

February 6, 2012



**BRAD BROWNELL
CLEMSON**

COACH BROWNELL: Coming off a difficult week where we lost two games, one at Virginia where I thought we played really well, then Virginia Tech, where we got off to a slow start. Rallied, had a chance to win. Unfortunately weren't able to get it done.

Obviously play a good Maryland team at home and then up to Wake Forest. So obviously a big week for us.

Q. When you have a week like this where you lost two games on the road, tense end-of-the-game situations, you're trying to build a program, a team, is that something you build on or is that a setback?

COACH BROWNELL: I don't think it's a setback. It's part of the learning process. We played very well against Virginia. It was a back-and-forth game. We actually led at half, thought we played a terrific first half.

Their credit, they got hot a little bit in transition, made a couple shots, put us on our heels. Our kids rallied back, had a shot with 15 seconds, an open three to tie, and missed. It's been kind a little bit of the story of our season.

We did not play well (at Virginia Tech). Again, to Virginia Tech's credit, they were ready, got off to a great start. We had a hard time getting going a little bit. Just kind of stuck with it. We were down 12 to 14 most of the game. In that game rallied all the way back where we had the ball down 2, got fouled on a dunk attempt, missed a free throw, then tipped it to ourselves and missed again.

It's a situation where that's happened to us probably five times this year where we've been in that situation, had some chances, haven't been able to make the free throws, make the shot. So it's a little frustrating.

At the same time give our kids credit because in a lot of games on the road, we've been down a little bit and managed to rally back to where it's a one-possession game and we have a

chance to win, just haven't been able to get it done.

A little bit that's our bugaboo this year. We don't have one guy we can give the ball to at the end of a game to help us in those situations.

Q. I'm sure the local guys notice, but as an outsider, is the situation with Milton Jennings, any hope he'll be back this season?

COACH BROWNELL: Yeah, there is, certainly. There's a chance he'll be back this week. I'm going to sit down and talk to the young man today, see how things have progressed over the last week, talk to a couple other people, start to make a decisions about moving forward.

Q. You've had some good play lately from K.J. McDaniels. Can you bring me up to date?

COACH BROWNELL: He has done what we thought he would do. He's a tremendous athlete. Anybody that saw the game against Virginia Tech, he can block shots, drive it to the basket, score. He can actually make a three. He's a little bit like a young fawn sometimes. He doesn't always have his legs under him. The speed of the game can put him a little bit behind.

I think the game has slowed down a little bit for him here in the last month or so. He actually had some ankle issues that were bothering him about a week, week and a half ago, so he missed some practices. I didn't play him much in a couple games because he had been missing some practice, wasn't himself, wasn't doing very well in practice.

He's fought through that a little bit and seems to have come out of that. We gave him his first start against Virginia Tech. I thought he responded very well. But he's like a lot of our young guys: they've showed signs of doing some really good things and at other times have looked very average. We're just hoping there's going to be some consistency in his game.

But I'm really proud of how well he played at Virginia Tech. I thought he showed some



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toughness that maybe he hasn't shown that much this year, so I'm really proud of him.

Q. The game against Maryland, they're getting some good play lately from Alex Len, their 7-footer. I wonder how that changes things for them having a guy like that and preparing for them.

COACH BROWNELL: Well, it makes it very difficult. Obviously Stoglin leads the league in scoring and is a very dynamic player. It's hard to keep him from getting shots. It's hard to keep him out of the paint. Hard to keep him off the free-throw line. He's a guy that's one of those scorers. Some guys are pure shooters, some guys are scorers. He's a tremendous scorer who can shoot, knows how to draw fouls.

Now you throw Alex Len in there, who is a big guy, great hands, runs the floor like a forward, does a good job of finishing. Obviously the stronger he gets, the more dynamic he's going to be. Very good shot-blocker.

I really like Pankey, as well. I think he's a hard-playing, physical rebounding forward. So I think it's a nice combination that Mark has in their low post. Obviously with a dynamic scorer out front, it makes it very difficult to guard these guys.

Q. We were talking about the close calls, the fact you weren't able to get over the hump. You said it's happened to you several times this year. Other than not having the great player to be the go-to guy, is there anything else your team needs to do to avoid those situations?

COACH BROWNELL: Yeah, we've had a couple times where we've had some scoring droughts that have really hurt us where we've gone three or four minutes at times where we maybe haven't gotten the kind of basket that we need. Some of it goes along the lines of still not having that one guy that just goes by people and maybe drops it off to somebody for a layup, draws two people on a drive, finds another guy on penetrating situations.

That's been problematic for us. I think our defense hasn't been quite as good as I would like either. At times in the league it's been a little up and down. Certainly there have been times it's been reasonably good, but there have been other times where I don't think we've played as well defensively.

We just have a small margin for error. As a result, we end up in a lot of these close games.

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Unfortunately a lot of times when we've gotten the ball in some good positions, gotten some good shots, it hasn't been just one guy. Andre Young has had two shots late in games that haven't gone down. Milton Jennings had a 10-foot shot in the lane against Boston College. Devin Booker got fouled, missed free throws. Tanner Smith had a free throw situation late in the game where if he made free throws. Obviously K.J. at Virginia Tech.

We've probably had four or five guys that have had an opportunity to make a big shot at the end of the game in the last 10 seconds, and three or four times we've had free throws and we missed free throws.

It's challenging, it's hard to keep getting the guys going in those situations. But I think the thing that I'm proud of is our guys have grinded away, especially in a lot of road games, to get to that position. A lot of times on the road in the ACC, if you can get yourself in a position to win, you've done pretty good. We just haven't been quite able to get that finished.

Q. Bernard James, what do you think he brings to the table as an opposing big man?

COACH BROWNELL: He's a tremendous shot-blocker, really protects their basket. Allows them to pressure out on the perimeter. Guys drive. He wipes away penetration. He's always a very good low-post scorer in terms of being able to throw the ball to the block. Offensive rebounder that cleans up around the basket, kind of earns baskets through toughness and hard work.

I'm sure there's an element of maturity and stability that he provides to the team being a guy who has served and done a lot more than just play college basketball.

He's certainly a terrific player. I'm sure he's a big influence off the court, as well.

MIKE KRZYZEWSKI DUKE

MIKE FINN: We're now joined by Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski. In the last 75 meetings between Duke and North Carolina in basketball, Duke scored 5,858 points. North Carolina scored 5,857 points. A one-point differential over their last 75 meetings.

Q. Obviously yesterday was a disappointing day. Is there something more

systemic with this team that has been bothering you for the last few weeks?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Again, overall our team's done a good job being 19-4. In our league, we're two possessions from being undefeated or two possessions from being 4-4 on the other side of it.

These games, especially in conference, turn out to be like attention to detail where you have to make a play. In yesterday's game, it still boiled down to you have to hit a free throw.

When you win a number of games, sometimes your attention to detail is not where it needs to be. The games we're involved in now and will be for the rest of the year, hopefully we make the NCAA tournament, you train for that. That's what we're trying to drive into our guys: the importance of every play, especially down the stretch.

Q. Amazing stat Mike just gave. You often say the Duke/Carolina game is a true celebration of college basketball. When did you first sense you were involved in something more special than any other game in the sport?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Right away. The first game I coached against them in the Big Four, the intensity of both teams, and the fans, it was just different. It was at the highest level. I think the teams bring that out in one another. The fans and the teams bring it out from one another, too.

It's the anticipation of a great event on both sides. They've been great games. Most of them have been really great games. Win or lose, terrific games.

Q. Bernard James from Florida State, can you tell me what you think he brings to the table as an opposing big man.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, what he brings to the court is maturity, first of all. He's a man. He's 27 years old, has been through quite a bit. There's nobody in our league who brings more maturity to the court than he does. Physical, mental, emotional.

Then his skill set. He's a tremendous shot-blocker and offensive rebounder and a very unselfish, outstanding player. In other words, he's all about what the team is doing.

Everybody in our league would want him on their team.

Q. Mike, with last week's announcement of the partners in the future for



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basketball, a lot of fans in Maryland and other places are upset that certainly rivalries are going to be changed. Is that just the by-product of what's happening in college sports or do you think the league should look at rivalries and history or the reality of what makes sense financially?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, I don't think it's a financial decision. I'm in full agreement with what the league is doing in that I think it was a mistake that we made when we added three teams about 10 years ago, in that we didn't brand the whole conference. It's not just the traditional rivalries. Again, we made up rivalries at that time by having two permanent partners. I think it showed that two teams were more important than the rest of the conference. I think that hurt us.

In this way, we keep one traditional rivalry. But we have to establish rivalries. There has to be a rivalry established with Syracuse and Pitt, the new members. I don't think that was done as well. I think the way they're going to do it is better for the entire conference. I applaud them for making that decision.

Q. The Duke/Maryland rivalry up here has meant a lot. Do you feel that rivalry will be changed by playing only once a year?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: For me, every team that plays against us has a rivalry. I respect the heck out of Maryland, and Gary, what he did, what Mark's trying to do in building his own program.

But we can't look at that game as the end all. We have to look at every game in the conference equally because everybody looks at us that way. And so my feeling is, that's the way I've felt the entire time.

Again, with utmost respect for Maryland, because they've beaten us, we've beaten them. But we've had great, great games. You want to have great games throughout the whole conference. Usually the team that plays against us, especially when we're on the road, or anywhere, it becomes a huge game for them. That's something we've been accustomed to for 25 years.

Q. As far as the North Carolina game on Wednesday, what are you stressing to your team this week in terms of what the keys will be?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Is this a 10-minute answer (laughter). We're going to stress more than I can talk to you about.

The main thing is to be prepared for playing the most talented team in our conference, and maybe the most talented team in the country. They have great experience. I mean, they have four guys who are on the pre-season Wooden Award. They can be an offensive juggernaut, especially at home.

I mean, we have to play really good defense in order to have an opportunity to beat them.

Q. Are you worried that you are not capable of doing that or do you think this team can bounce back pretty quickly from yesterday to Wednesday?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I've never gone into a game thinking that we can't win. So I'm not going to change during the late stages of my career. So we're going to prepare to win, just like we will on Saturday when we play Maryland.

Q. Can you give me your thoughts, pro and con, about the transfer rule for graduates, allowing them immediate eligibility?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, it's something that needs to be really discussed. I think the very first thing is you never want to hurt a young man's opportunity to do what he wants to do. In other words, if he finds that another school has a graduate program that is better than the school he has, I mean, probably that's the deciding factor. It can seem unfair, like you can pick up a free agent, especially in college, an older and mature free agent.

I think I would vote on the basis of what's best for the young man. But it's something that should be discussed, there's no question about it. I don't know who discusses that, since nobody runs college basketball, but somebody should discuss that.

Q. Do you see that increasing in years ahead?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I don't know. I don't know. Probably people will spend a lot more time figuring out if they should redshirt a kid. I mean, that's part of it. I mean, that's what lends itself to somebody doing that. You've redshirted him, and now the school's four-year investment in him paid off on the fifth year, but the youngster

leaves. Again, that's not the youngster's fault. He's done whatever you've asked him to do.

LEONARD HAMILTON FLORIDA STATE

COACH HAMILTON: We played an excellent University of Virginia basketball team on Saturday that was very well-prepared. They played a very good brand of basketball. One of the toughest games we've had all year.

The two teams really fought hard and defended each other hard. The game could have gone either way. We were fortunate being down one late in the game, we were able to make a couple baskets and be able to get ahead and maintain, fortunate to pull away with a victory. They outscored us 12-0 on a good run by them. Once again, we were ready to prevail and found a way to pull the game out in the end.

Q. Bernard James, can you talk about the maturity and presence he brings to the team after serving in Iraq.

COACH HAMILTON: Well, I've been asked so many questions about maturity, serving in Iraq, and basketball. I think some of it is altogether different.

The most important thing is Bernard is a young man who is learning the game of basketball. The game of basketball is new to him. He's not very experienced from a basketball standpoint, but he's experienced in life, which gives him a certain level of maturity where he listens, he's coachable, he follows directions. He has a keen sense of humility and where he is, what he wants to accomplish, which makes him an outstanding young man, a great teammate, a great guy to coach.

Iraq and the military part I'm not really sure has very much to do on the basketball court other than the fact that he's matured to the point where he understands that he gives his best all the time. He takes it very seriously. He wants to get his degree and improve his quality of life. He's using his opportunity to play basketball as such, wanting to have some opportunities when basketball and college is over.

Q. Obviously he's still learning. How high do you think the ceiling is for him?

COACH HAMILTON: Well, obviously he's just learning and growing. He has a young body

as it relates to basketball. His legs haven't been beat up. He hasn't played on the cement in AAU ball. He has an athletic body. I think his best basketball is ahead of him.

Q. The rule that lets graduate students transfer and have immediate eligibility, I'm curious for your thoughts pro and con on that rule and how you've seen it work.

COACH HAMILTON: Well, even though we have one on our team, you know, I've got mixed emotions about the rule. I think if a guy is interested in getting his master's degree in an area where they don't have it at that particular school, I think that's a pretty strong justification for a guy doing that. So I'm all for whatever's in the best interest of the young man.

It is a little awkward when you invest that much time and effort into a youngster and then when he's at his best you lose him. Like I said, I have some mixed emotion about it.

If I'm going to err, I want to err on making the decision in what is in the best interest of the young man without hurting the program.

That's something that maybe needs a little bit more discussion. The coaches, somehow or another, in some respects there are so many different committees that meet, so many different surveys they take, sometimes I'm not really clear how we come to some of the conclusions that we really do.

Q. Do you have thoughts about ways to make this process fair or better?

COACH HAMILTON: No. I think it's something that you just don't take off the cuff quick answers to. I think some of these things you have to think about, the pros and the cons, looking at it, studying it, making a wise decision. I think sometimes you make comments off the cuff without looking at all the different circumstances around, some of the different scenarios that have been on the table.

I'd want to make an informed decision. Right now I'm not real sure I totally understand what's all involved with all the different situations that allow us to come up with the conclusion that we actually use in there.

Q. Some coaches are concerned about it being like a free agency situation.

COACH HAMILTON: Like I said, different coaches maybe have given a lot more thought than what I have. I think sometimes you got to be

careful not to just start answering some of y'all's questions without giving it any thought.

I think it would be unfair for me to be quoted. I'm sure there's some different scenarios and circumstances that have gone into us making the decision, whoever made the decision, that we did. So I'd want to know all the information before I voiced my opinion on it.

Q. Now that you've faced Virginia and Mike Scott, I wonder what your impressions were of him.

COACH HAMILTON: I think he's a youngster that's virtually unstoppable. If you give him the ball in certain areas, he's not going to miss. He's a hard guy to defend. He's agile. He's quick. He's explosive. He's very strong. He's smart. He's more than capable of beating you by his-self.

We defended each other so well the other day, I'm not real sure that's a real good indication of anybody. He scored in the first half, didn't score much in the second half. He defended Michael Snaer so well, he was our leading scorer. I think we defended each other very well.

In all the films that I've watched, there's no doubt that Scott is a guy who's very capable of hurting you unless you give him an unbelievable amount of attention. One of the reasons why some of the other players were able to get some of the easy opportunities they had was because we had to give Mike so much attention when we played them on Saturday.

Q. It seems that maybe what makes him a little different from some of the other big men in the league is that he's got that 15-footer that he can step out and take about anytime. That's really hard to defend.

COACH HAMILTON: It's extremely hard to defend. Most guys post up trying to make layups. He's posting up, knocking down 15-, 16-footers. He's a handful, there's no doubt about.

BRIAN GREGORY GEORGIA TECH

COACH GREGORY: Pleased with our win on Saturday against a team that's difficult to play. Obviously I really believe down the road they're going to be even more challenging to play. Our

guys had to do a lot of good things to be successful in that game. To follow that game up, we had a pretty good effort out at Florida State. Just couldn't take care of the ball enough against their defense.

Again, I feel like we're making some progress as we head into the second half of the season. That's the most important thing for us to continue to do.

MIKE FINN: Questions for Coach Gregory.

Q. I saw the NC State/Wake Forest game. Lorenzo Brown had a really good game. What kind of problems does it cause when he plays against the defense?

COACH GREGORY: If you remember going into our game, I thought he was playing extremely well. His pace of play and his control of that pace was tremendous.

There's no question about it, that he's a guy that has really stepped up his game this year as a sophomore. Ball's in his hands quite a bit. So when he plays well, they're a much different team.

Anytime a guy has the ball in his hands as much as he does, there are going to be some games where maybe there's a few more turnovers, especially as he's only a sophomore. I think he had some of those games.

But he does so many other things: his ability to score, his ability to create shots, his ability to push the ball, use his length on defense, is a pretty good combination at that point guard spot.

As I said, I think he's right on the cusp of being an elite guard, not only in this league but I think as he continues to progress in this country.

Q. Guys like Pierre that get their degree and transfer to somewhere else immediately, do you think that rule is good or something that needs some more evaluation?

COACH GREGORY: Yeah, I haven't really thought about it that much. But I think it's a good rule. If our number one objective is to get players their degree, then that objective has been reached. Then to give the guys the freedom to play somewhere else if it puts them in a position to get a second degree or a masters graduate degree on something that they want, or in Pierre's case, to put him in a position where he's now back at home, maybe a greater opportunity to play, but also to get a prestigious graduate degree, I think it's good.

I haven't thought about it much. I think you're going to see maybe some more of that. I

think this year you've seen some more of that, as well. But at the same time I think the ultimate goal is to have those guys get their degrees, and that's been accomplished. So you put them in a position where now they have that diploma in hand, they have to make a decision. Usually they make one that's a pretty good one, either to stay and play or to go someplace else.

I think we've got a couple guys in this league who have done that and I think it's worked out extremely well for them and the teams they went to.

Q. Why do you think you might see more of it in years to come?

COACH GREGORY: I think, one, because I think guys are just starting to figure out that they can do that, that it's an option. So the guys who redshirt and so forth now will, instead of maybe having their course work go through the five years, if they have the opportunity to finish it up in four, then they have some other options.

They get their degree, they want to pursue a graduate degree, maybe the school doesn't offer that, they go to another school where they might have an opportunity in that one year to play more than they have in the three years prior to that, whatever the case might be.

So you can see that not only with guys who have redshirted, or guys that have redshirted medically, and due to an injury they're not quite the player they were before, they get to drop down a level, finish out their college career with a diploma in hand, credits towards an advanced degree, enjoying the basketball aspect of it even more, as well.

Q. Looking at your team from afar, it looks like one of your best performances was when you came to Raleigh and played NC State. Was it a good matchup or one of those nights where everything clicked?

COACH GREGORY: I think more to say we shot the ball extremely well, took care of the ball. Whenever we do that, if we defend the way we're supposed to defend, and our guys did a great job of that on Saturday afternoon as well, we're just a different team.

Whenever you're going through what we're going through in terms of trying to reestablish ourselves and so forth, as I've said time and time again, the biggest thing is to grow consistent in

that. Our longest flashes have been some non-conference games, but also the Duke game, which we lost, the NC State game, which we won.

We were just more consistent through that entire 40 minutes than maybe we have been in other games. So it was more us than the matchup, per se.

Q. Am I right, your win Saturday was your first win in that arena? How much of a home court edge is that playing in the city arena while you're waiting for Alexander to get remodeled?

COACH GREGORY: Like I said, the people at Phillips and the people before that at Gwinnett have been tremendous. Phillips is a wonderful facility. They've done everything possible to make it a home court as you can.

Just the simple fact, it's not. So it is what it is.

I thought the crowd was tremendous on Saturday. I thought in some key moments of that game you could feel it. Obviously we had that in the Duke game, as well.

So there was a little more electricity in the place. But it's difficult. It is difficult. Can't use that as an excuse. Now getting a win there will make it easier obviously. I think that was a monkey on our back that needed to be eliminated, and we were able to do that. Now we just got to move on.

It's really how you play and how you compete and the execution of the game plan more than anything else. In its simplest form, we have to play better. If you do that, then you get a little better home-court advantage, too, because people recognize that also.

MARK TURGEON MARYLAND

COACH TURGEON: We're playing better. Haven't got a win. Lost both games last week but played well. Obviously, no fun losing. But the guys are playing better, trying hard. Of course, we had two road games this week, so another tough week for us.

Looking forward to it. Just got to continue to try to keep getting better.

Q. Last week the ACC announced a new scheduling policy for the future. Obviously one of the issues that came up is taking away the Duke/Maryland special

relationship, so you might be playing once most years. Your reaction to that? Has it been a negative reaction up there to that policy?

COACH TURGEON: Well, I'll be honest with you, I don't pay attention too much. I know that our partner is Pittsburgh. But during the season I don't read, listen or do much. I know in the end, maybe our fans haven't realized it yet, but I know they want to play Duke twice. They also understood when the league changed and we added teams that things were going to change.

But the landscape of sports, college athletics, the leagues and stuff, it's the way it's going to be.

But, no, I think it's going to be tough. There will be years where we still have them twice.

Q. Mark, do you get a sense with your guys that the longer they don't finish some of these games the more they try to do to try to finish it, and they may be trying to do too much to get you over the top against a Carolina, on the road?

COACH TURGEON: No, I don't think that's the case yet. We had a lot of close games early in the year. We won those games. But we were better than who we were playing.

The game the other day, what we did, we just watched film from the last eight minutes of the Carolina game. Even though we didn't play from the 12-minute mark down to the 8, that's one of the reasons they got back into the lead. Just the mistakes we made, the things you have to correct to beat really good teams. That's all you can do. I don't think so.

I don't think our guys panic. I do think our shot selection at times is not great. Our attention to detail on defense is not great. But it's so much better than it was. You know, it's just not going to change overnight. The progress they've made, really since we lost to Florida State, has been tremendous.

It's just no fun. We're losing close games. But I don't think there's any panic among the coaches. To be honest with you, I felt comfortable that we were going to win that game Saturday, even though we were down two or three. I just felt we were going to do what we had to do. We shot a couple bad shots in there, had a couple bad turnovers, then we made three or four really bad defensive mistakes and got whipped on a couple rebounds.

You try to learn from them and keep getting better.

I don't think we're in that panic mode or trying too hard to get it done. I don't think the kids are that way yet.

Q. I'm doing a story on Jonathan Thomas. In terms of what he has brought with preparation and practice, early in the season, not in the rotation now, can you appreciate a guy like that in his role in terms of what he's done to try to help the team improve?

COACH TURGEON: Yeah. The kid's been great. Helped us win a couple games early in the year. He was one of those guys that tried out that didn't really know he was going to do it till the day of. Then to have so much thrown at you, to be in the rotation, then to be taken out of it, the way he's handled it.

But he makes our practices better. He's a good player. He's a tough guard. He's a smart kid. All those guys have really relished their role. It's part of the reason we look better, our preparation's better.

But J.T. has been great. He's a solid, solid kid that puts academics first. He's been able to maintain and done a nice job academically even though he's spending three or four hours here every day. That hasn't been really easy for him but I'm really glad he's part of the team.

Q. Mark, Alex Len seems to be making a significant impact on games. Do you see him becoming more and more of a factor as he gets that experience under his belt?

COACH TURGEON: Yeah, I hope so. I was really proud of him last week. Played really well at Miami, 11-7 or 12-7, then he was 11-9 against Carolina, was a factor around the rim, able to stay out of foul trouble.

Yeah, so, he had to gain a lot of confidence last week. That's what he was lacking. Much more aggressive offensively. Yeah, that's what we need. For us to compete against the Carolinas and teams like that, we need Alex to play well, and he did, and that's why we were in the game till the very end.

I was proud of him. It was a good week. We were just talking about it as a staff this morning, hopefully that's the Alex we get this week. You just don't know with young kids. But we're going into the Clemson game hoping to Alex is going to keep giving us those types of minutes and keep improving.

Q. He seems to be developing a knack for shot-blocking. I know he's long. He also has to learn how to do that without fouling, and he seems to be coming around on that.

COACH TURGEON: Yeah, I think he's always been a great shot-blocker. It was just getting used to the speed of the game. It's a different game than what he played overseas, the physicality of it. So it's just getting used to that.

But, no, he had four, then three the last two games. He's a tremendous shot-blocker. He has tremendous timing on that. He's good on the ball and good coming off the ball to block shots. The off-the-ball one, determining when he should go for it, when he shouldn't. If he actually has a chance to block it or if he has no chance. That's what we're working on right now.

But, no, he was born that way, has worked at it, and should continue to be a good shot-blocker for us.

Q. I'm doing a follow-up on UM's win yesterday over Duke. Having just played them, did that win surprise you at all? Having just played them, do you think they're coming together at this point in the season?

COACH TURGEON: Well, we played them without Kadji. With him they're a heck of a team. I just remember watching film. I hadn't watched Miami a lot. Watching film preparing for Miami last week, I just couldn't believe how talented they were. They were just across the board really good players. Scott is a heck of a player, Grant, Kadji, Johnson. They just got really good players.

The guys coming off the bench are all good players and good shooters. Jim's teams always play with great confidence.

Does it surprise me they won at Duke? A little bit. But they do have some upperclassmen that have been through some things. They were able to hang on. A lot of teams wouldn't hang on and get it done. They were able to do that.

I think they're getting hot at the right time. They're getting healthy at the right time. They have depth now, which they didn't have earlier in the year. They can make a nice little run here late in the season.

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An interview with:

**JIM LARRANAGA
MIAMI**

COACH LARRANAGA: Well, I was very, very proud of my coaching staff this week. I was under the weather. I had the flu and they did a great job of helping us prepare for the Maryland game, which we won in double overtime then our preparation for the Duke game, which we won in overtime. For us, it was a very good week and a major step in the right direction.

Q. I wanted to ask you about the reception you got when you guys came home. I even saw a picture, I think, there were some students waiting for the bus. What was the mood on the plane and arriving in Miami? Just what kind of confidence do you think a win like that plus the double overtime with Maryland gives the team?

COACH LARRANAGA: Well, all these conference games are so close, and it always makes you feel better when you come out on top. I think your confidence grows from those victories. Having the students come out is a whole other area of growth for our program to have the students that excited, especially on Super Bowl Sunday where everybody's tuned in watching sports.

So it was great for our players to see that enthusiasm and we just hope that we'll get a great student turnout for our game on Thursday night against Virginia Tech.

Q. How do you bring them down a little bit from a game like that? You've got a tough three -- well, the whole rest of the season, but the next three games are tough. How do you get past an emotional win like that that drains so much energy out of them?

COACH LARRANAGA: Well, I thought the players did it already. After the game they were

excited, but they understood that this is a long conference race. That was one game. It was a great win, but so was the one against Maryland. You've got to put those games behind you and start the new week and prepare just like you did the week before.

As I said, I thought my coaching staff did a great job preparing the team for each game. And the players, I'm very proud of them for executing under extreme circumstances. When you have a 16-point lead in both games, you lose that lead and end up going into overtime, it appears the momentum has shifted.

You have to keep your poise and to recover and make some big plays and end up with a W is a major step in the right direction for us.

Q. You guys had gone on this four-game winning streak with Shane Larkin in the starting lineup. Are those two things related the way you guys have been playing, Shane in the lineup?

COACH LARRANAGA: Well, I certainly think Shane has impacted many statistical categories for us. He's been able to add some things tangibly and a lot of things intangibly. But I think a lot of it has to do with we're getting healthier, having Reggie back full-time and practicing a lot. Last week we did not have Kenny Kadji for the Maryland game because he got hurt. But when you get your whole eight-man rotation, nine guys healthy and practicing for an extended period, then you're bound to improve it was the first time this season we were able to do that for a five or seven-day period, and that was just prior to our four-game winning streak.

Shane has had a great impact because he takes some of the ball handling responsibilities away from Durand and Malcolm, and that allows them to free up and spend more of their energy on basically defense and scoring.

Plus, Kenny and Reggie are finding great ways to help each other when you get good balance in your scoring and get good bench play like we've been getting, you get better results.



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Q. I wanted to ask you about Kenny Kadji. Any part of his game been a surprise? At Florida, he didn't get as many opportunities as he's had here. But obviously the scoring and rebounding and he's doing a lot of things for you. Any part of his game this year instead of how well he's played been a surprise to you or was it expected?

COACH LARRANAGA: I never saw Kenny play. He was never on any video that we had from last year's team. So the first look, really we got of Kenny was in September.

He's obviously very tall. He's got a lot of length to him. He's a good athlete, and he jumps very well. But probably the most impressive thing was his shooting ability. Then when he started the season he was a little rusty. He had sat out for so long.

But when Reggie came back and Kenny was moved over to his natural forward position, he was just more relaxed, more comfortable with himself and what we were asking him to do and he's really elevate his game. He's been a very consistently high performer throughout the conference race.

Q. How are you feeling? Are you 100% now?

COACH LARRANAGA: I'm feeling much better. I was bad. I was in the emergency room Saturday morning. I was feeling so bad, but I was able to recover enough to get on the plane and go with the team. I was really happy I did.

Q. Coach, could you imagine getting a win that big with your two veteran guards combining to shoot four of 21 from the floor. What are you going to be like when they get back on track?

COACH LARRANAGA: I don't know if it's getting back on track. One of the things that is very obvious in this league is the great defense that's being played by so many teams. You know, Malcolm and Durand are high octane players. They're going to have days where they shoot the ball extremely well and some days when they don't.

But I think some of their effort at the defensive end of the floor which has really been the defense of how we've been able to win, impacts their offensive effort. They don't have as

much juice as they would if they were resting on defense.

So even though they didn't shoot the ball as well, their defense was very, very good, and we're very, very pleased with that continued improvement in that area.

Q. We're a week into February now. Is it too early to start talking about this win putting you on the bubble and finally getting you from the bad side to at least on the bubble? Can you start thinking about putting together a resume that can get you in?

COACH LARRANAGA: I think we've played 21 games at this point. It's a 30-game test. You don't know what your final grade is until you've answered all 30 questions. It's going to be the next nine games that really determine what kind of year we've had.

We've got a lot of very talented opponents coming up very quickly.

Q. You talked before the season about how we have one plan for this particular group of players and another plan for when Reggie first comes back and another plan for later on. Are you finally going to plan three? Is this kind of finally the group and the performances that you've been waiting for?

COACH LARRANAGA: Yeah, it was what we were anticipating, what we were hoping for. So basically the answer to your question is yes.

Q. So no surprise to you?

COACH LARRANAGA: I don't know if anything is a surprise. It's more a work in progress. We're certainly not where we'd like to be. We would like to be shooting the ball better, rebounding better, defending better, just do everything better. The guys are working on it, and we are improving.

But you can always get better, and that's what we're working at right now.

Q. I want to know what you told the team in the locker room? What was the mood and the message you gave them after that win?

COACH LARRANAGA: I basically just said that they should be proud of themselves. That they held their poise. They played very, very well for extended minutes to earn a 16-point lead. Duke played great to erase that 16-point lead. And

it took an awful lot of resiliency to hang on and continue to fight in the overtime and come out on top.

That they needed to enjoy it, but for only that day. That game is behind us now just like the game on Wednesday against Maryland. It was a great game. You won in double overtime, but you have to put it behind you very quickly and get ready for the next one. That's what we're about to do now. Put those two games behind us and get ready for Thursday.

Q. When your bus pulled up and you saw the students, how did you feel about that? Seeing anybody waiting for you guys is probably not a typical situation.

COACH LARRANAGA: I thought it was very symbolic. You look for growth in certain areas with your team. But also with the support of your program. The greatest thing for us is to get our students to rally behind our program and to get the students excited about coming to the BankUnited Center and filling up our arena.

If a game like yesterday can be the motivator where the students start talking about our basketball team and wanting to be a part of it and feel the excitement, then they'll turn out in large numbers and that creates the electricity in your arena, and then other people will want to be a part of it.

When the pep band is playing and everybody's going wild, you see what happens when you go to Cameron Indoor Stadium. The Cameron Crazies are there hours before the game sleeping over in Krzyzewskiville.

We're in the best conference in the country. We want our students to feel very much a part of it. This is their program.

ROYWILLIAMS NORTH CAROLINA

COACH WILLIAMS: Two road wins for us. Very different games. At the same time you feel good about our toughness and getting through a very, very ugly game where we couldn't make any shots. Then going up and playing a very enthused Maryland team and home crowd. Again, a different kind of win, but I really liked their toughness and getting through that one.

Then all of a sudden you have the Duke Blue Devils coming in, so it's an exciting time for us. We do think we're getting better, but we have to keep working at it. I do think we can get a lot better than we are right now.

Q. Coach a few weeks ago you were talking about how, even before the Florida State game, you weren't very pleased even in victory with the way your team is playing. How pleased are you now in the last couple of weeks?

COACH WILLIAMS: I'm more pleased. There is no question about that, in some of the venues that we've played. Wake Forest is an unusual situation. The other night was an unusual ACC game.

But Maryland was right back where you have a packed crowd and people are just going crazy. To be able to focus and hold our poise was something I thought was extremely important, and at the same time, Harrison, for example, getting through with his ankle bothering him and being able to do some very good things for us.

We've had much better practices. Earlier I didn't think we were doing the job in practice every day, so I kept telling them, how do we expect to do the job in the games if we're not doing it in practice? And we are practicing much better now.

Q. Obviously you don't have to tell your kids to get fired up and motivate them to play Duke. Is there anything you have to do to guard them against being too amped up in this game?

COACH WILLIAMS: I've had that question almost every year. I don't know if there is such a thing as too amped up. We're going to be excited. I think that level makes you have better energy. I think in playing the game of basketball you have to be concerned to not go too fast.

But for us, I wanted to go so fast, it makes no difference. We don't have that problem that some teams might have to get out of their comfort zone with the speed of the game, because we want it to be really fast anyway.

The only area is to be relaxed and poised when you're starting to shoot the basketball and lose yourself in the game. I think in this type of game, you have a better chance of doing that.

Q. You've won 14 of the last 15 games,

and it just seems like this team is really starting to come into its own. Is there a certain trait or characteristic that your team -- and I remember a year ago right around this time, you guys went on a tear and ended up finishing the season 13-3. I just start to see that you guys are really coming into your own.

COACH WILLIAMS: I don't want to be redundant. But what I was saying to Taylor is we're practicing a lot better. I was frustrated with the practices and the games and everything. We're practicing better. We're getting banged up a heck of a lot more, so we're having to focus even more and our practices are a little shorter and we're concerned about that part of it.

But we got on a very significant run last year because we started playing better. I'm one of those guys that thinks if you practice better, you play better. So I'm hopeful that we can do the same kind of thing this year. But it remains to be seen.

We're exactly halfway through the conference season, and we were 7-1 in the first half, I think it was. So if you go 1-7 in the second half, all the stuff that we coached doesn't end up meaning anything.

Q. Harrison Barnes, you could see how much he was limping on the court Saturday night with a sprained ankle. How do you think he's going to be for the game against Duke on Wednesday night?

COACH WILLIAMS: I'm hoping he'll be better. Yesterday was a day off. They have not practiced today. So we haven't seen him in action since the game. But he had less swelling and less pain after the game than he did after the Wake Forest game. So we'll probably hold him out of quite a bit of practice today to give him another day, and we hope that will help some.

Q. Duke's coming in off a loss, how do you size up the keys to this game on Wednesday?

COACH WILLIAMS: You never have any idea how the other team's going to react to anything, because you don't coach them. You have a feel for your team and how they're going to react.

I just know that it's North Carolina against Duke, and we've got to play our best game of the year, regardless of where we're playing or what time the game is. Offensively, most weapons, in

my opinion, most weapons of anybody in the league. You've got to be able to put the ball in the basket. I thought that was one thing Miami did yesterday. When the lead got down to one, and Duke took a one-point lead, then Miami scored. Duke went down and scored, and Miami came back and took a one-point lead again and they kept scoring.

In my opinion, you've got to be able to do that against Duke. It's awfully difficult to stop them, so you've got to be able to score yourself.

Q. Do you feel this is a team that's vulnerable to your offense?

COACH WILLIAMS: I never feel that way. I think we're going to score it all. I hear all the stories about Duke's defense is this and that. What I studies, I think they're pretty dog gone good defensively. They give up a lot of points, and so do we, because we want to play so fast. I'm not counting on them opening the door and letting the drive in for a lay-up. I saw something yesterday that I'd never seen when a team lets a team score a touchdown. I'd never seen anything like that. I don't think Duke's going to let us do that.

Q. When you're preparing for two different teams in Duke and have a who play such different styles. Talk about what that process is like for your team as you look at two squads that couldn't be more different in terms of what they want to do?

COACH WILLIAMS: Well, I think they are different, but we never prepare for two teams. The thing that's we're doing in practice today and tomorrow is directly related to Duke. Then after the Duke game, the things we do in practice will be directly related to Virginia.

But we teach our principles. We work on our things all the time. We probably give a smaller scouting report than anybody in the league because we play defense by principles, and then we give our guys a one-page scouting report and that's it.

So for us, we don't prepare for two teams at any time. We just prepare for one and then we have one or two practices to prepare for the other one.

MARK GOTTFRIED NC STATE

COACH GOTTFRIED: Well, we've got a very difficult game for us on Thursday night. Georgia Tech came into Raleigh and beat us, and I've got a lot of respect for how they have played. Even though their record may not be great, I think that they have done an excellent job. So we've got our hands full.

Q. Richard Howell has really put on some strong games on the board. Can you talk about his maturity? He still has a little foul trouble, but other than that, he seems to be really developing as an inside force.

COACH GOTTFRIED: He's done a terrific job rebounding this year. He's been consistent. He's not one of the taller players on the floor. But he uses his body and he's had phenomenal effort. I think he's just had a very good year as a junior.

Q. Coach, the first time you played Georgia Tech, what are the things that stand out that perhaps you'd like to change for the coming game? Was there anything they did in particular that you'll be more concentrated on this time?

COACH GOTTFRIED: I think there were two things. I think one they made a lot of shots. We did not defend them well. They made some open shots and they also made a lot of tough shots.

Then on our end of the floor, I thought we executed as poorly as we have in a long time. We mishandled the ball. Dribbled it out of bounds, we bobbled passes so the combination of those two things spelled for a bad day for us.

Q. How do you think they progressed since then and your team may be different from the first time you played?

COACH GOTTFRIED: I think we're better than we were then. But I think they are too. I've watched them on tape. But I do think that we have improved in a lot of areas, so hopefully we'll play better.

Q. How encouraging was it to play Lorenzo Brown the other day going into this game?

COACH GOTTFRIED: Very encouraging. He had a bounce in his step, which is what our team needs. His energy was higher, and he played much better. We're like any team. When your better players play well, you're a much better team, and he did that against Wake.

Q. You're here, it's the first week of February and N.C. State is pretty much regarded as a bubble team. Do you think about that or look at anything in terms of what you need to do to get in that NCAA field?

COACH GOTTFRIED: Well, you always do. Anybody that tells you they don't, they're lying. You always do. But that cannot be our emphasis every day. Our emphasis has to be on the next opponent and how are we going to play well in this one game.

But as a big picture, I think it's natural, and hopefully we can do well down the stretch.

Q. As a guy that was a commentator last year, if you were standing on the outside looking at N.C. State right now, what would you say is their strongest thing and what would you say you have to do to make the image better?

COACH GOTTFRIED: Well, we played a great schedule in the non-league, which was good. Obviously you have to keep winning games. It's fun for the commentators to talk about who is going to get in the tournament in the second week of February. But the way to get in the tournament is to win games. Everybody that's in the tournament every year, they've played their way in. They've earned the right. So that's what we have to do.

TONY BENNETT VIRGINIA

COACH BENNETT: You mentioned we're playing Wake Forest Wednesday, I think they're probably one of the most improved teams in our league. Coach has done a great job. They added some personnel and they're playing certainly very competitive good basketball. So as every game is in the ACC, home or away, you have to be ready to play.

We're going to prepare to be as ready as we can, and take the good from the Florida State game and work on the area that's need improvement?

Q. Jontel late in the Florida State game, did you at some point in a timeout tell him he needed to be more aggressive with the ball or did all of that transpire during the flow of the game?

COACH BENNETT: Well, he did a good job in that stretch. We spread it out and opened it up for them a little more, and they were switching on the ball screen. So we tried to take advantage of the mismatch.

Sometimes when you switch on the ball screen and you try to isolate a guy in the post, they kind of can clog everything up and flood. So there are a couple of ways to attack, sometimes a switch on a ball screen. And sometimes spreading it out and attack in the paint with a bigger guy guarding a smaller guy, or you can try to get it into the post if you can.

We saw some openings. We were down at the time, down double digits or down 10 or 11. 13 was the biggest. So Jontel got a couple of steals for some transition buckets and did a good job of getting to the lane with some space off a mismatched ball screen.

Q. As you went back and reviewed the tape from that game and the turnovers how many did you think were on you and how much was attributable to Florida State's length and defense?

COACH BENNETT: I don't have a percentage exactly. But some of them were just some bad decisions on our part where we got into traffic and made the wrong decision. A couple were just careless where we didn't make intended passes. They were unattended and went out of bounds.

A number were certainly their ability to pressure you. Get in passing lanes or know when you get to the lane, they've got some athleticism and size at the rim certainly similar to Wake Forest with that, so that maybe in the back of your mind makes you change your course of action and make some tougher decisions.

So I think it was a combination of both. I think some of it was certainly on us. But that certainly had to do with their pressure and their ability to alter your decisions when you get into the lane.

Q. I seem to remember you saying something about Assane last week that the doctors were going to take a look at him. What

kind of encouragement did you get, if you got any?

COACH BENNETT: Didn't really get any. Meaning I thought maybe I was a little over anxious to hear. They just took off the cast. And I think they took an X-ray from what I understand after I talked to Ethan about it, just to make sure that none of -- I don't know how many screws he had put in. But the plate and the screws, just to make sure everything was still in place.

It was more just to make sure nothing looked out of the ordinary or out of place and that's all it was. I was hoping maybe you could see a little healing or filling in of the fracture area, but that didn't look to seem to be the case.

So like I said, I don't think there is anything major out of place. I think it's not for a while until you get a feel for where he is at in terms of his recovery process.

Q. In regard to David's question earlier, you said a number of mistakes were decision making and turnovers. I'm just curious, when you reviewed the film, did anything stand out in particular that led to the decisions that were being made? How do you go about working to correct those to try to make better decisions going forward?

COACH BENNETT: Yeah, sometimes it was someone would penetrate and we didn't slide to the open area. Maybe the guy that was to receive the pass stood or if Mike got pressured, we didn't get to open alleys for them when they came at him. They be a couple, again, we lost the ball off of it. They pressured us or we lost it, and we didn't see our offensive player when we made a pass. So a combination of things.

Turnovers, again, they're challenging you at the rim. But when penetration occurs or someone's in trouble, you have to get to open spots and get to the right areas so that there's, whatever you want to call, outlets or safeties for guys that get in there.

It's always working on being in the right positions or when a person is under pressure. Then also that attentiveness. We use the term being ball strong or being sure with the ball. Just having an aggressive but sound mindset with the ball in your hands and making a real solid decision. That's a little bit of it. Are you screening well? Are you moving forward hard? Are you working to get off the ball. But then with the ball, do you have the

assertiveness and soundness to handle defensive pressure?

Q. I was wondering, given Sammy's shooting struggles the last few games, have you guys given any consideration to possibly bringing him off the bench? Maybe start Malcolm just to maybe break him out of his mindset a little bit? Have you thought about any of that kind of thing?

COACH BENNETT: You know, the way we're playing predominantly six players, Darion and Paul are seven and eight, they're all going to play, especially those six are going to play a lot of minutes.

But watching the tape, Sammy guarded it well, and did a lot of things. Didn't shoot it particularly well of course. But they're all going to play. Whether you come off the bench to start, I think that's not as significant of a deal.

It's just a matter of, again, playing and doing the right thing. And to specifically answer your question, that's not out of the realm, but I don't think that's the answer. If we're going to bring him off the bench to relax, they've played as many games as Sammy has or as many minutes as all of our perimeter guys are getting. It's just a matter of finding the right kind of looks to impact the game as many ways as you can, including shooting, but also in the other areas.

So I feel like that wouldn't be necessarily the issue. But, again, we'll just keep looking at how things go.

Q. Have you seen anything technically off with his shot? He had a bunch of air balls in that Florida State game.

COACH BENNETT: No, a few of those, a couple of our guys got their balls tipped, and they closed quick on the perimeter. They rush your delivery probably more than most teams. But you try to have a consistent shot.

At times, sometimes the shot can get flat, but I didn't see shots pretty much the same. I know we work at it. Just try to have a repeatable, consistent shot, and have a good feel. For whatever the case, obviously, they got to a couple of those balls and they certainly, all the shots that he missed were strong.

So it wasn't that he was leaving it short. He certainly shot them strong, but I didn't see anything particularly from, I guess, a square up

technique or an issue that looked different in his shot.

Q. Is Mike Scott giving you what you wanted to get from him this year?

COACH BENNETT: Yeah, how could you say not? Mike's had a very good year. He's certainly a lot of the defenses are gearing up to stop him. But he's played hard. He's hit big shots for us, and he's been terrific. Like I said, I'm very happy for Mike that after having to sit out last year you can see the maturity in his game and the improvements he's made.

The thing about Mike too I like is he'll be the first to say, 'I've got to improve in this area' or 'I didn't do well particularly in this situation.' So he's still seeking for ways to help this team and improve.

He's not one of those guys that's about trying to showcase him and trying to get numbers. He really wants the team to do well. That's refreshing to see. Up to this point, I've been very pleased with how could you not be with what he's done and how he's producing.

Q. To follow up on Mike a little bit. When practice started, did it take long for you to see that he was going to be able to play full strength and not have any lingering effects on his injury?

COACH BENNETT: It did, because he was in and out of practice. It was really interesting, because he played some in the summer. He was on and off. His ankle would flare up on him. He went to start as close to the season as -- I'm trying to think when we did our scrimmages, what those dates were. You know, the last weekend.

Our two scrimmages, Mike did not play in. We scrimmaged Vanderbilt and Baylor. I think it was the last weekend in October, first weekend in November, and Mike didn't play in those because his ankle was flaring up and he was having issues. So we weren't sure as of that point where is this at?

It's continuing to get used to the consistent pounding. Really, since we started playing the games, he's really good about getting his treatments and doing his rehab. Doing the right kinds of things that have made the difference. Hopefully that continues for him.

Q. You also noted that he's made some improvements in his game. Where specifically have those come? How is he a better player than he used to be?

COACH BENNETT: He's more versatile in terms of I think he's improved defensively. He's more of a team-oriented defender. We always get on those guys that that's got to continue to keep improving. But he's trying to be more of a help defender and working on that aspect of it.

Offensively he's developed the versatility in his game to face the basket more and stretch his range out. And when you're hurt, a lot of times all you can do is spot shooting. You try to really groove your outside shot, but I think he's developed more. He's had that a little bit, but he's enhanced his ability to face and stretch the defense, get the mid-range shot play off the dribble a little more.

So I think that's probably added to his versatility as much as anything on the offensive end.

SETH GREENBERG VIRGINIA TECH

COACH GREENBERG: Obviously, we're extremely pleased with finding a way to win this past weekend after such a fine line between winning and losing in our league ourselves, like any other team in our league, we could be 0-8 right now, we could be 6-2 right now. That's just the way it is. There is a very, very small margin of error.

Fortunately for us, we found a way to win this past weekend, and now we've got to hopefully build on that. We'll play an outstanding Miami team that's as good a front court as anyone in our league, is experienced and physical a perimeter game as any in our league.

So it's going to be a tremendous opportunity, but a great challenge. I think we have something to build on though.

Q. I don't know if you got a chance to look at the Duke-Miami game, but your impressions of Miami coming off that?

COACH GREENBERG: I think they're a terrific team. They've got two legitimate front court players, obviously, in Johnson and Kadji. Durand Scott is extremely difficult to keep out of the lane. Grant shoots the ball in range. And Larkin is giving them really good minutes in terms of settling them

down, getting them in the offense. I think they're playing really well defensively.

They're just a really good basketball team right now. They play with a purpose. They're extremely well coached, and you've got to figure out how you can defend them, because they can really score with the basketball.

Q. Coach, you were talking about the fine line that separates victory and defeat. How much of that is experience, and how much is confidence when you lose a couple of close ones? Does it make it tougher to get over the hump the next time?

COACH GREENBERG: I think that's just human nature. But I think experience is a huge factor. You see the teams that are probably veteran in our conference right now, they're experienced, mature teams. That's just around the country, I would think.

Excluding Kentucky, that's obviously in a class by itself, but your teams that win close games have been there before, have found a way to win. Our teams that have been there before, they can go and make a play, and have guys that, if they don't make a play, they can get a stop. I do think experience is a huge factor in that.

Again, how do you learn to make good decisions? You make some bad ones. Unfortunately for us, that's been part of our learning curve with our young people.

Q. Beyond that, is there a cumulative effect of success or failure? You say you learn to make the good plays by making the bad ones. You all have been just missing, just missing, just missing. You're coming off a game where you made the plays at the end and you got the win. Does that carry over?

COACH GREENBERG: I'm not sure we made the plays at the end, quite honestly. Free throw block out, they came back and had a shot to win it. But confidence is huge in sport. Whether it's in basketball, whether it's in golf, shoot, whether it's in football, confidence is a huge factor. The more success you have, no doubt about it, obviously, the more confident you're going to be, the more you expect to win.

What we've got to do with our basketball team is get to the point where they do expect to win and they are going to believe that they're going to make that play. Obviously, making it another

day helps us a little bit towards that goal.

But when I say you have to learn from your mistakes, that's just a reality. Young players, if they are really, really understanding the game, learn from their mistakes when they're put in that same situation next time. A year later, maybe two weeks later, all right, they're not going to make the same mistake. They're going to make a better decision against the press. They're going to switch when they're supposed to switch. They're going to make the extra pass. They're going to make sure the right guy's shooting the ball on time, on target. That's what I'm talking about.

Q. Just curious about your observations about Reggie Johnson. Have you ever seen a guy that big do as much under the rim, perhaps, as he does?

COACH GREENBERG: Well, he's a mountain masquerading as a man. He's a massive mass of humanity. He's got terrific hands. Again, it's like a different time zone when you get from one side to the other side. So he has the ability to create an angle and finish around the basket, not by getting up, but by creating angles because of the size of his body.

A lot of times there is a direct correlation between the size of someone's rear end and their ability to score. But he's like Sponge Bob Square Pants. The guy is square. It is impossible to get around the guy.

So he uses his body well. He targets well. He catches anything that's thrown to him, which is a huge asset, and then he creates angles. You've got to give the guy credit. He's really doing some special things.

Q. Given that size, how important a role might range play Thursday night?

COACH GREENBERG: I think range, staying out of foul trouble. With the front court of Miami, you have Kadji who can step out and post you and is tough on the offensive glass. And then you have Reggie who obviously takes up a tremendous amount of space, but yet with his strength -- the big thing with Reggie, if you do your work late, you're done.

I thought the end of the game, there was a segment where Duke did a great job of defending him early and getting him off the block, getting him to repost. It was easier to guard him. Even though he made that unbelievable jump hook, I think you

can live with that shot. It's the ones where he carves out that space right in front of the rim.

Again, you say he doesn't jump very high. He doesn't jump very high. But you're like at 6:00 o'clock, and the ball's like at 3:00 o'clock he's so wide.

Q. Question about Dorian Finney-Smith. How do you keep him at the level he was the other day?

COACH GREENBERG: I'm really proud of him. He's working really, really hard. Obviously, to see the ball go in early was huge for him. But he's going to be a special, special player, there is no doubt about it.

Again, it's a process that most freshmen have to go through. But he's going through it with strength, repetition, by changing a couple things that we think are important for him. I think that he'll continue to get better. I expect him to continue to play and to build on his performance of the other day.

JEFF BZDELIK WAKE FOREST

Q. Last year you played Virginia, and they didn't have Mike Scott. Now he's playing excellent basketball for them. Wonder how tough it is to prepare for his presence in the lineup?

COACH BZDELIK: Well, he's a real tough match-up, he really is. He'll post up mid range. He can shoot over the top of you. You put length on him, and he scores in a variety of ways. He can take bigger guys out. It's hard. You can't double on him, because he does catch it off the block in that mid range area and score.

He's got great bulk, great size. He's cagey. He understands even if you try to double him where the double team is coming from and they're prepared for that.

He's playing at a very high level, and really just gives that team a lot of confidence.

Q. Does that mid range game that he has make him different from other big men that you face?

COACH BZDELIK: Without question. I think that mid range game in many ways has been lost in the game of basketball. You either have big guys that have to catch it very deep to score, or

you have guys that want to shoot the three or take it all the way to the hole.

So he's got really good foot work. He'll set good screens. That's another thing he does really well. He sets really good screens. Who is going to be most open often? The screener -- by setting a good screen, causing your defender to lose your position on the ball and guarding him. Then he can establish a deep, low post position or a position off the block and catching the ball.

He does a great job of screening. He's skilled. He's smart. He's strong, and he's very mature as a fifth-year senior. So that mid range game is something that you don't see that a whole lot anymore in the game of basketball.

Q. Tony Bennett said a little while ago that they're essentially playing six players now. Are there advantages to that? Because obviously there are some disadvantages.

COACH BZDELIK: Well, I think the way they play, they limit their possessions. I'm sure Tony is keeping his players fresh. He's got some experience there, so probably doesn't have to go as long in practice.

But they're a well-oiled machine is the way I would phrase it right now. They run their offense very well. It's not overly complicated. They just do what they do very, very well. They read screens and use screens very effectively. They defend well as a team and also individually. This is a very, very good basketball team and Tony has done a great job with them.

I think that you can have a little bit of a shorter bench when you have some experienced players. I think as freshmen, if you don't have a lot of depth with real young players, that becomes more of a problem, because they're just still getting used to the college game, the physicality of the game, the length of the concentration necessary and the amount of games. It's more of a problem if you have an inexperienced and young team.

Q. Coach, Virginia's strength has probably been their defense, obviously. Florida State is another team you played that's renowned for their defense but they seem to do different things. Can you talk about Virginia's defense and what makes it unique as opposed to say, Florida State?

COACH BZDELIK: I think Virginia's defense, yeah, there are philosophies. Virginia's defense is more of a packed kind of defense where

they're putting really good ball pressure on you, but their players off the ball are in gaps. So you really don't have any space to drive. Whereas, some other defenses everybody's more tied into their own man and not allowing you to catch it.

Virginia does a great job of, like I said, you get nothing easy with Virginia. Their offense helps their defense. I think that's a key phrase. Their offense helps their defense because they don't turn it over. If they do turn it over, they're good turnovers. Turnovers that they can get back, set their defense up, get it set and defend. Whereas bad turnovers are turnovers out there out on the perimeter where the defense steals the ball and goes in for a dunk, and you can't defend that.

So their offense helps their defense by controlling the ball, manufacturing high-percentage shots, not turning the ball over in a bad way. Then they get back quickly in transition. They get their defense set, and they don't allow you to get to the rim easily. So it's more of a pack defense where they really plug holes, so to speak.

Q. Is there one specific thing you emphasize to try to attack that or exploit that?

COACH BZDELIK: When you get into gaps, you have to play off two feet and kick it, and get that ball moving from one side of the court to the other side and make their defense move. Good defensive teams have all five guys moving on every pass. Well, sound offense would be to get that ball from one side of the court to the other with great spacing and player involved movements to keep them moving, so that they're not quite set into the gaps where they want to protect the rim with. That's really important.

Of course, getting stops and getting defensive rebounds and getting the ball down in transition, and swinging that ball quickly before the defense can get set and organized is sound offense as well.

STEVE DONAHUE BOSTON COLLEGE

COACH DONAHUE: Last week I thought we played two really hard fought games and played well. Unfortunately, came down to the last minute in each of those games and we just don't get a victory. But really pleased with our guys and how competitive they were. Not executing great,

that's for sure, especially on the offensive end. But I think we're competing and getting better each and every day.

Q. Do you measure progress, like the week before you all played 30 good games and then let it get away from you in the last ten minutes. The last week you took it down to the wire in the two games. I know you want to win, but is that the kind of progress you want to see?

COACH DONAHUE: I think that's a great point. I think it's a good way to look at it. Part of this is trying to get guys to compete for 40 minutes, figure out ways that you can help your teammates and beat your competition. So, yeah, I think that's a good way of looking at it.

The other way, obviously, I'm looking at other things. Execution has got to continue to improve. The way we play has to improve. There are certain things I look at as well. But the bottom line is we're very young. We're probably outmanned in most games going in, and we've got to figure out a way to stay competitive. I think the guys have done a really good job of doing that.

Q. Florida State has led the conference and the nation in field goal percentage and defense. Defense has been renowned. Is it as good as its reputation? If so, what makes it difficult to attack?

COACH DONAHUE: I think it is as good as its reputation. I think they're legitimate in every aspect of defense. They play aggressive, yet they don't give up easy shots. So think about that. There is a team that's in passing lanes and jumping around, yet you don't get easy shots. That's, by design, I'm sure. It's also with how they recruit, they've got good length, especially at the rim.

So you're not going to get easy looks, but they also speed you up and not let you feel comfortable on the perimeter. It's just a real good game plan that Coach Hamilton has done for years. It's as good as advertised.

Q. How is Patrick Heckmann doing in dealing with mono? Is there any chance that you'll get him back at some point?

COACH DONAHUE: The answer to the former, he's doing fine. It's frustrating, because when you have mono, there is really nothing you're allowed to do exercise-wise. I'm trying to get him

to look at games and sit back and really take in, now that you're in that competition and try to learn from what's going on out there what you can do better. So I don't know if there is anything physically.

The prognosis going forward, I would think that we're going to try to see the doctor this week at some point. Try to start exercising again for another week or so then get them back here a week to ten days, two weeks, maybe.

That's, unfortunately, that's not a really direct exactly when, but that's where it stands.

Q. How does a player in that situation, can they really concentrate on trying to learn from watching from the bench? He's bound to be frustrated by this certainly, but it's easier said than done.

COACH DONAHUE: I think it is, but I also think these guys have been in a unique spot where they come in and have no idea what college basketball is about, especially Patrick. He was thrown in there playing 30 minutes a game. He had some good moments and some really shaky moments for him.

It's almost like I can take a deep breath for a second, and try to see what coach is telling me about. How my improvement can be made by watching the game being played. We'll watch film with them and do some different things with them.

If it's a kid who is a junior and he's running out of time and his eligibility and he's trying to help his team make a run in the NCAA Tournament, I think it can be frustrated. It's a little different with the situation with Patrick, and I hope he benefits from it.

It's not something he wants, for sure, but like anything in life, you have to figure out ways to do stuff when negative things happen.

Q. Coach, in reaction to that, does Patrick's absence mean more minutes for Gabe Moton?

COACH DONAHUE: I think it does because we just bring another guard out there. Patrick's, we're using him at so many different positions. We were able to sneak some four minutes at him and play smaller, spread the floor. I thought it was something going forward, that's how my teams have played.

That being happening, I think Gabe has gotten the opportunity to step in there and play

some more minutes, where Patrick may have been playing. I also think you see Matt Humphrey play more minutes as well. Just because he's a bigger guard. He can guard bigger guys. We throw him at the four at times like we did at Georgia Tech, and we do different things out of that as well.

Q. Did I see you play Caudill and Clifford together? Is that the first time all year? Is that something we'll see a lot of or a little of?

COACH DONAHUE: It was the first time in the league that we did it, and we did it at Georgia Tech as well in the NC State game. I think deciding and rotating Ryan, Dennis and Kyle at the four and five spot for a little bit, just to make and see what happens with those guys. All three, I think, are playing fairly well. They'll bring in something else. So if we want to go big, we can go big.

As I said before, I'd love to be able when Patrick goes back to go smaller again, and get the ball moving and play faster. The way we're playing now is a way to teach these guys how to be competitive. But the reality is that's not how we play and win at Cornell, and it's not how we're going to try to win here in the ACC going forward. We'll have to try to play fast and do more things on the offensive end than we're doing right now.