

2007 ACC Football Championship
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Coaches Press Conference

AN INTERVIEW WITH COACH FRANK BEAMER

THE MODERATOR: Coach Beamer, Virginia Tech.

COACH FRANK BEAMER: You know, we are just really excited to be back here in this ACC Championship game. I can tell you four years later I guess it is, three years later, we are still awfully proud to being in the ACC. People talk about it's a revenge game. I don't deny that if you got a choice to play Clemson, who we were able to beat, or Boston College, who beat us, then most people choose Boston College. But you got to be careful what you wish for, now that you got them, you got to figure out how to beat them. They are a tough team to beat. They play well. They play efficient. They play smart. I mean you got to beat them. They are not going to give it to you. You got to beat them. You got to do it for 60 minutes. You can't do it for part of the ball game. You got to do it for 60 minutes. We are proud to be here. I'm proud of our football team. We went through a tough loss against Boston College and came back and won four tough ball games against really good teams, good opponents. I think that says something about our program, our players, our coaches. I'm proud of where we are right now. But realize we are going to have to play a great football game tomorrow to beat this Boston College team.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Frank, since the BC game you haven't given up a point in the fourth quarter, was that emphasized after that game as you like to say, close the deal.

COACH FRANK BEAMER: Well, I think it's just part of it. Normally I think if you look at our defense we get better as the day goes along. I think our football team does. Coaches making good adjustments. If something is hurting you early, you are better at the end. Certainly the Boston College game we didn't pick up a first down at the end. We had an onset kick we didn't get, and then they scored. I think what happened after that, it's in the back of everyone's mind, get better as the day goes along. But I think our program, our coaching staff, our defensive staff, our offensive staff and good players, that's what enabled us to not be good in the fourth quarter.

Q. Coach, can you talk about the job that your quarterbacks have done improving your

developing throughout this season and also the job that their position Coach, Michael O'Cain has done with them?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: Yes, I think Mike O'Cain deserves a lot of credit. I'm not sure that I ever thought I would be back on a two quarterback system again. And I think his coaching has really helped. I think the two players involved have really helped. Both of them have abilities to win football games for you and trying to get the best of both of those abilities is what we try to do,

And it's worked.

I mean we made it clear that they weren't competing against each other. It wasn't like mess up a play and you are out of here. It was we are going to try to get the best out of both of you. The type of kids they are makes it work. Then I think Coach O'Cain and his style, his understanding, his taking time to teach, taking time to listen to you. I think that's been a big part of it.

Q. Frank, you've gone up against Boston College for a lot of years under Coach O'Brian, and now Coach Jagodzinski is there now, is there anything different about them this year that's sort of helped spur better success?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: The last time I went to Boston College when Tom was there, they got us up there, they came to our place and got us here. The main element they got good players. They are well coached. They were well coached when Tom O'Brian was there. And they are certainly well coached right now. And then I think they got a lot of mature players. They got a lot of experienced guys that have been around, been in a lot of games. Like I said earlier, they are hard to beat. They were hard to beat when Tom was there, and they are hard to beat right now. I mean it is a good program.

Q. Coach Jags was just in here and he thought weather played a big factor in that game; they weren't able to throw the football as well as they would have liked. What factor do you think the weather played in the earlier football game?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: That's probably true. Any time you are throwing the ball you want a dry ball. I think from a defensive standpoint, you are trying to get good footing. I never thought it was bad in that game. I think our field held up pretty well. There is probably something to that. I'm sure being able to run precise routes, and throw the football, and catch the football, you know, the weather did affect them.

Q. What do you anticipate the challenges of facing a team again for the second time in a season? Are there any concerns about second guessing yourself or trying to change too much from one game to plan to the next?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: No, I think you get further along in the game plan quicker. You got a foundation. You go back and look what happened, what did they do, what did we do. I think it's who adjusts to the adjustments tomorrow is the one that's going to come out best in this deal. They got good players. They are playing well. We got good players. We are playing well. Both of us will do some things different and how do each of us adjust to that.

Q. You faced a lot of good quarterbacks in the ACC, and the biggest, where does Matt Ryan fit in terms of all of the talented quarterbacks that you have faced?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: He is up there. I agree with Jags there. You judge a quarterback on, do they win? He came into Blacksburg on a Thursday night and won. That's not an easy thing to do. When you go into Clemson -- when I think Clemson was playing probably their best football. They were on a great roll and won. That's not an easy thing to do.

I think the thing that happened, you know, you kind of wanted him running around. You say this

guy is such a good pocket passer, he sits back there and gets in a rhythm, you want him running around. I think he has a real ability of finding receivers and throwing hard passes. You find a receiver down the field, the ball will be in the air a while. He is throwing passes on the run down the field and hitting guys from a dead run. To me that's a real, real good ability. Sometimes you don't think about that with him. So, you know, he is smart, he gets rid of the ball, you don't get him for sacks much. To me he's got it. I think he is a heck of a quarterback.

Q. You mentioned your reluctance to go to a two quarterback system. When you have had success for years on end, do you still need to be flexible and sort of kind of reinvent things year-to-year?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: Yes, I think part of coaching, a big part of coaching is saying, okay, what do we have here and it changes every year. What do we have and what do we need to do to win the football game. I thought we did a good job with that last year. We are kind of inexperienced on offense. We kind of hung around and took care of the football until the bowl game. And then won 10 games last year, I thought we did a good job.

This year, things came around, the quarterback thing. We had no clue. Starting out the year we were going to red shirt TyRod (phn), go with Shawn. Then we got a couple of linemen hurt. Things came around. We felt like we needed a more mobile quarterback. Then they came back around, TyRod was playing well, Duke gets hurt, here comes Shawn, he is playing great. We kind of adjusted on the run.

I think we've done a good job of doing the right thing for the football team and making it work so far. Hopefully it will work again tomorrow.

But I think that's the deal. Let's get the ball in their hands this percentage of the time, who can do it for you. The guys that can do the best job of that, taking advantage of your strengths and hide your weaknesses a little bit. I think that gives you the best opportunity to win, no question.

Q. Frank, when you look at the confusion atop the BCS right now, and we could even have a two loss Georgia team sneak into the title game, do you ever allow yourself for a minute to think what if, if you had won that game on Thursday night?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: No, I don't do that much. What I would say to you, I'm proud of our program. We had a heartbreaking loss, a tough loss and came back and won four tough football games and came together really I think as a team. The offense contributed, the special teams contributed, the defense contributed. We came back. How many times do you go through a season that you don't have something tough happen to you, but how you react to it? So that's the part I look at. I'm proud of this football team. If we can comeback and win an ACC Championship, I think it would speak volumes about these seniors, our senior leadership, players in our program and coaches in our program.

Q. The last time you were here, you were the younger coach the last time at the ACC title game, you were the new guy on the block, so to speak. This one, you are more of the wiser, the elder statesmen of the two head coaches, it's just a little different roll for you this week?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: I don't know about wiser. I think you understand that what I said in there at lunch. This is a special week. That's what I tried to get to our team. How many times do you lineup and it's one game for a championship. I mean you just don't have those weeks very often. So it's worth putting a little bit extra into it. Everything intensifies a little bit. You got to be well prepared, and you are playing a team that is very, very good.

So, you know, hopefully we can lead our group better than last time here because we didn't get it done the last time.

Q. Coach, I had a Virginia Tech alumnus tell me yesterday that he thinks that Virginia Tech has

always had really good fans; that this year, the spirit surrounding the team has been above and beyond anything that it's ever had, and obviously attributed to what happened early in the year; have you noticed that at all and do you feel the same thing?

COACH FRANK BEAMER: Absolutely. I don't think the Hokie Nation has ever been closer, tighter. I think since our tragedy in April that we have handled it as well as we could, never forgetting the victims and their families and the people shot. But the other result of it is, we are tighter than ever, stronger than ever.

THE MODERATOR: Anyone else? Thank you.

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