

Georgia Tech at UVA ... 11/9/19
Georgia Tech Head Coach Geoff Collins

Opening Statement

"I have been coaching a long time and as a coach, at times, you can distance yourself from the emotion and be very pragmatic to what is going on, but this one and the way these guys invested, believe in what we are doing and each other, compete and fight, and to come out and play at a really high level then fall short – I hurt for them. I hurt for the coaching staff, because we have some special young men in that locker room, regardless of circumstances, who is hurt, it doesn't matter, they just come out and play, compete and fight over and over and I do not take that for granted. I hope no one in the Georgia Tech fanbase takes that for granted because it is not easy to do what they did. The fight and the battle regardless of the circumstance is an example of how they handle life and adversity. 24 hours from now we will put the ball down again and get ready for another good ACC opponent. We talked last week about being three inches away and I think it was probably that today. That doesn't end up on the record book but I know how they are doing it. We just need to finish strong in the last three games."

On James Graham's performance after last week

"We have a process, he is learning our process. He had a setback in the first half a week ago, would like to have some throws back, but the culture we are building and putting in place prepares them to handle adversities and setbacks. We coach them through it, we care for them, they know how much we love them, we know we teach them to attack success, to go out there and make plays. He trusted the coaching, believes in what we are doing and came out and had a really good week of practice and preparation. The things he left on the table last week in preparation, he didn't this week. He is learning how to be a big-time college football player and we are teaching him how to do that at a high level."

On emotional loss

"We invest a lot in this program, in these young men. It was our final away game this regular season and we celebrated them last night. We sat around and told stories, even though it is a small senior class, and just what they mean to us as an organization and culture is special. We want to honor them in everything we do and all week we talked about making one more play because we are so close, and I hate that we couldn't make it. I hate that I couldn't coach one extra play to give them the success on the result they fought for."

On the team stepping up after injuries

"It is a next man up mentality. Whoever is out, we are going to rally, put the ball down, play, support each other and battle and fight the way we practice. The way we practice prepares us for times like this. They fought, they battled, they stayed together. All those things show a really good football team."

On touchdown before the half

"We relaxed on the squib kick right before half. Learning experience, building a culture, you cannot relax at any point in the game. Especially for a team that is as explosive as they are, have the returners they have and having a quarterback like they do. You cannot relax for a single second. The bigger the games get, the smaller the margin of error gets. One relaxation, one play, that we are not all in can hurt you. I thought that one play was the difference in the game."

On Virginia's second half performance

"It is one of the top defenses in college football and we cannot discount that. We had some really good plays early on, we made some adjustments, they made some adjustments in the fourth quarter as well. They were really good."

On OL William Lay

"William Lay at center, we nominated him for the Burlsworth Award, as one of the best walk-ons in college football. He is in there playing center for us, essentially the quarterback of the offense. He makes everything go with the mike ID's, the plays, getting us going as an offense. They are getting better every single week. It has been back-to-back week of an elite defensive line. They have just battled and we had some really good plays and success."

On field position

"The one situation we wouldn't have wanted the punt returner inside the 10, that was completely on me. Pressley Harvin III and our punt team completely flipped the field. The contributions that Jaytlin Askew and Nathan Cottrell are giving to us on special teams is really special and it is good to see how hard they play and buy into that role. To the outside world isn't a glamorous role."