

Clemson's Elliott adapting to solitary post

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CLEMSON – When he's recruiting in the vicinity of Tampa, Florida, forgive Tony Elliott if he's inclined to drop in on Jeff Scott.

Elliott and Scott have a history, after all, that dates back to their days as teammates at Clemson in the early 2000s.

They later served as assistant coaches on the same Clemson staff for nine seasons, the last five as co-offensive coordinators. Their careers as co-workers came to an end a couple of months ago when Scott was named head coach at South Florida, but rest assured they won't become strangers.

"I'm really excited for him," Elliott said. "I recruit Tampa, so I've kind of got my ear to the ground down there.

"And the things that I'm hearing, the way he's going about his business down there, he's got that fan base energized. I can't wait to get on the road just to get down there and actually see it."

That will come in due time, Elliott said, but in the meantime he's busy adapting to life as Clemson's lone offensive coordinator.

So far, so good.

"Jeff and I had talked about this before," Elliott said Wednesday following the Tigers' fifth practice of spring. "I knew this was something he really wanted to do, so I knew this time was coming.

"You prepare yourself in your mind for this to happen. But at the same time, too, when we transitioned from (former offensive coordinator) Chad (Morris) to Jeff and myself, we never made it about us. We were just like, 'This is the work that needs to get done and this is how we're going to divvy it up.'" The Elliott-Scott tandem proved successful and then some.

Since taking the reins of the Clemson offense prior to the 2014 Russell Athletic Bowl, Elliott and Scott combined to push the right buttons time and again.

With Elliott and Scott calling the shots, the Tigers compiled a 70-5 record with five straight Atlantic Coast Conference championships and two national titles.

Now Elliott is in the midst of his first spring without Scott as his right-hand man since 2015, but Elliott has found himself leaning on assistants Tyler Grisham and Brandon Streeter.

Grisham has succeeded Scott as wide-receivers coach while Streeter, who has coached quarterbacks for the past five seasons, has added the role of passing game coordinator.

"It's refreshing," Elliott said. "I'm watching Tyler Grisham and his enthusiasm, his passion and his appreciation for his opportunity, and that has kind of put things perspective for me, too.

“Not a whole lot has changed, and with Streeter becoming the passing game coordinator, he’s kind of absorbed some of those responsibilities that Jeff would have in the spring.”

The key, Elliott said, will be keeping the chemistry intact.

“We don’t want to disrupt the chemistry,” he said. “I think what made us successful when Jeff and I were here, we had good chemistry amongst the entire staff. It wasn’t

just me and Jeff, it was (offensive line coach) Robbie (Caldwell), it was (tight ends coach) Danny (Pearman), it was everybody in a support role as well.

“So the biggest thing is to make sure the chemistry is there, which means I can’t make it about a new job for me. We’re going to operate the same, just some of the responsibilities will transition. I may have to accept some more responsibility, but that really won’t come until we actually get to the season.”