around, guys, and apologies, a lot of stuff going on downstairs.

But really, let me start by thanking our students. That was special. Warm ups, they were out there, and they were getting after it early, and our fans, same thing.

I mean, that's a legitimate Big Ten home-field advantage, that's what that was to be the. At times you couldn't hear yourself think, and believe me, that has an effect.

So I want to throw a big huge thank-you to them, and I want a big huge thank-you to our team. I thought the players, disciplined, tough football team. Not our best showing. Not our best execution. Some of that has to do with how good Washington is. I think a lot of it has to do with how good Washington is.

But find a way to win; that's what these kids did, and they kept chopping. They kept fighting right down to the last play, and you know, you look at it, how did the game get decided probably third down in the red zone. That's where the big difference was and then ultimately, zero turnovers, right. We're undefeated. We don't turn the ball over. That's what we can do. We do that, we've got a pretty good chance of winning the game.

Like I said, really proud of our guys, and try to answer any questions.

Q. What's your overall assessment of way Athan played and the offense overall?

GREG SCHIANO: I thought he that be played really well. It was nuts out there tonight. There was a lot of things to fix and a lot of things going on.

But I thought Athan was a cool customer out there and delivered some really good balls. That is a yoked up front. I mean, they are physical. Hats off to Steven and his staff. They gave us a lot of problems blitzing, running through



linebackers, playing through different fronts, mixing it up. I thought they did a good job.

But the offense and Coach Ciarrocca, they found a way to score enough. That was really big.

And Kyle and Sam, I mean, what a nice once, two punch they are. I think it was close to 180 yards rushing, two touchdowns combined and that's what this team is about. It's about us. I love watching that.

Q. You talked about dreaming about being in the Big Ten way back in your first stint. National television, national run-up. Is this kind of the picture you had in your head?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, one of them, yeah. I've got a lot of pictures in my head. Some would call me nuts. But you could feel it in that stadium tonight. That's what Big Ten football is, and that's what I want for New Jersey. That's what I've always wanted for New Jersey is to have that in our state.

I grew up here. I played in this state, high school football, and it was always somewhere else, right. I want it to be -- not every kid is going to stay, and nor do we want every kid but I want there to be a place that New Jerseyans can be proud of; and when I say that, I mean New York, and everybody that's right next to us.

So tonight was a good step, but that's all it is. It's one win. It's an exciting one, good one, one we found a way to get. But it's a one.

Q. Could you explain how Kyle is so patient getting to the hole? He doesn't overrun it. On the second level, he just turn it up. He just so physical on that second level.

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, he's got unique abilities for sure. He's worked very hard to hone those abilities. Learning to become a patient runner is not easy. You see daylight, you want to just go.

But the reality is, that closes and he's learned how to know where the -- and tonight, it closed in all areas a bunch.



They are strong. And they two-gap things and they lock you out and there are some big men and our offensive line just kept battling and that's what I loved. We got some tough guys.

Q. Talking about the impact of the crowd, was there a moment you thought the crowd specifically impacted the game in a way when you were down there that you recognized as it was happening?

GREG SCHIANO: I think the last kick maybe (Laughter). That was a little bit of a pressure situation with -- I mean, here we go, baby. You're talking about, really, as a coach, what you're talking about is overtime. All right, what do we got, you know. It's good.

Q. Can you just talk about Ian Strong's impact on the game tonight and his highlight real touchdown catch in the second quarter?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, Ian is going to be a real good player here. I say going to be. He's already doing things. You know, you watch last week's play, and then this week, but he's just scratching the surface. You know, the neat thing about Ian is he's so smart. Really smart. And really focused young man. So I can't wait to see where he can take this thing.

And his understudy, his high school teammate, wasn't too shabby either, right.

Q. A lot of comparisons throughout the week about other big games you participated before in 1.0. Was it more down to business tonight? Seemed like the celebration was more muted and this is what's to be expected now.

GREG SCHIANO: I don't know if it's to be expected but it's early and we're figuring out who we are, right. I'm a big believer, no matter what, you really don't know who your team is until week three or four, and then you start making adjustments with your female and it's usually about midseason when you kind of lock your team in and that's if everything stays as is. You get some injuries, that changes it.

So I think I've got a pretty good feel on our team now. And now we've got to figure out how -- see what the injuries are from this game and then figure out -- we have a lot of things to improve on from tonight, and I didn't even watch the tape yet and I know that.

But I love doing it from the win column. I know it's coach speak but you know, 1-0 in the Washington season makes it a lot easier to get up early and watch that tape and do all

those things.

Q. Your team's ability to capitalize on some key opportunities, to capitalize on some mistakes that they made, I guess what does that say about the maturity of your team and where they are right now in their growth?

GREG SCHIANO: I think when I started out, I said we're a disciplined, tough football team, and it takes a little while to develop into that, right, because it's over time. Unfortunately there's no speed it up, unless you've got just unbelievable talent, better than everybody else, which that's not us. All those little things add up.

Now we have some really special players, don't get me wrong but for instant -- like instant winning, you've got to have great players at almost darned near every position. And our guys, I told them, they work so hard at things that I don't even know if other programs think about, because we have to. But you know, it showed up tonight, so I was happy for them. Sometimes you do all that and it doesn't show up. I say, there's no guarantees, fellas, but I sure am graduate when it does for them.

Q. Defense gave up a lot of yards but made some big plays when they needed to. Talk about that bend-but-don't-break mentality.

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, you know what I'd be lying if I said that's what we're trying to do, we're trying to bend-but-don't-break. We've got to get better. We have to improve defensively. I didn't think we tackled well enough tonight.

Now, truth be told, that running back is something else now. But like there were some other guys we didn't tackle, too. If it was just him, I could understand. Because they are saying the same thing about Kyle. I mean, those are two really good backs on the field tonight, and then you throw Sam brown in the mix. But we made plays when we had to. We made stops when we had to, and that, to me, shows a bunch of guys that can stay in the moment and chop the moment, and not get -- I always talk to them about if you start worrying about the result, that's when you get in trouble. That's when anxiety and worry and all -- just stay right here and do it. It's liberating to be able to lose yourself in the moment. There's a lot of moments tonight. They found a way.

Q. They say members don't lie. But when you define this game, team had 521 yards, but 2-for-12 -- that says a lot what this team is about. Maybe numbers do lie sometimes.

GREG SCHIANO: They were 2-for-12, and we were 7-for-15. They were 2-for-5 in the red zone, and we were 2-for-2. That's really what it boils down to. They didn't turn it over, and we didn't turn it over. It's one of those games.

Like I said, really proud of the way they fought from start to finish. I mean, it wasn't easy right from the jump. It was a battle from the jump and that game took awhile. That took a lot of focus and concentration for an extended period of time. I don't know many 18- to 22-year-olds that can concentrate on anything for four hours and those kids did. I was really, really proud of them.

Q. Two straight wins, three points, down to the wire. Has this team showed you championship metal, signs of a special season, something there?

GREG SCHIANO: I don't know yet about that. I don't know where -- someone told me the Miami Virginia Tech was like a nail biter, too. You guys probably thought I was doing the coach, soap up the other team. But I really thought they have a really good team. They have got a lot of NFL players. When I look at teams, I just look, they have got NFL players. That team's got NFL players. So does our team.

When you have a good college team, usually have NFL players on it. I think we do. Yeah, I'm glad we get a little day here. The kids get a little day to just relax a little bit. That was tough. That Virginia Tech game was a physical game. Got back home around midnight and I asked them to just get to bed. We had a short week.

I should point this out. I'm really proud of our coaches because they worked incredibly hard to get the game plan done for Monday morning, and then install it. Not a lot of sleep around this building. I think everybody caught up at the end of the week but in the beginning of the week, it was kind of a rough-looking group and then the players worked real hard to implement the plan in a short, short week.

So again, my hat is off to our coaching staff. Again I'll end the way I started. I really thank our fans. We've kind of set the bar now, this is what we need to do at shi stadium. We need to make it a home-field advantage.

We won't be here next week, but the following week, we will. We need it. They definitely helped push that win over the finish line. So I want to say thank you again to them.

Thanks, guys.

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