

Atlantic Coast Conference Football Kickoff

Thursday July 18, 2019

Geoff Collins

Jalen Camp

David Curry

Georgia Tech



regardless of the offense that you're in.

With this offense, we kind of focused on coming out of spring footwork and releases and things of that nature.

Q. Tell us about your teammate David Curry, what is it like going up against him in practice?

JALEN CAMP: Curry is a really competitive guy. He hates to lose. He's a hard worker, one of the hardest-working dudes on the team. Fun to be around.

Going up against him every day is just a chance for you to get better. Iron sharpens iron.

Q. Fill in the blank for me. We'll have a successful season this year if we...

JALEN CAMP: We'll have a successful season this year if we take it day by day, try to get better from this past day, just stack days, what Coach Collins preaches, get better each day. If we take that mentality as a team, we'll see wins come with that.

Q. What is your relationship with the quarterbacks now? Can you give us some kind of idea of what y'all did in the off-season and what you're working on now?

JALEN CAMP: Relationship with the quarterbacks is real good, with each of them. We've been in the indoor I would say probably three or four times per week, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. We'll probably get like a Wednesday in there. Just kind of getting on the same page with each of the quarterbacks, take turns catching balls from each one of them, trying to make that connection stronger.

THE MODERATOR: We will switch places with David. You can have a seat and watch the rest of the show.

JALEN CAMP: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for David.

Q. How about you describe Jalen.

DAVID CURRY: I guess you can say is first thing he doesn't look like a wide receiver. He's one of the hardest workers on the team, if not the hardest worker. I think I challenge him for that.

Like he said, he does everything right, perfect role

THE MODERATOR: Yellow Jackets of Georgia Tech have rambled in.

We'll invite Jalen Camp up first. Questions, please.

Q. What can you say about your first impressions of Geoff Collins as your new head coach.

JALEN CAMP: My first impressions is just, you know, a real fun guy, down-to-earth, energetic guy. That came with our very first team meeting. He came in there with high energy. Seeing that, you have no choice but to want to go fight for that guy.

Q. Seems there's a very familiar face that you're going to be welcoming into Georgia Tech this year, young man by the name of Jamal Camp. What are your thoughts about that?

JALEN CAMP: Yes, sir, that's my brother. He came in as a freshman this year. I think it's going to be real fun just kind of bringing him along with me, showing him the ropes. Back in high school, I was a senior, he was on the freshman team. We never really got a chance to play together.

This year I'm trying to take full advantage of that with this being my last year, enjoy it.

Q. Did he listen to you growing up? Do you expect him to now?

JALEN CAMP: Yeah, he listens to me because I typically do things the right way. He sees that. He'll want to listen (smiling).

Q. Obviously with Paul Johnson things were different with this offense. What can you say about maybe describing the offense moving forward, some of the changes made? What are you excited about?

JALEN CAMP: I would say us as receivers, we're probably one of the most excited groups on the team, just for the basis of a receiver, it doesn't really change too much because basically as a receiver you're asked to catch the ball and block. That doesn't really change

model for anybody. He's an honest guy. I can't say enough good words about him. He deserves to be here. I'm very proud to be his teammate.

Q. What can you say yourself about your first impressions of Geoff Collins, what it felt like when he walked into the room, started to lead Georgia Tech into the next chapter.

DAVID CURRY: First team meeting we had, he walked in, all of us are like, What's going on? He has all this energy, crazy amount of energy, enthusiasm. The first thing he says is, By the way, this will be like the most dull you'll ever see me. All of us are looking at each other, This dude? What?

His energy is through the roof. His care factor, he loves everybody in the building. You can see it. Doesn't matter if it's 4 a.m. in the morning, or 11 at night, he's running around, jumping, chest-bumping with people. It's a joy to be one of his players.

Q. There's been some obvious changes on the offense. Tell us a little bit about what Geoff has done on the defensive side.

DAVID CURRY: There's a lot of little things that you can change to a defense. I'd say we're a lot more competitive day in and day out about the little things, taking pride in it. He's a minister of mayhem. We're going to come after some people. We attack on everything we do.

They're very, very picky at the little things. Very, very picky at little things. It's fun to be a part of because I'm learning how to be a better football player so much faster now than I ever have. I think it's going to pay off.

Q. I know you've got some time before things start for the summer. It's got to be in the back of your head. How are y'all getting ready to prepare for an offense like Clemson?

DAVID CURRY: I don't think you prepare any different than you would going against anybody else. You treat every game the same. We are focused on us, getting our process down. We practice our process.

I think we're going to be a very good team this year. We're very confident. If we can just stack days, day after day, I think we're going to be ready to play.

Q. Having the two open weeks this year, the fact that you guys are going through having the new coach, if that was something that could be more beneficial for you?

DAVID CURRY: The two bye weeks?

Q. Correct.

DAVID CURRY: I thought that was pretty cool. Gives

your body a little bit more rest during the year. I guess you could say it might be a little bit more beneficial, give us an extra week to prepare for those two teams we're going to be playing those next weeks.

I'm excited about giving my body a little bit of rest.

Q. Really good dovetail. Your body has been through a lot over the last couple of years. With the injuries on and off, what have you learned about yourself, your resolve, your stick-to-itiveness through all that?

DAVID CURRY: I've got a rock in my father. I look up to him. He is no-excuses type man. I get hurt, he said, Son, I'm sorry that happened to you, but that's football. What are you going to do? Are you going to sulk about it? You're going to go and rehab as hard as can you and make straight A's in school.

My mom is, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry. All that.

That's how I've been taught, you don't sulk things about what you can't help. You go and attack what you can control.

Of course, I've had my ups and downs, but I've always prided myself, when I get hurt, I'm going to come back and shock people about, Wow, he came back from that and he's still doing that, so...

THE MODERATOR: David, thank you. We will look to be shocked throughout the course of the year by your play. We'll bring head coach Geoff Collins up to the podium now.

Questions, please.

Q. What can you say your takeaways were from the time at Temple, then being an Atlanta area native, what it feels like to be back at home?

GEOFF COLLINS: We had a great run at the previous place. Great young men, great culture. Again, coming back to home to Atlanta was special. Been here twice in the past, one with Coach George O'Leary, one with Chan Gailey, coaching at Georgia Tech. Always had visions of one day returning as the head football coach. To be with you guys at this great event as the head football coach after Georgia Tech at times is surreal.

It's an exciting time. We've got great young men in our organization. I want to take a second to pay honor to a young man that we lost during the offseason in Brandon Adams. You'll see different things we do throughout the year to honor his memory. He was a great presence in our locker room, a great teammate, great friend. I just wanted to take the time to just say how much he means to us every day still moving

forward, and to his family.

Q. A lot of your players have talked about the energy that you bring to the team, that hometown culture. What does that do for the identity of this team? How important is that?

GEOFF COLLINS: Yes, I mean, I don't know any other way to be. That's been the hallmark of my coaching career. I'm just excited every single day about what I do. I'm blessed to be a college football coach, blessed to be in a position to help young men reach their dreams. I attack that every single day, try to be creative as possible to give our guys every single advantage they can possibly have for their future success. Whether that's branding, social media, the way we do our off-season conditioning, our outside-of-the-box things we do with position flexibility, moving guys around.

Jalen is a great receiver for us. In the spring, he was out there playing outside linebacker. Just creative things that we will do just naturally flows. I'm blessed to be surrounded with a bunch of great coaches, some are former Georgia Tech players, that have returned home to the flats. Five of them were with us at the previous institution, have embraced every single thing that we do.

Hired the National Strength Coach of the Year in Lew Caralla to join us in Atlanta. He's done a great job with the development of our program, the development of our players. It's just exciting.

Q. The tag "Minister of Mayhem," where did that come from?

GEOFF COLLINS: I was the defensive coordinator in the SEC, I guess it was a moniker that stuck. Sports information guy keeps putting it in my bio, I guess. I guess it's kind of stuck.

Q. You haven't told them to take it out yet?

GEOFF COLLINS: I kind of like it (smiling).

Q. With a brand-new coaching staff, new system, program, your 100-day plan to make sure you can be as cohesive as possible as fast as possible, what did that plan look like?

GEOFF COLLINS: The first thing is getting to know our players, building relationships with them. I met with every single player in our organization, found out the things that they really liked about the Georgia Tech experience, things that they knew were going on that they wanted to see improved, and attack those things relentlessly.

Hired an unbelievable coaching staff, recruited at a very, very high level in the short window that we had.

Just the big thing is developing relationships with our players because people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. We want every single player in our organization to know how much we love them, care for them, want them to be successful in every phase of their lives. That is a daily mission so these guys get better in every single phase of their lives.

Q. Obviously Georgia Tech has had an identity on offense for a long time under Paul Johnson. What can you say about developing your own and utilizing the players you have returning as well as trying to recruit?

GEOFF COLLINS: Interesting question.

One of the big things is we're not an organization that's built on scheme. We're an organization that's built on players. We inherited a roster that had 13 running backs on scholarship and zero tight ends. Those young men are in our organization, and they have hopes and dreams and want to play at a high level. How can we put them in a position so they can have success individually and we can have success collectively as a team.

Same thing on defense. What we've inherited, some great young men, but whether we're a 3-4, whether we're a 4-3 doesn't really matter. We need to put our players in a position so they can have individual success and we can have success as a whole.

That's the challenge every single day that we're going through. There's some exciting things that we're doing, that we've experimented with, tried to find a place for every guy in our organization to have success.

Q. Initial thoughts and impressions on Parker Braun?

GEOFF COLLINS: Who?

Q. Parker Braun.

GEOFF COLLINS: Didn't really get to know him that well. The things I heard were nothing but positive things. We wish him absolutely the absolute best.

Q. We haven't talked a lot about special teams. Tell us a little bit about your early analysis of that group.

GEOFF COLLINS: Yes, we inherited two really good place kickers: Wesley Wells I think was 100% on field goals, extra points last year. Hit a game-winner last year. Excited about them. Arguably one of the most explosive, dynamic punters in the country in Pressley Harvin. Excited about them.

Just the commitment that we have in special teams, we

tell in our team meeting every single day, we have special teams being the first priority in our organization as a team. We take pride in that.

Q. Can you tell kind of everyone about Tyler Davis, your tight end, who seems like a special player that not a lot of people know about in the ACC yet.

GEOFF COLLINS: As a head coach in the American conference last two years, Tyler Davis was arguably the best player for the University of Connecticut, played tight end, played H, would split him out as receiver, played quarterback at times. When he decided to transfer, obviously that resonated with our entire coaching staff because we knew what a great player he was.

The thing that excites me is Tyler understood what our culture is. He understood what playing in our system, what the off-season regimen was like, is very challenging. He chose to come to Georgia Tech because of those things. He's helped us define our culture and build our culture within the locker room. He's a relentless competitor. He's incredibly tough. He's a great leader, a great teammate. All the things that we stand for as an organization, he's come in and embraced it. Educated the young guys. Done a really, really nice job. On top of that, he's a really good player, as well.

Q. Opening up with a conference game, are you a fan of that, particularly on the road? Would you rather have a couple games before you get into conference?

GEOFF COLLINS: Every single thing that we do in our program matters. Every single day matters. Every single opponent matters. We're just blessed that we get to play the defending national champions on the road.

It's an exciting time. I think it's nice to have such a big game from the outside world's perspective as you're going through the off-season conditioning, as you're going through the off-season workouts, just enhance the focus knowing you're going to be playing against a team that's really well-coached and has really good players and a great environment.

I'm excited about it. I know our team is, our program is, our fan base is. It's an exciting time.

Q. There's been six different champions in the Coastal Division. You're coming in here. What do you make of this division? Do you feel like it's wide open, you have as good a chance as anybody? Do you feel there's a favorite?

GEOFF COLLINS: Well, since December 7th, there's one team that I'm worried about, and it's the Georgia

Tech Yellow Jackets. I haven't had much time to worry about anything else besides our team, our players, our organization, setting the culture, developing the standards that we have in our locker room. Our coaching staff, getting to bond with our players, setting positionally what the expectations are within each group, within offense and defense.

It's a great league, great coaches, great players. But the complete and total focus is on the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets.

Q. I imagine you're going to get picked probably in the bottom part of the Coastal, if not last, by the media. What do you think the ceiling is for this program this year? What is your expectation?

GEOFF COLLINS: Expectations are to get better every single day. Expectations are to build a culture that's built on effort, where we compete in every single thing we do, learn our processes on how we become a great football program. Every single day we're in that battle and in that challenge.

I'm just blessed to have inherited a group of young men that have embraced every single thing that we've asked them to do, that have attacked every single workout we've asked them to attack.

They entered the locker room, enter the building with positive energy, wanting to get better. They push their teammates. They're highly intelligent. They have high character. I'm just blessed every single day to coach them.

I'm not worried about outside expectations. I'm worried about the internal that we have going on every single day to build the culture, to build exactly who we're going to be moving forward. If we accomplish that every single day, we're going to be a pretty good football team, we're going to be a great football program.

Q. Tell us a little bit about your Waffle House meetings.

GEOFF COLLINS: The Waffle House (laughter)? It's been a great relationship. There's 400 Waffle Houses in the state of Georgia. The fact that everybody loves Waffle House, at least I know I do, just the relationship, a lot of those guys are Georgia Tech graduates. The founder, upper level management. It's been a really neat thing.

I had zero idea that it was going to take off the way it did. After living in the northeast, Marc Narducci from the Philadelphia Inquirer is here, there's not a Waffle House within an hour of Philadelphia. When I got back down to Atlanta, the first nine days on the job, by 5

a.m. I was in a Waffle House. It just kind of organically happened. But it's genuine. Everybody loves Waffle House, and I'm one of those people.

Q. We know you're big into branding. There's a great example of branding right there.

GEOFF COLLINS: Yeah.

Q. You say your goal is to get better every day. When you think about your own personal rubric, your checklist, how do you know each day that you're getting better?

GEOFF COLLINS: Just here's the standard of how we attack. Here's the attitude. Here's the effort. We have metrics to judge every single player's effort every single day. We have a catapult system. A lot of people use that for rehab purposes. We do that as well.

I think we've taken our study of data, how we measure our player's performance on a daily basis through the catapult unit, judge effort, how they can incrementally improve every single day their speed, their stamina, change of direction, all of those things. We look at those on a daily basis.

The thing that we say all the time, greatness is a process, not a destination. Once we become the elite program that we're going to be, there's still going to be another day that comes after that, and we still have to attack that next day at a high level and continue that moving forward. That's what I'm excited about.

THE MODERATOR: You have proven Thomas Wolfe wrong, you can go home again. Thank you.

GEOFF COLLINS: Thank you.