

December 7, 2013



Florida State – 45
Duke – 7

An Interview With:

COACH DAVID CUTCLIFFE DUKE

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Obviously disappointed in the result of the game. Not disappointed in our preparation, not disappointed in our effort. The inability to make 1st downs on offense, stay on the field, I think our defense wore down a little bit as it went on, but we'll look at it and see what we can do better.

We've got a bowl game to prepare for. We'll find out where that is, and that's about it. It's one of those games you going to look at the tape closely to evaluate a little more closely what we need to do better.

Q. I asked you pretty much the same question last year, and you said kids are resilient. How soon before these kids realize, you know, obviously there's disappointment, but what has been accomplished in raising the new level at Duke?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Well, I know they're very aware of their accomplishments. We've talked about that going into this, separated the 10-2 regular season from the championship game. We just went 0-1 in a championship ballgame. We'll put this behind us. We've got to learn a little bit more about where we'll be playing in a bowl game, and I think once you get back on the practice field, that's where the real healing starts.

But I am very proud, again, of their efforts and who they are and what they've done, and results don't change you when you're the right kind of people.

Q. You obviously have a lot of guys who didn't beat the guy in front of him. What

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would Anthony Boone have needed to do better?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Well, you are going to have to make plays when they present themselves. We're not going to beat a lot of people when we complete 50 percent of our passes. That's not always just the quarterback. In a game like this, any given opportunity to make a play, you'd better make it.

Q. Can you comment on Breon, first guy in an ACC Championship game with two interceptions, true freshman?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Breon Borders is a very talented young man and I think is going to be a terrific player if he keeps working like he's worked. He and Bryon Fields, together that tandem is about as good as we've had in young corners, so I'm excited about his future.

Q. Was it kind of symbolic to try to get Josh Snead that touchdown at the end?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Well, I don't know if it was symbolic but I was happy that it happened. It was good for Josh there. But we really weren't thinking of that in that regard, but it was a really good run. He had to slide through a very small hole to get that done, so I was happy for him.

Q. I know it's tough when key guys go out in the second half with injuries. Do you have any early prognosis?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Well, Perry Simmons looks like he's got a fairly significant knee injury, which is fairly concerning for a guy that's had no injuries in 50 straight starts. Until I know more tomorrow about each and every one -- I know Brandon Connette went out, Shaquille Powell went out, but Perry I do know a little more about, but we'll wait and see what the results of an MRI tells us.

Q. What did you think of that play when Norman was called for the penalty?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Yeah, I don't know

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what I think about it is important right now. You know, that's a tough rule. All he was doing was breaking on the football. You're teaching him try not to take a blow at the head, so he had to go low, which he did, and did a good job of. What they told me they called was that he used the crown of his helmet. Well, when you go low, when you put your shoulders down to keep from hitting a guy in the head, your head goes with it. So that's just an interesting call, and I'm disappointed that that occurred that late in the game with the score what it was, and we lose a guy for the first half of a bowl game. You know, that's not ideal.

Q. I know it wasn't the result you wanted, but talk about what this means to your program, to have an opportunity to play for a championship and then go on and play in a nice bowl game, too?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Well, I think it's important, and what I hope the importance of playing in this game to me is not about recruiting. It's about wanting to get back to it and wanting to win it. There's a process involved in all of this, and there's no atmosphere like conference championship atmosphere, and I'm glad they have experienced it. I hate the fact that it was experienced in such a manner where the loss hurt, but maybe that hurt propels you forward is what you have to hope.

Q. What was different in the last three quarters defensively from when you guys were able to shut them out in the first period?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Well, I think the matter of what I said in the opening statement: We didn't make enough 1st downs during that stretch on offense, and our defense wears a little bit. But we still played well. We had a turnover, which we hadn't had in the first half, backed up to give them points, so we still played good football. They're going to make plays, and they made a number of them. But had we done what we thought we could have done offensively, and it was just a tough night. They were great on defense, too. But it just didn't work out that we stayed on the field offensively as much as we hoped we would have.

Q. Obviously not the result you were looking for, but can you talk a little bit about the success that you guys have had this season, specifically with some players from this area, obviously Boone, Crowder, et cetera?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: We are very proud of the recruiting that we've done here and proud of the young men that are making plays for us. We have, I think, 13 or 14 guys from the Charlotte area that are significant playmakers for us, and a lot of them displayed that tonight. This is a great area, a great football area. It's great to come to a facility like this that the Panthers have here now. I think Charlotte more and more is becoming a hotbed for great young football talent.

Q. Was the quick kick on that 4th-and-3, was that originally the play there, and how seriously did you think about going for it there?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Well, I thought about going for it there right at the end of the half. I wanted to see what they were in. I had a quick kick called. If we wanted to continue it, I knew I had the opportunity to take a time-out before the ball was snapped and I wanted to see where they lined up, and then I made a decision it would be better -- I was hoping we would have an end 10 punt. I was hoping it would be better to leave the score as is and come back out and play the second half. Nobody in a while had really played them as well as we played them the first half, and I didn't want to give them the ball. If we took a sack there or something didn't want to give them the ball near midfield at the half, but it obviously ended up backfiring for me.

Q. How pleased were you with the start of the first quarter there, just being physical and just showing them that you were there to stay?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: We came out and played physical, and actually played physical on both sides of the ball. They are a very physical team. We knew we had to try to minimally match it, and for a while we took the edge, and we just couldn't take advantage of the opportunity. I think if we had made a -- scored when we attempted the field goal, if we could have punched one in there for a touchdown, anything there where we could score and get a lead, it changes a little bit of the mentality of the game. So it was very disappointing. I was pleased with the way it started. It was the way we wanted it to start. I thought our game plan was really, really good, and it just -- the wear and tear of the game ended up getting the best of us.

But I was pleased with the way we had put together a good start in the ballgame.

Q. I wanted to ask you about the defense that your guys held good coverage in the first half, you got good pressure, but Jameis able to extend plays with his feet. How demoralizing was it for your defense when they played so well but some of those plays still came through?

COACH CUTCLIFFE: Well, I don't know if we were demoralized. It's no fun, but we competed with them. As I said a minute ago, we were on the field a little too much. You know going in that a big, strong quarterback that moves around well will extend plays, so you have to maintain your discipline in coverage, and we did for the most part. But they've got big, strong, fast receivers, and they're going to make plays, and the more chances they get, the more they're on the field, the more they make plays, and their defense does a good job of getting the other offense off the field, and unfortunately that worked well for them tonight.

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2013 ACC FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME DUKE PLAYER QUOTES

Anthony Boone, QB

RE: Not playing a clean, efficient game to-night

“That’s what it takes to beat a talented team like that, it takes an efficient game for three and a half hours.”

RE: What Florida State was doing defensively to make it difficult to move the ball

“They weren’t doing anything to confuse you, they were just playing football. They were just going out there, lining up and playing football, that’s all they were doing. They played a little better than we did tonight.”

RE: Being difficult to not take the final step to win the championship

“Yeah, but this has been one heck of a year. We’re definitely going to be back here next year, I promise you that. And we still have a bowl game to win, that’s still one of our big goals for this year. We went to a bowl game last year, but this year we want to leave with a victory. We finished this year 11-3, and that’s all I’m worried about right now. We’ll get the tape, we’ll evaluate it, we’ll see what we need to do and find out tomorrow night where and who we’ll play and go from there.”

RE: What happened after the field goal attempt on the second drive of the first half

“It’s one of those things where you’ve got to answer early, try to get some momentum, because a team like that they have a great defense they can put people away, and they have a quick offense that can score at will. So you’ve just got to get points where you can and try to catch a rhythm and we missed the points and we didn’t get a rhythm going.”

Jamison Crowder, WR

RE: How frustrating it was to not be able to execute like Duke normally does

“It’s frustrating, we knew going into the game that we were going against the best defense in the nation. So, they came out and played well and they did what they had to do, and we just didn’t execute well on offense.”

RE: If Florida State’s defense is faster than

any other they’ve seen this year

“Yeah, most definitely. You know, the corners, the safety, they’re fast, physical, big. So, most definitely best team we’ve played all year.”

RE: What this successful run has meant

“It meant a lot, the season isn’t over, we’ve still got one more game left. So, we’ll just go back and prepare for that game, whoever we’re playing against and just end the season on a good note.”

RE: If Duke can get back to the Championship next year

“Yeah, most definitely. You never know what the future holds, but we’re going to work hard in the offseason after the bowl game and most definitely try to make a push to come back.”

Dave Harding, OG

RE: What is different about the Florida State defense

“They obviously are extremely talented at every position, they’re a big, strong team and they’re champions. There’s a reason they got to this game and there’s a reason that they’re ranked first, and they’re very talented. My hat’s off to them.”

RE: If there is any satisfaction despite what the scoreboard said

“I mean, being Coastal Champions was one of our goals coming into the season, so to be able to knock that off the list is satisfying. But, as far as today goes, there’s nothing good that we can check off the list.”

Kenny Anunike, DE

RE: Initial intensity in the game

“We were one of the first teams to just come after them, just fully come out blitzing on them almost every down. That kind of shocked them I think, because a lot of teams have been sitting back on their heels and just playing, but that was our game plan just



2013 DR PEPPER ACC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

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to come after them from the jump, hit them in the mouth and that's exactly what we were doing. But, things just didn't go our way in the end."

RE: Athleticism Florida State puts on the field

"Starting with their quarterback, their offensive line, then move on to their wide receivers and then on defense they've got a bunch of great players. We've got a bunch of great players too, but we just didn't make the plays that we needed to make."

RE: Any satisfaction with what Duke has done

"Of course, I mean not every team in the ACC can say that they've been to the ACC Championship, so it's definitely a major feat for our program, especially for a program that was chosen last in the ACC back in the summer. This has truly been a great season for us, so this one game doesn't define us. We know that we're a very good football team, we lost to a very good football team. It's fine, we'll move on, we've got a bowl game to play and we're in it to win this one."

Braxton Deaver, WR

RE: If Florida State was what he expected them to be

"Yes, absolutely. They're the number one team in the nation, you expect fully for them to be unbelievable athletes out there and they were everything that we thought they were going to be."

RE: If it's more disappointing that offensively they didn't play clean, efficient game

"It is disappointing, but most of all disappointing it's I wanted us to go out there and compete. I think we competed with them and I think that we did a good job in the first half, but to compete and to play close with a team like that, you have to compete down to the wire. You've got to go toe-to-toe with the best kids in the country and play to win the game and I think that we slept off and weren't able to compete as well as we wanted to."

RE: Not matching their offense

"You know, I think at one point we were treading water and it was a lot. We kind of got taken over a little bit and ended up putting us under and the momentum shift was incredible and we couldn't do a whole lot to get back into the game and that was pretty disappointing. But, we're going to learn from this, we're going to take this for what it is and we're going to go get our 11th win in the Bowl."

RE: Not being just glad to be at the ACC Championship

"No, we're not glad to be here because we deserve to be here. We won six ACC games straight, we beat the best in the ACC and we earned our right completely to be here. We showed up we just didn't swing as many punches as we wanted to. But, absolutely we 100 percent deserve to be here."

RE: If it's more disappointing with so many players on the team being from the area

"You know, I'm from Charlotte, and a lot of friends and family are here. It's not that, it's just the loss in general, it's not being from here, I mean I didn't get to play last year in the Bowl game. So, getting back into Charlotte is exciting for me, but it wasn't that, it was just the disappointment of the loss and not playing as well as we wanted to."

RE: Putting this game behind them and focusing on the Bowl game

"We have played this whole year on the idea of the next play, the next idea, the next play, the next snap, and that's exactly what we're going to do. That's what we do as a football team, that's Duke football, we play the next play and that's our next objective. This game is over, we're going to take from it, we're going to look at what we did well, we're going to look at what we did bad and we're going to analyze that and make us into a better team and we're going to be able to make gains from this."

