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An Interview With:

**LANDON WALKER
DWAYNE ALLEN
RASHARD HALL
EDDIE WHITLEY
DANNY COALE
LOGAN THOMAS**

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to today's ACC Football Championship Student-Athlete Teleconference.

We'll start off with Clemson, Dwayne Allen.

**DWAYNE ALLEN
Clemson**

Q. Dwayne, I just wanted to get your take on I guess what's happened to you guys down the stretch here. Obviously you guys have faded. Turnovers explain some of it. But it didn't explain all of it against South Carolina. What's your explanation for what's gone on?

DWAYNE ALLEN: Injuries the end of the season. We've got guys playing out of position. And I feel like that's created some -- it's been kind of like a domino effect, with the protection, the quarterback play, everything.

Q. How much stock do you put into momentum? Because Virginia Tech has some right now, and it seems like they've got a little bit more than you guys do?

DWAYNE ALLEN: They have a ton. They're riding, what, a six, seven-game streak. They're playing well. A lot better offensively. Defensively they have some guys down. But the guys that are stepping up are playing at a high level.

They have a ton of momentum. And momentum played into it a lot. Just during the face-up championship game there has to be a big play. We have to put out a big play to get that momentum swung back into our favor.

Q. Dwayne, first of all, I've got two questions. What would winning this game, this championship game, would that wipe out what's happened the last couple of weeks? And then also with you individually, the All-ACC team's coming out today. I know that's been a goal of yours for a while. What would it feel like to make the All-ACC First Team?

DWAYNE ALLEN: Starting with your first question, I believe so. One of our goals was to win the state championship and beating South Carolina. But a bigger one, one that comes after that, is to win the ACC Championship. And winning the championships, which is something that hasn't been done here in over 20 years, will wipe away the aches that we've been having with the taste of defeat the past couple of weeks.

And your second question, yeah, to be the best tight end in the nation has been one of my goals since I stepped foot on this campus. You can't be the best tight end in the nation unless you're the best in your conference.

And that's been one of my things that I've been working really hard to accomplish and hopefully throughout this year with my play on the field, I demonstrated that.

Q. How do you rally your confidence, especially with all the young guys you have, when Virginia Tech's playing as well as they are?

DWAYNE ALLEN: Just letting the young guys know what we're playing for. That's the first ACC title in 20 years here at Clemson. That's the opportunity to go and play for a BCS Bowl game which hasn't been done here in 30 years. So there's a lot on the line with this game.

Virginia Tech is a team who's been in this championship game a lot. They have a lot of

experience. But with that, I was there two years ago. And I know what it takes to go into this game and play well. And I'm going to do my job as leader of this team and rely on my knowledge, my knowledge to the guys and let them know that this is for all the marbles, let's go out and play our best.

Q. One more thing, completely unrelated. There's a guy at Virginia Tech who is a wide receiver?

DWAYNE ALLEN: Danny Coale.

Q. Yes. And he also punted last week and punt returner, can you imagine having all those roles to do in one game?

DWAYNE ALLEN: I couldn't. I definitely would prepare myself to take on all those roles. He's a guy who I'm sure his team has a lot of confidence in to put him in all those positions as a punter and punt returner and one of their go-to wide receivers. I mean, that's awesome for him. And he's definitely a guy who we've got circled and going to have to stop in order to bring the championship home.

Q. Just wanted to ask you, how well do you know James Hopper, did you play against him in high school at all?

DWAYNE ALLEN: No, I didn't play against him at all. But I did have the opportunity to meet him whenever we went up there to play them, and he seems like a good kid and got his head on his shoulders and just waiting for his opportunity to play and make plays for them.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Dwayne.

LANDON WALKER Clemson

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by Landon Walker. Questions for Landon?

Q. Landon, you guys obviously are a different team than you were a couple of weeks back, when you played Virginia Tech. And so are they. What do you think you guys need to do in this game to play better than you have in the last four?

LANDON WALKER: Yeah. That's a pretty good question. I feel like ever since obviously Virginia Tech's only loss, ever since that game they've been -- the sky's the limit for them they've

been doing nothing but great things. Every game they've played their offense has just gotten better every game.

And it seems like we were going that way until about three weeks ago. Georgia Tech kind of was a downfall for us. We didn't play as good as we wanted to at Wake and obviously NC State and South Carolina. We haven't been ourselves the last three, four weeks.

But the biggest thing I feel this team needs to do is just realize this is the postseason. The last three games are behind us. We ended the season poorly. And I think that we didn't play as well as we wanted to there at the end of the season.

But obviously postseason, in any level, is just a different -- it's a different mentality, the way you enter the postseason, there's going to be a lot of teams watching at home and you have the privilege of being in the game, in the ACC Championship game.

So I think the biggest thing to address the team is just it's a new season.

Q. Do you sense the guys have the confidence and they sense of urgency they need going into this one?

LANDON WALKER: I think confidence level is something we've been talking about the last couple of weeks or so and getting that back. I feel like we fell off there a little while, especially NC State. That was a big blow to the confidence, getting beat like that. We hadn't gotten beat like that in a couple of years.

So that really hurt us. But I think that relaying to the team, it's the postseason and there's a lot of teams watching us. That's going to bring confidence right there. It's a whole different mentality. If anything, hopefully that can bring some confidence to the team.

Q. You said that you hadn't really been yourselves the last few weeks. Can you pinpoint what is it that's kind of held the offense back the last few weeks compared to the way you all were going the first part of the season?

LANDON WALKER: Yeah, it's been turnovers. Obviously at NC State we turned the ball over and gave them the ball right inside the 20-yard line three times. When you do that, there's no way you're going to be able to win. Turnovers and momentum have been the biggest difference

in us early on in the season and late in the season.

I think when you give teams turnovers like we have the last couple of weeks, especially when you're on the road, it's very hard to catch the momentum and get the momentum back in order to be able to do what you want.

I think anytime when you give a team turnovers it gives them momentum and they're going to capitalize. I think that's huge for an offense to be able to get the ball with great field position like we've been given offenses the ball.

And I think the defense feeds off the offense. Obviously when the offense can go and score points and be successful doing that, the defense is going to be able to really stop the run, stop the pass. And I think it's really a game of motion and momentum, and I think we haven't had that on our side the last couple of weeks with the mistakes we've been making.

Q. I was wondering, this is a team you beat by 20 on the road. And you're going into this game as an underdog. Does that kind of bother you, see the point spread the way it is; this is a team you beat pretty handily and is that something that you can use as motivation the fact that it seems a lot of people are doubting you like they haven't since maybe the start of the season?

LANDON WALKER: Most definitely. I think when we were playing the beginning of the season we were picked to lose in almost every game when we played. I think at least the first five or six we were picked to lose.

Even when we were winning at Auburn and Florida State, Virginia Tech was picked to beat us at Virginia Tech. That was very big for our motivation.

I think when we were picked to lose those games, I think it helped the team. We had something to play for more so than the end of the season when you're on top of -- you're kind of on top and everybody's gunning for it. I think it makes it a lot easier to get motivated and play for that kind of thing.

Obviously when you have a point spread and you're not the team that's picked to win, I think that's motivation in any case. But, yeah, I definitely think that's going to help our team this week and practicing harder and developing a winning mentality this week when we practice.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

RASHARD HALL Clemson

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Rashard Hall.

Q. My question concerns Logan Thomas. What do you recall from the first game against Virginia Tech about him, and what have you seen since then on film that maybe he's improved?

RASHARD HALL: First and foremost, I want to give all the glory to God. Secondly, to answer your question, Logan Thomas, he's a great player. He was a young player coming to our first game.

Looks like he's just been improving over games as you would expect players to do, especially at the quarterback position. He played a good game against us and watching him throughout the season and on film last night, he seems to be doing a great job as their quarterback.

So just preparing for him and his style of play, throwing and running the ball. And he's been doing a great job.

Q. He throws well, obviously. He runs well, too. Do you recall him as being a difficult guy to bring down or does he look like now a difficult guy to bring down?

RASHARD HALL: Both. Both. If I recall in the first game, I didn't have many opportunities to actually tackle Logan, so I can't really comment on that. But just watching him throughout the season, he seems like a guy that's definitely going to give you a fight to take him down.

Q. I don't know how much you've been able to see of Virginia Tech so far on film or just watching on TV during the season. But I'm just wondering, other than Thomas's development, what is the biggest change in their offense since y'all faced them? Because you've shut them down unlike anybody else. They've been able to move the ball pretty well since then. Have you noticed any difference other than Thomas's development?

RASHARD HALL: Other than his development, I just noticed they've been throwing the ball and just running it more efficiently than when we played them. As I recall, they threw right-hand, ran right at us. And throughout the

season they just seem they have been getting better in those departments. That's the improvement I've seen from the first game until now.

Q. Also David Wilson did have a pretty good game against you, 123 yards. What is it about him that makes it, sets him apart from other running backs that makes him so special?

RASHARD HALL: He's a great running back. He runs hard, has great vision and can catch the ball out of the backfield. Those are the attributes he brings to the game. He's just a running back in those regards and that's what makes him special amongst other running backs in the ACC and the SEC of all the teams that we play.

Q. What can you tell me about Andre and his contributions up front and what that does for you guys in the secondary?

RASHARD HALL: It makes a big, huge difference. Andre is a great player. One of the best defensive ends I've played with here at Clemson. He just brings a lot to the table that helps us in the back end and vice versa.

But playing behind him makes it a lot easier on the DBs and linebackers.

Q. Anything you can tell us about him that maybe we don't know, anything about his personality?

RASHARD HALL: Just his mentality. He has a freakish mentality. When he steps on the field, he's the best defensive end in the nation; he obviously is one of the best defensive ends in the nation. But just his attitude and the way he prepares for games is something I admire about him.

Q. You guys won convincingly in Blacksburg now you're being listed as an underdog for this game. I wonder what effect that had on you guys as a team and your mentality, and does it bother you?

RASHARD HALL: I would say it has no effect at all. Me personally, it doesn't bother me at all. I can't speak to the rest of the team. But it's pretty much the same attitude. We're preparing for the ACC championship. So anything that's happened before then to this point is pretty much just out the window, and we're preparing to win a championship game. And that's just mainly where our focus is at this point.



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Q. Are you in graduate school now?

RASHARD HALL: Yes. I was accepted to the Human Resource Development Graduate Program here at Clemson, and I'm also working on a management degree at this time also.

Q. Management, graduate degree or undergraduate?

RASHARD HALL: No, another undergraduate degree in management.

Q. How is the approach and attitude been this week compared to the last several weeks going into this game?

RASHARD HALL: You're talking about this week going to the ACC Championship game, right?

Q. Right. How is the preparation different than maybe the last several weeks and what have you guys improved on?

RASHARD HALL: To be completely honest with you, we haven't started preparing yet. It's still early in the day. We went and watched film yesterday. But as a team we haven't even started preparing as a team yet.

Q. What do you feel like you need to work on?

RASHARD HALL: As a team, I feel like we did a great job just putting this last game behind us, just the attitudes on the bus and the players I've seen watching film yesterday.

But as far as preparing, just concentrating on doing our job.

Q. What's your impression of the Virginia Tech receiving corps?

RASHARD HALL: They have great receivers in 81 [Jarrett Boykin] and 19 [Danny Coale], and the rest of the guys do a great job. I definitely enjoyed playing them the last time we played down in Blacksburg, and they bring a competitiveness to the game that I enjoy playing against, and they're a great corps.

Q. You enjoy the competitiveness, what do you mean by that?

RASHARD HALL: Just competing. It's a little trash talking between snaps, enjoying football. You can just tell they're ambitious about what

they're doing on the field and they're just competing every snap.

They're not lazy receivers; they're not just receivers that are going to be pushed over.

Q. And 81 and 19 sort of jump out at you in those categories? You mentioned 81 and 19, do those two guys really jump out at you or jump into your memory as being especially competitive and fierce?

RASHARD HALL: As far as that, the last game at Blacksburg, yes, sir.

Q. The film you looked at last night, anything else jump out at you about their receiving corps?

RASHARD HALL: Not in particular, not since the last time we played them no.

Q. Marcus Davis, No. 7, had a couple of big games, I wondered if you had him in the mix?

RASHARD HALL: The film I watched last night was just a repeat of our game, just looking at how I played against them and looking at the things they did. So my preparation beyond that point would carry on throughout the week.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

EDDIE WHITLEY VIRGINIA TECH

THE MODERATOR: We're back with Virginia Tech, Eddie Whitley.

Q. I wanted to ask you about what it would mean to you to be a part of the winningest senior class in school history there, especially being able to set that mark in your hometown?

EDDIE WHITLEY: It would mean a lot to me knowing all the hard work that this senior class has gone through and all the tough games that we've won here as a team and as a senior class. It would mean a lot. And especially doing it in front of my hometown and friends and family, it would be a tremendous event for me.

Q. The Class of 2007 currently holds it and the Class of 2008 was 42-12. So it seems like you guys are just constantly finding ways

to top each other. How do you keep that up and keep that tradition up?

EDDIE WHITLEY: I guess it's kind of like a big brother/little brother type of thing. You don't want to disappoint the guys that's been here before you. And they put their hard work into it.

And we just want to keep the winning tradition going as much, as far as we can. And that's probably basically the whole thing, is we just don't want to let the alumni that's put their work in in trying to get this program to where it's at right now, we don't want to put them, let them down.

So that's probably the biggest thing is just knowing that the guys out there that paved the way for us to get where we are at now and give the opportunities that we have to play in big-time games and things like that, we don't want to let them down. So that's probably the reason that we just keep topping each other year in, year out.

Q. Eddie, obviously you guys have gone through your fair share of defensive injuries this year, more than your fair share, I guess. But when Bruce went down, what do you remember about that first defensive meeting that you guys had after that; maybe how Bud addressed that, what your demeanor was as a defense at that point? Because he was your best player. What about that?

EDDIE WHITLEY: We just -- when Coach Bud told us what happened and that he was going to be out for the season, that Bruce was going to be out for the season, guys -- everybody knew they had to step it up an extra notch. Our defensive leader out there with me, and we lost one. So we knew everybody has to step it up and play that much better. Because we knew he gave it all out there for us, and we didn't want to disappoint him and not give it all out there when he's not out there.

Everybody had to step up and just play a little better. And that's what we've been doing.

Q. There were presumably some concerns from people outside the program about would you guys be able to sustain how well you were playing without him in the lineup. Looking back, did you guys wonder? Maybe you didn't worry, but did you guys wonder how you would adjust to that, and what do you think about how you played with him out so far?

EDDIE WHITLEY: You know, it's basically the scheme that Coach Foster, he caters to our

abilities. And we just go off of what we have.

It doesn't matter who plays; we just need the same performance, we need the same results. And if we get the win, we just get the win. It is hard to see somebody like that go down with that talent. But at the same time we have to go on and just keep playing.

So really we just -- it was kind of like, well, it's a different person in those shoes but we need to have the same results, and that's what we've been getting.

Q. I don't know how often you guys go live in practice, but I know that Danny Coale's a really good blocker. Do you ever get to deal with that much?

EDDIE WHITLEY: Yes, sir, we have to deal with it Tuesday and Wednesdays. He is a very savvy player. He knows how to use his head and knows what type of technical block to use on you.

That helps us out both ways. We try to work on our block setting as well as them using their block technique. So we help each other out as much as possible and just try to get better.

Q. And talk about what you thought -- I'm sure you guys probably watched with interest when he trotted out the other day to punt for the first time. Just talk about, as hard as it is to get ready for all the stuff you're supposed to do just to play your position, can you imagine what it's like to do that and to punt and to punt return and do all the other stuff that Danny does?

EDDIE WHITLEY: Right. See, going into the season he knew that -- he tried to put on himself that he knew he had a lot of responsibility this year as a senior. And he wanted to help the team out as much as possible to win.

And he worked out so hard over the summer to get in shape, and whenever his name was called to do all the duties or any duties he had to do this year he would be ready.

And I knew -- we didn't have any type of, I don't know, questions or uncertainty that he wouldn't go and do the job to the best of his ability. He's a heck of a player, man. And all you can do is, you know, admire him.

Q. Eddie, when Clemson came to Blacksburg a month and a half ago, they came in red hot as an offense, and they put up 23 points. Seems like you guys slowed them

down a little bit. What did you think of how you guys played against that defense -- or against that offense, excuse me -- six weeks ago, what do you think you guys need to, I guess, improve on from that performance?

EDDIE WHITLEY: We felt that we played a pretty good game against them. Like I said, we probably had four plays out there we wanted to get back and that could have changed obviously the difference of the game.

But we couldn't get them back. All we can do now is learn from our mistakes, keep playing with the same emotion and the passion we had the first time and clean up the mistakes we had the first time. Hopefully we come out on top.

Q. You guys were able to slow down Sammy Watkins pretty well, and if I'm not mistaken was it Cris Hill who covered him most of the game?

EDDIE WHITLEY: Yes, sir.

Q. What does that say about Cris? Does that surprise you? Everyone would kind of think either Kyle or Jayron would be the one covering Sammy Watkins but it was Cris who shut him down. What did you think of what he did against him and did it surprise you?

EDDIE WHITLEY: You know, we as a defensive back, and our coaches, whatever, in practice, we just work on our technique every day. And we try to work on our craft and perfect it as much as possible. It didn't matter -- I guess it happened like that that Sammy was into the field the whole game or most of the game so that Cris Hill had to guard him.

It wasn't like we had to pay a little more attention to him. We knew he was a dynamic player and he was going to make his plays when possible.

But we just gotta trust our players we have and go out there and just play ball. He's a senior, Cris Hill is a senior. He worked hard over the summer getting ready for the season because he knows it's his last one, and we didn't have no problem with him guarding them.

It didn't matter who was on him. We just had to trust our technique and our coaches to put us in the right position to make plays.

Q. Just wondering, was that game -- the first game against Clemson, how much of a

wake-up call was that for you guys? What was said and done the week after that, because you haven't lost since then and clearly been a different team since then?

EDDIE WHITLEY: How much was what?

Q. That first Clemson game, how much was that a wake-up call, a reality check for you guys, and just the entire team and what did you all do differently to kind of turn the season around after that point?

EDDIE WHITLEY: You know, it was kind of like we had four exhibition games, competition in the first four games wasn't as -- I don't know -- as powerful, dominant as we would like.

But going into the Clemson game everybody was on a high horse. It was a wake-up call. After that game we were like, this is ACC play. Obviously we knew how it was going to be. But I guess we got caught off guard for a little bit. But after that everybody woke up and we knew what we had to do for the rest of the season. And that's why we've been winning since, so...

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

DANNY COALE **Virginia Tech**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Danny Coale.

Q. Danny, first, what progress have you seen in Logan over the course of the season?

DANNY COALE: I've seen a lot of progress. You have a guy who has all the tools in the world and all the athletic ability along with the right mental approach to the game.

So as you would expect, he has a little bit more comfort. He gains a little bit more experience each and every time, and you see him become more comfortable as the games go on. And I think he's just matured quickly into a very good quarterback.

Q. And for you personally coming into your senior season, I know you expect to do a lot as a receiver. You took on the challenge to be a punter. Did you come into this year thinking, "This is my last year and I'm going to do everything I can to make it as most successful for me and the team possible"?

DANNY COALE: Sure, as far as the punting goes I knew that was an opportunity ending spring, doing some punting duties and coming into fall camp with the opportunity to do that.

I wanted to as long as I helped the team. If I was the guy to be called upon, then so be it.

But you do have the kind of sense of urgency going into your last year. You realize that it's the final one. And you really want to make the most of all the opportunities that you're given.

So whether it be catching balls or punting them or whatever it may be, you definitely want to make the most of those opportunities.

Q. Follow up on the senior question there. How do you guys keep topping yourselves? I see that you guys can be the winningest senior class in school history, and it seems like every couple of years that's a story line at Virginia Tech. How do you guys keep improving and keep up that tradition?

DANNY COALE: I actually remember them saying that last year, the same thing, that last year's class could go out with the same kind of deal.

I think it comes down to a few things. But I think there's an expectation around here that when you come in you're being recruited into a program that's had a lot of success, that prides itself on excellence and winning and getting to championships.

So when it's your turn to be called upon and you want to add to that winning, you don't want to be the class that lets down that tradition.

So I think there comes high expectation coming in here, and it's something that we pride ourselves on. It's something we expect to win, and we work really hard to do that.

That's kind of the mentality of the program around here.

Q. The other thing I wanted to ask you is you guys are obviously a different and better team than the one I saw when you guys last played Clemson. Is it that simple to say that Logan Thomas has been the difference, or are there other reasons for why you guys have gotten so much better here down the stretch?

DANNY COALE: I think Logan's certainly gotten a lot better throughout the year. But I wouldn't say that the reason we lost to Clemson

was solely his fault.

I think in all phases of the game we played pretty poorly. And we didn't help him out. So he is a quarterback, and when you lose, unfortunately, a lot of fingers look to him. But he played very well that game.

And the surrounding cast didn't play well enough to win that day. So I think not only has he progressed, but I think all three phases of the game, the offense, defense, special teams have jelled and come together after that loss and played better.

We haven't played great at times. But I think we are becoming more comfortable with each other. And that's definitely always a good thing.

Q. I'm doing a story on Jack Tyler. I know you guys are on totally different sides of the ball but in terms of him being a walk-on and given the chance to start for this team, and you're sort of the same way you were kind of not a big time recruit and coaching staff -- obviously coaching staff gave you a chance to earn your way into the lineup eventually. How does that dynamic work within the program in terms of walk-ons and guys who maybe don't have all the recruiting stars, how does that work in this program with them getting an opportunity to play? It seems that Jack's not the first, and sounds like he won't be the last?

DANNY COALE: Right. I certainly have a lot of respect for him coming in here not a scholarship guy, having to buy his time and earn it really. And to start on a defense, one of the better defenses in the country, I think that's a pretty awesome deal.

I think a lot of it comes down to just the way things kind of are done around here. And I was a scholarship guy but I wasn't heavily recruited. I didn't have a lot of stars.

And I think the mentality around here is that once you sign your letter, whether you're a walk-on or a scholarship guy, once you come here, it's kind of an even and clean slate. And you kind of stick your, put your head down and work hard and kind of do the right things, you're going to put yourself in a position to succeed.

And it doesn't really matter at the end of the day how many stars you had or if you had any at all or if you're a walk-on guy, everybody kind of starts with a clean slate here. The coaching staff does a tremendous job of giving players the opportunity to succeed. So that's really what it kind of boils down to.



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Q. Did you have notice that you were going to punt the other day?

DANNY COALE: I didn't get much notice, no. I knew there could have been an opportunity, and I really didn't find out for sure until right before the game where Coach told me he felt comfortable with me being the guy.

Q. If I'm not mistaken, your first punt was from kind of deep in your own territory.

DANNY COALE: Sure. Yeah, I was in the end zone.

Q. When you're back there calling for the snap, I know you've done this all year in practice and stuff, but when you're back there calling for the snap, was there like an "oh crap, don't screw this up" moment for you? What were you thinking when you go back there?

DANNY COALE: You know, first of all, you get in the huddle, you hear what the snap count is going to be. We decided to snap it quickly. And at that moment you don't have much time back there to gather your thoughts, because as soon as you get lined up the ball's coming.

So my thought back there was just to really get it out. If I can get it out and just get it downfield wherever it may be, the coverage team, the punt coverage team does a great job. So if I can just put them in a position to make a great tackle or do something like that, then I think I've won. And fortunately for me it just -- it happened to go a little further than I planned on it.

But after that, the nerves kind of went away and it's something I enjoy doing.

Q. Clemson beat you at home and now you're favored to win the ACC Championship. Does that surprise you? And I don't know if you pay any attention to the BCS rankings. You were fifth last week. If you win, you stay fifth and Stanford jumps from ninth to fourth, did that surprise you or disappoint you in any way?

DANNY COALE: Okay, I think to the first question, I am a little surprised that we're favored. I mean, to me they came in here and they played better. They won.

And so to me we have something to prove. We have to play better. And I think for us we're the kind of underdogs in the situation because we've

played them once and they came out on the winning end.

And second, you know, I did see the BCS results. To be honest with you, at the end of the day you realize there's just really nothing you can do. And the BCS is a complex process. And I couldn't begin to tell you how any of those rankings are determined.

But it's like preseason rankings, you really don't want to pay attention to them because at the end of the day I think the final rankings where you finish the season is more important. Whatever happens in between is absolutely out of our control.

And so I'm thrilled to be playing on a quality football team, and we're just looking forward to going out and playing Clemson a second time.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

LOGAN THOMAS Virginia Tech

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Logan.

Q. Logan, you talked about the first Clemson game being sort of a watershed moment for you. You learned a lot about yourself and about how you needed to play. Could you give me some specifics on what you learned that day and what you've improved on since?

LOGAN THOMAS: I would say what I learned that day would be don't try and play outside yourself. You can't be the person that played before you. You can't be the person you look up to in the pros or whatever. You just gotta go out there and be yourself.

I kind of recognized that after the game. And I think it's helped me in the long run just to get by some of the mental stuff I've had to get by.

But as a player, outside of that, outside of that, I'd say that just being more confident and calm and knowing where to go with the football and knowing when to tuck and run when I need to.

Q. Logan, in that first Clemson game, memory serves, your shoulder was kind of banged up. Were you kind of hampered from playing your whole game against Clemson because you were maybe favoring that shoulder a little bit?

LOGAN THOMAS: I would say that I was. And not because of what I did, but I think Coach

O'Cain was afraid to run me as much just because he was afraid to put that shoulder in jeopardy.

But, yeah, it hindered me from throwing the ball deep down field a little bit more, but I can't say that's the excuse of why we lost. I would say that as a team we didn't play well enough. I definitely didn't play well enough. And the next time around I'm thankful we get another shot.

Q. You came to Tech because they wanted you to play tight end weren't really looking to play quarterback. How much of an adjustment has it been for you, and how do you think you've handled kind of being the center of attention?

LOGAN THOMAS: It's been quite an adjustment. Because I mean, growing up you always pictured yourself as something different. I pictured myself as a receiver catching a football.

And so when I got here, just it was shell shock when I found out I was playing quarterback. I think it was for the best. And I thoroughly enjoy it now.

And being the center of attention, it doesn't -- it actually doesn't bother me as much as it could, just because I don't go out in the limelight as much. If you're in Blacksburg the only time you see me is going to grab something to eat or on campus for my classes.

Q. Logan, if I could go back to the tight end thing for just a moment. I think back in the preseason when we were talking about this, you said that you actually had wanted to play tight end and weren't that interested in quarterback. Could you talk about that for a second? And am I remembering that correctly, first of all?

LOGAN THOMAS: I didn't want to play quarterback just because, like I said, it was something I dreamed grew up catching the football instead of throwing it.

And it was just kind of -- just because of that I think is the reason that I didn't really want to play quarterback. I played it in my junior and senior year in high school so I was familiar with the position. I knew what I was doing.

And I knew there was a possibility that I could be playing quarterback when I got to college, the way Coach Stinespring just kept hinting at it. But I didn't want to believe it at that time. But I guess I was forced to believe it the day before the

season started my freshman year.

Q. Clemson beat you guys in Blacksburg. You're now favored to beat them in this upcoming game. Does that surprise you at all?

LOGAN THOMAS: Actually, it surprises me tremendously. I think Danny said before that they took it to us the first time. So no matter what, I think they should be the favorites, and granted they should be. They're a great football team. They beat us 23-3. Beat us by 20 points pretty handily. And they're a good team as well. And their record is 9-3, and obviously they're going to be a tough team to beat.

But I think that they should have the upper hand on us right now from the previous game they had us figured out, and they beat us.

Q. Logan, have you communicated with Tajh Boyd recently and what do you make of today the All-ACC Team is going to be announced and I think there's a debate over whether you or Tajh should get it. How much have you guys kept -- I know you guys are friends. How much have you talked to him since that first Clemson game and what he's sort of gone through?

LOGAN THOMAS: I talk to him on and off every now and then. Hasn't been as much as before we played them, just kind of because we've gotten into the swing of the football season and our focus has been elsewhere.

But I talked to him -- I sent him a text after a couple of the games. And he's doing well. He's been playing well. He's had his ups and downs just as any quarterback has. But he's still got his head on straight, and he's going to be working hard.

And as the All-ACC thing goes, I think we're both deserving. Obviously Tajh has had a phenomenal year for them, so many passing yards and so many touchdowns.

And, of course, he wants the award for himself. But if I were to lose out to Tajh, it would be perfectly okay in my book just because he is a great friend and also a great player.

Q. Immediately after that Clemson game you played a great game against Miami and then you've kind of -- you played really well ever since. I was wondering what was said to you after the Virginia Tech game; was there any encouragement you got from teammates or

coaches that allows you to maintain your confidence? How were you able to turn things around as quickly as you did?

LOGAN THOMAS: Coach O'Cain just called me into his office afterwards or on Monday after the game was just like: Hey, keep your head up. You're still our quarterback. We have no doubts in you. You're going to be a great one.

And it was definitely good to hear that from my coach. But I think it was better that all the guys on the team had my back as well. And nobody was down on me. Everybody was picking me up saying: Hey, we got it. We just gotta take it one game at a time. And the next week I came out and probably had one of the best games I've had or will have.

So I think it was just a confidence boost just knowing that everybody had my back.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Logan.

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