

September 1, 2007



**GEORGIA TECH 33
NOTRE DAME 3**

COACH CHAN GAILEY

COACH GAILEY: Coach John Bond did good a great job of innovating and putting in things like that, the direct snap to Choice that felt like we might gain some numbers advantage if we go out and cover the quarterback, then you gain that advantage. It worked out well for us today.

Q. (No microphone).

COACH GAILEY: Well, we thought that their quarterbacks brought different things to the table. We knew we had to go out there and stop 3 from running the football. We had to do that because that's what his package is.

It those other guys came in the ballgame, then we had to stop the passing game and that's what we felt like we were trying to gear up to do. And I thought Jon Tenuta and his staff did an unbelievable job of preparing our football team to play today. They did an outstanding job.

Q. (What was your plan for Jones)?

COACH GAILEY: Well, we wanted to challenge him to throw the football, obviously.

We're going to blitz you, we don't care who you are. But we felt like the challenge was to stop the run game to see if he could throw the ball well enough to beat us.

Q. Did you see a 30-point win?

COACH GAILEY: I'll be honest with you folks, I did not see this coming. I thought we would play pretty well defensively. I did not think we would be able to run the ball as well as we ran it today. I didn't know that.

I thought we had a great offensive line coming back and a good set of still people, but to be able to run the ball the way we did today, I didn't know that.

Q. What did you think of your quarterback's performance>?

COACH GAILEY: It was good and bad. He did some really good things. And he missed some throws that I had seen him make 50 times in practice.

The great thing is, he didn't have to go play great today. He could play good and we could still win and he can learn and get his feet on the ground and continue to get better, and go work to become a great quarterback. So we're fortunate he didn't have to play great today.

Q. (What were the big keys for you)?

COACH GAILEY: I thought we were able to get to the edges a lot. Our guys are good blitzers and stunners. I thought we were able to get to the edge to put pressure on their quarterback today. I don't know how many sacks it was, but I think it was a bunch.

Q. Did you know who their quarterback was going to be?

COACH GAILEY: We didn't know who it was going to be. We had practiced for whoever it was going to be.

Q. Where do you see them going from here?

COACH GAILEY: Coach Weis will be in here in a few minutes and you can ask him that question. I have problems trying to get my team ready for the rest of the season.

Q. (No microphone).

COACH GAILEY: They didn't know because they had not been looking.

Q. How important was --

COACH GAILEY: Big. That early field position was tremendously big. For us to keep the pressure on them, our defense just dominated I thought early in the ballgame and gave us field position. And even though we were not scoring

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Coach Chan Gailey 9_1_07

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touchdowns, we were able to keep making field goals. Travis Bell did a great job. He kicked that one a little low but other than that he kicked the ball great today and that was a big part of us keeping the pressure on Notre Dame and the game, being in control of the game.

Q. You've had some situations in the past years where you have not been able to cash in with touchdowns early in games. Was that a concern at any point during the game?

COACH GAILEY: Oh, sure, any time you go it in there and don't score a touchdown, you get concerned. You've moved the ball and been in field position twice, you have one touchdown, it's 7-6, yes, you're always concerned about that. And that's something we have to go work on. We didn't play perfectly, we didn't. We've got things we can go work on.

Q. What did you see of Jonathan Dwyer that you liked during the game?

COACH GAILEY: He's strong now. The guy is a big, strong back that can get to the edge better than you think he can. I was impressed with the way he ran the football today and I think that bodes well for him and us.

Q. Do you think people are overlooking Georgia Tech in general?

COACH GAILEY: I don't know. And it doesn't matter now to be honest with you. Right now it doesn't matter. I care about where we are at the end, not after the first game of the season.

Q. Just out of curiosity, Appalachian State beat Michigan --

COACH GAILEY: Where is this question?

Q. Appalachian State beat Michigan. Did you hear that and what's your reaction to that?

COACH GAILEY: Yes, I heard it. I know Jerry and I know App State and I know what a great program they have. I'm just as surprised like everyone else in the country right now.

This just goes to show you, you'd better get ready every week, every team, every week; there are no gimmees in the world of football. And there's possible going to be some more of those

during the course of the year. That won't be the only one.

Q. Running was the original game plan --

COACH GAILEY: Yes --

Q. How early did that happen?

COACH GAILEY: There were a couple of series. I think we went out there, and I think we ran the ball pretty good early and then we went out there one series and threw it every snap for three straight downs.

Somewhere, I want to say start of the second quarter, and I told John, I said, "John, let's just keep pounding them a little bit." And we had enough weapons and enough ammunition to be able to do that.

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COACH CHARLIE WEIS

Q. Take us through the progression of quarterbacks and what you saw and where you go with that.

COACH WEIS: Well, it was three different plans. Really the plan we had was the plan with Demetrius. That was the plan. Evan was more of our two-minute plan and throw the ball down the field plan if we needed to get into that situation. We were hoping not to get into a game where we had to throw it a whole bunch of times.

You know, we thought that going against Georgia Tech, especially with our experience level, we thought that the best way to go against them was to run the football. And we felt that Demetrius as an additional runner could provide us some plays where we would be able to move the ball.

Unfortunately, obviously, Georgia Tech got the best of us all day far as their defense getting after our offense. So the next thing that came into play was right before two-minute, we had practice with Evan being a guy that was going to run two-minute.

And we got a little bit of momentum going to the point where I wanted to be able to throw the ball down the field a little bit more and I went with Evan. And to be honest with you, I just got his feet wet. It got to the point of a game where I would never want to throw in a towel in a game, but I have this other kid who just got back, just got ready to go as far as being able to throw the ball down the field; I just wanted to get his feet wet. So I figured it was the best time to get him a little taste was at that point right there.

Q. And where do you go from here?

COACH WEIS: That's a good question. I think that, you know, obviously I'm not happy with us taking care of the football. I'm not happy with our protection.

But I have to wait to see, you know, how many of those errors are quarterback related and how many of them are protection related, how many of them are route related. There's a whole litany of problems right there that we have to fix. The problem is when you have so many issues, it wasn't like even though we knew they were going to throw the kitchen sink, it wasn't like anything that was unfamiliar territory as far as what they were doing.

So I think that, you know, with that performance right there, you obviously have to start to take the blame and responsibility starting with me because I would have thought that we would have performed better than what we did.

Q. Is that the conservative approach that you feel you need to take with Demetrius or is it more because of Georgia Tech --

COACH WEIS: In this game I felt that -- look, I knew that they have a very sound defensive scheme and they have good players. So we figured they were going to be getting after us pretty good and one of the ways we felt we could try and slow down and neutralize them is try to run the football and try not to have negative plays.

Well, then we turned the ball over a couple of times, so we do have negative plays. But in reality what we are trying to do is we felt we could keep the game relatively close and play in a more intermediate type of game, rather than, you know, throwing bomb's away and turning it into a home run game.

Q. Obviously you want to look at the tape with the offensive line, but did they get beat up physically or did they just get outnumbered?

COACH WEIS: No, outnumbered wasn't the issue. I think that we didn't do a very good job of being ready for the speed of the game. And the sad part about it is the three criteria that I have assigned for last three days -- actually, I started back on Monday, but even as early as this morning once again, you know, speed of the game and ball

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Coach Charlie Weis 9_1_071

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possession were two of the three most critical factors and we didn't handle the speed of the game very well and we didn't take care of the football.

Q. What did you say to the team?

COACH WEIS: Well, I told them that when I come in to deal with the media because they always want to know what's going to happen now; I said that I'll take full responsibility for a team coming out and losing 33-3.

Obviously you have to give credit to Georgia Tech because they are a good football team. But the flipside of that is that when the team is not ready to go, okay, which obviously we weren't, okay. Who else are you going to blame but yourself? I'm the head coach. It's my responsibility.

With that being said, I told them that I wanted to refrain from making serious judgment on any one thing until after I've gotten a chance tomorrow morning to go ahead and watch it. And I said that we're not staying stagnant. Look, we're going to get better or are we're going to get worse but we're in the staying even, that I can promise you.

I said I'm not going to make any idle threats. We're going to watch the tape tomorrow and critically evaluate where the problems are and go about fixing them; so that when we go to Happy Valley, we are not having this same conversation next Saturday night.

Q. Three carries in the first quarter and none after that; was it the packages he was in?

COACH WEIS: Actually he wasn't the guy we were really looking to feature in blitz pick up. Armando, when we putted him in there, we wanted to give him the ball and then it turned into -- now you end up having to throw the ball. Now we're using Travis and James and junior, as a matter of fact, as well. But we got in that situation, I didn't want to put, you know, him in there to turn him into a blitz pick up guy. That's why when the game started to get a little out of hand, it wasn't the time for him to be getting there.

Q. And do you question yourself or look back on how much time you spent on multiple packages? Because clearly you had --

COACH WEIS: No, it was multiple packages, multiple packages in this game and it

was pretty simple. We were going in there determined to try to run the ball, make sure we didn't have negative plays, okay, to make sure we played close to the vest early and got used to the speed of the game with the number of people that were relatively inexperienced.

And when it all played out, all of a sudden a couple of bad things could happen, you turn the ball over a couple of times, okay, and they make a couple of big plays.

You know what, really, the game was still under control. It wasn't pretty, but it was kind of under control until it was 9-0. Then we have a dumb penalty and when we're getting off the field, it's still going to be a two-score game. I think that was -- I'm not putting a finger at Justin. Obviously it's a dumb thing to do but I think that was a critical turning point in the game as far as whatever gas you had left in your tank seemed to start to run out at that time.

Q. I just wanted to make sure we're clear about this. You settled on Demetrius as a starter, that was because he was the best fit against Georgia Tech or down the line, as well?

COACH WEIS: No, we were just trying to beat Georgia Tech. And we've been practicing this for multiple weeks. We established our mentality, what we were going to do weeks ago, and when I said to everyone that all of these guys were involved; they are all involved, because, you know, we only worry about winning that one game and obviously that didn't play out too well.

Q. A lot of talk about switching to the 3-4 defense and you gave up 276 yards rushing to Georgia Tech. Talk a little bit about the disappointment there.

COACH WEIS: Well, I'm going to have to wait to see it. Other than the gadget runs (ph), other than gadget runs where the quarterback was flexed out and they were direct snapping to their back.

We're going to find, and I have to watch it first, but we have to find where we really gave up a whole bunch of those yards on a few long outside runs. I think that's what it's going to come down to. I think that's going to be a whole bunch. I don't know that there's four or five runs that are going to go for 150 yards. But a whole bunch of them are going to be zeroed down to a few plays.

One of the things in a 3-4 defense you have to be able to do is set the edge. And "set the edge" means don't let the edge get caved in where they can get to the corner. I have to watch it first, but obviously when guys turn the corner, you know, and there's no one in sight, that that's not a good thing. It's one of the many issues that we're going to have work on rectifying.

Q. Gailey said he did not see this outcome coming. Obviously you had a feel for your team going into this game. Did you think this was a possibility?

COACH WEIS: No. I thought that in this opener, with our team, I thought that we would play the game, you know, more of a low-scoring mentality than one I've had in the past.

Usually when I'm trying to score a whole bunch of points, we're throwing it a whole bunch. But I didn't want to really expose us to come out and have to throw it so much and put us under duress with all of their blitz packages coming in. I wasn't expecting the outcome to be like that, but, you know, that's why I'm here taking the bullets.

Q. Is there one thing that you can take out of this that you can build on, anything identity-wise?

COACH WEIS: Yes, that blame will be unilateral. It will be across the board.

My M.O., my feeling is when I feel with the media, okay, which is fair to be criticized after a performance like that, you deserve your due.

But I think that it's really important for me to sit there and be a stand up and make sure I take it so that when I talk to the team after watching the tape, I can critically evaluate what they do without turning it into a he-said/she-said, or I'm pointing the blame at any one person because there's too much to go around. Today I will be more than happy to sit there and say I did a crummy job.

Q. Can you talk about the impact of positions early in the game?

COACH WEIS: I think that we did a poor job on field position all day, including turnovers. But even in the return game, I mean, one of the things I talked approximate, let's get Zibby going on a punt return. Well, the first time they punt to us, Zibby gets hit right in the fates. What was it, a

50-yard net punt? I don't remember what it was but it was something ridiculous.

Shows you how good a job I did. About every goal that identified with the team, this is what's going to happen in the game; unfortunately it happened just the opposite of what I said. Okay, give Zibby a chance to get going, he'll make some hay; he gets hit in the mouth. Take care of the football; we lay it down on the ground. Don't have any stupid penalties; well, we accomplished that one, too. You name it, I was prophetic.

Q. Evan and team tries obviously had specific packages designed for them but was Jimmy, was he aware of certain scenario under which he might fit in at some point today?

COACH WEIS: No. He knew that really, the game was designed for Demetrius to be the quarterback; that Evan would be in two-minute unless we got into a game that we thought we had to throw the ball down the field a whole bunch.

When we started to get a little bit of momentum in that third quarter, that one glimmer of hope in the third quarter when we were throwing the ball a little bit, he was the best person in there.

In Jimmy's case, I told him I'll only use him in the case of emergency, A, and to get his feet wet, B. But I felt as the game dictated it allowed me an opportunity, although in a negative vein, it allowed me an opportunity to go ahead and get that done.

Q. How difficult do you think it will be to evaluate how those three did, given how little time they had to work and the pressure they were under?

COACH WEIS: Oh, I don't think it will be that difficult. I think it will be pretty easy to see when you're sitting there watching.

I just have to make sure that when I'm identifying problems, I know who is at fault. I mean, you know, too many times you sit there and blame the quarterback. Now there's certain things that you can't shun, certain things that are your responsibility. You turn, you fumble the ball; there's no one else you can blame.

But as far as sacks or reads and all those other things, I think that is something that you have to make sure you watch the tape so you don't make the wrong deduction.

Q. So are you bringing Jimmy along slowly because he's not physically all the way back or you don't feel that he's ready for the speed?

COACH WEIS: No, he's ready for the speed of the game. He just was -- as the year went on, he told you guys he was rehabbing, and I told you he would be ready to throw the ball down the field on day one. Well, both of those were through. He was rehabbing and he was ready to throw the ball down the field on day one.

But here was the problem. The problem was as you're getting everything close to getting ready to go, those other guys are guys that are taking reps the whole time. What you didn't do is you can't sit there and take a quarterback and say you're in there under those two guys when you're not in there on a daily basis getting all of the regular reps that everyone else is. I think that he's turned that one.

Q. So where will you go from here? Will you go into the next game without the starter announced, or do you know how you'll handle it?

COACH WEIS: No, I think that once I know what I'm doing -- I think I'm going to need 48 hours. I think I'm going to need at least 24 hours. I might not be ready by the press conference tomorrow, but by the time I meet with you Tuesday, I'll tell what you we're doing.

Q. The way that you handled keeping that concealed, you don't look back on that, was that a negative in any way?

COACH WEIS: What negative was that?

Q. I have no idea.

COACH WEIS: No, the whole team knew what we were doing for weeks. So for the team it wasn't a negative and for those players, it was just to make sure that those guys weren't under the scrutiny of all the Notre Dame fans across the country.

Well, now, you know, it's open season, okay, from the head coach right on down. Take your pick what story you want to write tomorrow. You name it, you've got it.

Q. Do you remember the last time that you ran an offense that didn't score a touchdown?

COACH WEIS: I don't know. I mean, we've had some awful games in the past but it's been a while.

Do you know the answer?

Q. No, I don't. I was asking you. (Laughter) And can you take me through your vantage point of what happened with Justin Brown?

COACH WEIS: Well, I mean, obviously I didn't see it happen, but here is what I do know: I do know he had a third down stop at a critical time in the game, and next thing you know, the guy is getting called for hitting somebody in the face and getting thrown out of the game.

And even though I haven't seen it, I have to believe an official throwing a guy out of the game, you guys have probably seen it -- I didn't see it because I was following the ball right there, okay, because I was trying to see if we were going to stop them and whether they were going to kick a field goal or a punt or ta-dah, ta-dah, ta-dah; so I didn't see it happen.

But I have to have faith that the officials, for them to throw somebody out of the game, he must have done something not very smart, he must have.

Q. The snap to Choice, did you feel you practiced --

COACH WEIS: No, we practiced it. Plus we've been doing it some in camp ourselves to practice. So it wasn't like it was something unexpected. Because that's also the package that led to Nesbit at the end of the game when he was getting a couple garbage reps at the end. You're practicing that, too, so you have an opportunity to play that.

I think that they just did a very good job with both their fronts, both their offensive front and their defensive front at the lime.

Q. The success of the running game, how much do you think that's a by-product of them just wearing down?

COACH WEIS: I think there definitely was a negative residual effect of the defense having to

be on the field because of the lack of consistent drives by the O.

Q. Lastly, you said Jimmy just got back; is that this week?

COACH WEIS: No, he's been practicing. He just hasn't been able to throw multiple throws, multiple throws at full speed. He's been throwing all along. It's just that you know, when you practice a guy every third day, then you practice a guy every second day, it is not like he hadn't been throwing. He just hasn't been a guy that he's been able to be in there and take every rep. That's why he was third.

Q. What did you tell Demetrius when you pulled the plug out, and how did he take that?

COACH WEIS: He was very good, and I talked to him before I did it. I let him know what I was doing. It wasn't so much the two-minute drive, because he knew if we went to two-minute, Evan was going in. So that wasn't any big surprise.

It's just at half-time when we decided to stay in that type of mentality, not two-minute, but throw the ball more down the field, that didn't come as a shocker because that's kind of how we had to explain to him beforehand that if we got in that situation, that's what we were going to do.

So, you know, I'm never big on lying to the players. I always think it's important to let them know how things are happening. Hey, they are both disappointed. But join the club.

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