

Atlantic Coast Conference Football Kickoff

Tuesday, July 23, 2024

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Virginia Cavaliers

Tony Muskett

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Tony.

Q. What would constitute a successful season this year for you guys?

TONY MUSKETT: That's a good question. I'm going to give the answer that Coach E gives us. He's big on preaching our first opponent is ourselves. UVA's first task of victory is UVA.

I'd be lying if he said the standard wasn't a bowl game, ACC championship and now a spot in that College Football Playoff.

I know for a lot of people in years past, that hasn't been the standard for UVA. We're trying to be the top program in the country and become the model program. With that comes championships, bowl games, College Football Playoff berth. That's the standard we're chasing so that's the standard we're going to set.

Q. I noted that you played high school football with wide receiver Ethan Davies. Can you give us some insight into that relationship?

TONY MUSKETT: Yeah, Ethan, you guys haven't met Ethan. He's a real funny guy. Not a man of many words, but very fast, knows the playbook well, works harder than anybody I've been around.

Getting to play with them in high school, then when I was in the portal, he was a pretty good reason why UVA was attractive. He loves it there, loves Coach E. Just being around him in the locker room, it was a huge help transferring in. Still being around him, it's fun, a lot of fun.

Q. I'm fascinated by your tone and calmness. Last year at this time you were new to the ACC, to Virginia. With all that you've experienced to this point, talk about how you feel about going into this season and how maybe your expectations have changed.

TONY MUSKETT: I wouldn't say my expectations have changed because it's the same thing. I think we're still chasing that standard of being the model program.

But in terms of expectations of what I know, what we have in the locker room, I'd say it's a lot higher. Coach E mentioned just the experience we have coming back. From O-line to receiver, all the guys we got in the portal from our defensive side of the ball, I think we have a complete roster, a deep roster.

Expectations are definitely high. Yeah, I expect it to translate to some wins.

Q. How did you go about building some chemistry with some of the new wide receivers?

TONY MUSKETT: It's real easy with those guys because we do a good job of recruiting high level, high character, hard working guys. Half the time it's them reaching out to me or AC, like, yo, let's go get throws, routes. They're always around the facility. It's easy to build chemistry when guys are there 24/7.

Bringing in new faces that love football, want to get better, want to compete. I think you're going to see some big production with them guys.

But to answer your question, chemistry is easy when you're willing to work for it.

Q. You went through a bit of injury troubles last year. What did you learn about yourself going through those injuries back and forth, now applying that over the next few months?

TONY MUSKETT: Yeah, I learned a lot. I know Kam spoke on it a little bit. You kind of take on a new role. For me it was you get hurt, the timetable to come back was kind of uncertain. You can either feel sorry for yourself or do everything in your power to try to make the best of the situation.

For me, that was obviously just rehabbing as much as I



could, doing everything I can to get back on the field quicker. Also being a player coach. If AC or any of the other quarterbacks needed help, I need to be there to answer their questions. If any guys in the offense need help, need somebody to talk to about the playbook, I need to be the first one there to help them out.

Understanding that the role may change. But you're still working your hardest regardless of the role.

Q. All the work you've put in, you know what the schedule is like, comes down to the last game of the season, you beat Virginia Tech, how good would that make you feel?

TONY MUSKETT: I mean, yeah, it's definitely a big game. I mean, we're focused on the other 11, as well. I know Tech is our rival, a big rivalry game. Every game on the schedule is a big game for us. We want to win all 12 of them, come back here win the ACC championship, go on and make a playoff run.

It would feel good. But just like the other game, we want to win them all.

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