

January 7, 2013



An Interview With:

**JEFF BZDELIK
WAKE FOREST**

JEFF BZDELIK: I'll just take the questions.

Q. I was just wondering what your general thoughts are on facing Virginia on Wednesday and what you kind of think about that match-up for you guys.

JEFF BZDELIK: Well, Coach Bennett is doing a great job with his basketball team. They know how they want to play. They believe in it, and they practice it. They do a great job of, I think, frustrating opponents from the standpoint that they're going to work really hard through the shot clock to move you and move you and move you, and then create an opening for an open jump shot or a drive. And a lot of teams want to play fast, and so they get frustrated by not having the basketball in their hands, and having to guard through the shot clock challenges your discipline defensively.

And then they're going to give you nothing in transition. They get everybody back and back into their set defensive positioning, and they do a really good job of pressuring and staying in.

We're going to have to do a great job of staying disciplined ourselves defensively through the shot clock, and we're going to have to do a great job in half court execution because transition baskets are going to be hard to come by.

We were successful against Xavier. Xavier plays in many ways the same way, so we're looking forward to this challenge Wednesday night.

Q. You had some stretches early in the season where Travis McKie seemed to struggle a bit. The last three games he really seems to have come along strongly. What do you see as the difference in the way he's playing?

JEFF BZDELIK: Well, early on in the year we were moving him around a little bit between the 3 position and 4 position, and just adjusting to much too much in terms of am I a 3 or am I a 4, and when he would have to switch in the game between the two positions. A thinking athlete is a non-athlete, and he's adjusted much better to when I'm a 3, when I'm a 4 both defensively and offensively, so he's much more of an instinctive player relying on his instincts now and scoring the ball at a much higher and better and more efficient rate.

Q. Is he spending more time at the 4 than the 3?

JEFF BZDELIK: Well, it's about 50/50, it really is. Unfortunately sometimes with foul trouble or sometimes with freshmen just being real freshmen, when freshmen have a freshman moment, you know, I can't play them. It varies, and it also varies from game to game based on the match-up and what might be best for us at the time, whether we can go big or small.

So it really strikes a balance when it's all said and done.

Q. Devin Thomas obviously had a rough offensive game Saturday, but he had a second straight strong game on the boards, his two best games so far. Can you talk about his development as a rebounder and what he needs to do to take the next step?

JEFF BZDELIK: Well, first of all, Devin Thomas in my mind was one of the most underrated rebounders by the recruiting experts coming out of high school. I mean, he had many 20-plus rebounding games in high school, and even throughout the AAU season against top-of-the-line competition. He's a rebounder. I mean, you saw that the other night. His last two outings against Duke and Xavier, two very good basketball teams with size. He can rebound the ball. I mean, he's ferocious, he has a nose for the ball, he rebounds outside of his area, he's an excellent athlete, plays with great force. He's only

a freshman.

I think he's got a chance to be one of the very special rebounders in this nation as he continues to develop. He's getting stronger, he's getting more confident.

Offensively he had some opportunities around the rim. He's still learning that. We work every day on post moves. He runs the court extremely well. He's very fast, very explosive. The first play of the game at Duke, we got him the ball at the high post and told him just go, and he actually had an opportunity to score, and really he dunked the basketball right off the bat there.

But just -- he's young, and he just needs a couple shots to go down to get his offensive confidence to complement what he's doing defensively and on the boards.

Q. And the other freshmen, actually two, seeing the game Saturday, I was interested in the way you used Codi Miller-McIntyre and Madison Jones. What are you looking for from those two and what do you see that makes you sub one or the other, or is it just a predetermined thing?

JEFF BZDELIK: Well, to me they're my two point guards, Codi and Madison, and C.J. playing the off guard position, you have two freshman point guards, and there's no big brother for them to look up to, so they're learning on the fly. You know, their decision making has to be better, something that's a work in progress, and playing off two feet and reading the defense, when to really push the ball, when not to.

I know a couple of times they took the ball inside when they needed to back it out and make sure we were in a set, and sometimes that's hard to communicate, especially in a place like Cameron. They've been actually doing a very good job as of late. But in Cameron it's tough to communicate. There were times that we weren't very communicative in terms of making sure them as a point guard what everybody else was supposed to be doing and what kind of set we were in, that kind of thing.

And then we've got to do a better job containing the basketball. I think Codi, he got two fouls very early in the game and then got very tentative defensively. I remember one time against Curry, he was chasing Curry off a screen, first play for Duke, I think, and he fouled Curry, and so then he got another quick foul, and then from then on out, it was as if he was afraid to touch him, and you can't play like that.

They're learning. I want them to -- the defense starts with them and the kind of ball pressure they put on people. They need to improve their decision making. They've been doing a better job, as I said, of that as of late, and making sure that they're leading this team. There's a lot on their plate, but they're both talented young men and very smart, and they're going to be fine.

JAMES JOHNSON VIRGINIA TECH

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, I think coming in right now 9-5, it's a new season, and we're 0 and 1 in the league after a tough loss on the road at Maryland. Got a short bench, got one guy playing extremely well right now, and got to get some more guys going with him and just not playing consistent basketball right now on either end of the floor, and that's not a good combination. Don't have enough guys playing well, and not playing consistent basketball on either end of the floor is not good, especially going into ACC play.

Q. Is there any update on the situation with CJ? What are your plans for him against Boston College?

JAMES JOHNSON: CJ, right now he's competing in practice for playing time just like the other guys are. We did a few things yesterday, not competitive enough for me to tell right now. But he's available just like he was available last game. And right now the front line is Raines and van Zegeren and Beyer and Barksdale. Where we are with those four guys, it depends on match-ups and depends on who's playing, who's playing well, who's giving me effort right now, who's rebounding the basketball and defending.

Q. Have you talked to him postgame, and what was his reaction to not playing a single minute?

JAMES JOHNSON: I did talk to him postgame. I talked to all those guys and let them know that the production needed to be better. The production needed to be better, and again, I'm trying to build a program there, and I've told those guys -- first of all, I told everybody, be prepared to help this team win a game at some point, and I'm going to use as many guys as I have to, scholarship or non-scholarship, if they're

competing and giving me effort, do what we need done to help the team win.

Q. You'd be probably better using all your guys. Why was benching CJ sort of good for the program going forward?

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, I've got to set the tone of what's wanted and what's needed for the team, and effort is one thing. Effort is one thing. Playing hard is one thing. And if I've got a starter that's going out playing 20 minutes and getting one rebound, that's not feasible to the program. That's not what I'm looking for at that position, when I got another young man coming in getting nine points and 11 rebounds.

Q. The guy you just mentioned with nine points and 11 rebounds, can you talk about Beyer as a walk-on? Was he a recruited walk-on or was he just a guy that showed up on campus?

JAMES JOHNSON: He's a guy that showed up on campus. He emailed saying that he was going to be at school and would like to try out for the team. He was actually on the team with the previous staff and didn't like the way things were going and quit the team, and then when I took the job, he decided to come back and be a part of the team.

And now he's contributing and playing well right now.

Q. What does he bring? He's 6'7", fairly slender, right?

JAMES JOHNSON: He brings energy. He brings effort. He just plays hard. You don't need to bring anything but effort. He's 6'7" -- you can be 6'7", you can be 6'11", you can be 6'9". And if you play hard, you don't play hard. If you play hard and you give effort, it doesn't matter how big you are and how athletic you are. And that's what he does, he plays hard.

Q. I just was curious because I don't get to see guys a lot, overview, though, you started the season plan so well, even towards the one-point loss to West Virginia. As things have gotten away from you a little bit, what's changed from the first month to now?

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, I don't -- you know, we were making shots, and when you're making shots and did a lot of things get looked over and looked to the side, but as it stands, the head coach and as a staff, when we're looking at

the film, we see different things, and the things are -- we're not making those shots now, so now all the things that we're doing, the lack of rebounding and the lack of defense is being manifested right now when we're not knocking down our shots right now. And we're not getting multiple guys playing on the same night. We had guys, three guys in double figures, Green along with Brown and Eddie, and those guys were scoring consistently on the same night, and we're not getting that now, and we have to be a team now that if the offense is not working for us, we've got to do a better job on the defensive end at rebounding the basketball, which we're not doing, which I'm not happy with, and that's why a couple of changes have been made.

Q. The one guy that obviously is giving you pretty good production every night is Erick Green. Is the pressure on him? I notice his shooting percentages are still very good for a guard. Is he doing a good job of not forcing too much, knowing he's got to be the guy that's the big scorer?

JAMES JOHNSON: Oh, definitely. He's letting the game come to him. He's not taking a lot of shots. He took 18 shots in the Maryland game and Robert Brown took 15. I mean, here's a guy that's leading the nation, second in the nation in scoring, is taking three more shots than the second guy on our team. He's definitely letting it come to him. He's playing under control, taking good shots. That's why his percentage is good. He's making the right reads. His assist number would be up if guys around him would be hitting shots right now, which I think will come at some point, it's just right now we can't seem to find the basket.

Q. Have you had a chance to look much at Boston College, and can you give me any kind of a scouting report?

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, they've got two very good guards. They've got all three-point shooters. They're going to have four three-point shooters on the floor at one time, and that seems to be -- our defensive field goal percentage, three-point field goal percentage, percentage-wise, it's not the type of team that shoots the basketball against us for some reason, but they shoot the basketball very well, and like I said, after the Maryland game I thought a lot of those shots were contested. We gave up some in transition, but I

thought a lot of them were contested and guys were hitting shots.

We're going to have to take away the three-point shot with those guys. They're making seven threes a game, they're shooting 33 percent from there. But I think they're a better three-point shooting team than even their percentage, and they've got a lot of guys that can make shots, and they run that what I call Princeton style offense. We've got two days to prepare for it, so it's definitely a team that I'm concerned about.

TONY BENNETT VIRGINIA

TONY BENNETT: Just had a game last night against North Carolina, and you're in conference play and everything steps up, so just trying to get ready for Wake Forest. Watching them, I know they're improved, and hopefully we can be ready to go. It was good for us to have Jontel, played him kind of shorter increments, and that was positive, and then Akil Mitchell didn't practice leading up to our game last night but was a warrior and played with a pretty good sprained ankle, so that was helpful. We certainly needed everybody in last night's game, and that will be continuing to be the case.

Q. What is sort of the plan for bringing Jontel along? You mentioned short increments last night. You sort of have to stretch him out a little bit, and will he continue to come off the bench for a while?

TONY BENNETT: You know, Jontel, we've been very conservative. He had a fifth metatarsal -- had a screw put in his fifth metatarsal. He's had two minor setbacks, and I think we've been real conservative with him, didn't rebreak it or anything but just aggravated it, and we've tried to be conservative both times it happened. He's now at the three-month mark where he -- from his original surgery or from his original injury, and that's -- at that point, I'm not saying you're completely done healing, but you're in essence from what I understand, you have what you have.

Hopefully we can build him up and he can get more, and again, just keep progressing with his foot and go by symptoms, and really hope that stays strong and is good for his senior year.

Q. This is a question that's quite an obvious one, but how does he make everybody else better when he's on the floor?

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, well, one, he's been there. He's a senior. And he'll put probably more -- well, certainly more than anybody we have, he puts pressure on the offensive end, he'll put pressure on the defense by he can get to the paint. He's a guy that certainly people are going to lock and trail on, our shooters, and do that, and Jontel has an ability to either get to the rim himself or touch the paint off the dribble and create for other people. And I think his strength and his quickness make a difference for us.

And then defensively when he's right, he's still got some work there, but he can guard the ball, and again, knows the system well. It's just always to have a good plan of attack for us. Teven Jones has done a nice job for us, but I think from Jontel's standpoint, he's always had a strength for breaking his guy down off the dribble and be able to get him there, and then that takes some pressure off the other guys.

Q. Could you talk about the depth you have on this team, which I guess has enabled you to kind of hang in there with Jontel out and Malcolm missing the season? I guess you've got another -- Gill, red shirting, and yet it seems like with all that you have a lot more options than last year.

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, you know, when we're healthy, there are, and I think our first-year guys, our freshmen, have played a big role in that. They've gotten tremendous experience, and they've been thrown into the fire because they've had to, and that's helped. Whether it's been Teven Jones or Evan Nolte, even Taylor Barnette, Mike Tobey, Justin Anderson, those guys, there's five freshmen right there that have played at different times and given us valuable minutes and will continue to, and then now that Jontel is back, and well, Akil, he's always been there, but that just gives you that depth that allows you to play guys, hopefully give guys breaks, play harder longer and be a little more diversified with what you have. And my hope is that those young guys are getting better as they get experience.

But it's a -- when you face injuries, you have to have some depth or it can just really get you, and my hope is that, again, you always hope you're through with those. But the guys have

responded well in the absence of some of the key guys, and well, Malcolm being red shirted or out this year, and Jontel missing the majority, the guys have stepped up for him.

Q. Following up with I think less than 72 hours before your next game, do you kind of dread coming in the morning and getting the report from Saliba?

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, he and I have -- I'll tell you what, I didn't give him credit after the game -- the postgame. He did a great job of getting Akil's ankle ready. I think there might have been eight treatments in that short amount of time, so he did a great job. But he'll -- whenever he calls, I'm hoping he's just calling to tell me everything is okay or someone has got a cold, but I always kind of hold my breath when we talk.

But you know, it is what it is, and hopefully the guys will do the best we can to treat him well and be conservative with him, give him the time that they need. Yeah, I'm hoping -- I haven't talked to Ethan yet, that Akil's night was good and Jontel has responded well. I talked to them both after the game, and they said they felt good, so that was a positive there.

Q. Along those lines, do you expect Akil to maybe not practice heading into the Wake Forest game, or have you thought that far ahead yet?

TONY BENNETT: Again, last night after the game.

Q. Can you talk about the dynamic, you guys play one of the more patient tempos in the country. North Carolina came into that game playing the fastest tempo in the country. How do you slow down a team that wants to play quickly?

TONY BENNETT: I think, again, and I've said this before, any team that plays against Carolina, when you listen to the coaches and you talk about it, it's first on transition defense trying to make them play against your defense that's set, and that's -- there has to be a sense of urgency to that. So it's just getting back. When a shot goes up you've got to send the guys that you designate to the offensive glass. Hopefully you get some of those, but the ones that aren't, they've really got to work on getting back as quickly as possible and everybody has to fly back and really try to build a wall with your defense and get them set up and

stopped because if they got rolling, they're so effective. So that's definitely a priority.

And then offensively you just try to take good shots. It doesn't mean that you don't take opportunities with fast breaks, but you never know what will give you a chance against a talented team like them. At times we probably had some silly turnovers that cost us some buckets on the other end, and then the second half we did not turn it over as much, and that also plays into -- certainly transition defense does, but taking care of the basketball does, too, but not letting them get out on fast breaks.

Q. If you were coaching against you guys, would speeding you up be a way to try to do it? I look at your numbers, and not many teams have succeeded in doing that.

TONY BENNETT: You know, I think you've got to -- I think every coach looks at their team and says what gives you the best chance to be successful, and you've got to look at your personnel, and then use your system accordingly or adapt, I guess, your system, and coach it to the best of your ability.

Q. Coming into conference play you guys have the worst strength of schedule of any of the conference teams in the non-conference portion. Did you have concerns about what was going to be coming? Did you talk about goals or ambitions, I guess, for the ACC portion of the schedule?

TONY BENNETT: Well, you know, conference season it certainly steps up, it's more physical, and part of that was our own doing. We didn't get to Madison Square Garden. That was the hope. And that's when you play in those tournaments you've got to beat them. We got beat by Delaware and then we didn't get to advance to play what would have been Michigan, Kansas State or Pitt, which we knew was very strong. Again, when we went on the road and played some teams and some of those teams that we had early in the season, it's a little bit of a crap shoot. You think they're going to be stronger maybe than they are or they have injuries, so things like that happen. So I think it's a little skewed.

But of course conference play, the talent of the teams in your league, you know that you're going to have to be ready every time-out, and just you want your guys to be as ready as possible,

and we've shown that when we're locked in we can play effectively, and when we're not, we'll certainly struggle like a lot of teams do, and that's been a lesson that we've learned the hard way in not getting to go to Madison Square Garden and being beaten by some teams that have played better than us when we've gone against them in Old Dominion and George Mason on our first opener.

MARK GOTTFRIED NC STATE

MARK GOTTFRIED: Well, you know, I think any time you win on the road, it makes you feel a little bit better about things, which we were able to do this past weekend in Boston. We have a very challenging game with Georgia Tech, who I think is a lot better than they were a year ago. They came to Raleigh last year and beat us, and we have a lot of respect for them, and I think more than anything that's what we've got to concentrate on.

Q. Can you talk about the dynamic of having such a short bench, playing essentially a seven-man rotation so much of the time and the problems that presents, and does it make anything easier?

MARK GOTTFRIED: Well, I think that even though -- I think we're playing eight guys right now, and some of those guys maybe the minutes aren't as high, but we've got eight scholarship players, and all eight are playing. If it happens to be where for a particular game we don't go that deep, then we'll just make it work.

But I don't think those are issues in college basketball.

Q. TJ Warren is your first guy off the bench and playing essentially starter's minutes as you rotate him in there. But is it that he -- he seems to accept that role well, and not everybody would. How has he responded to that in your eyes?

MARK GOTTFRIED: I think he's done very well. I think he knows that he could be in the starting lineup, and I've told him many times that if I was allowed to start six, I would. Whether he or Rodney start, I don't think it matters that much. I think they know they're both going to contribute in a big way, so I think TJ has been very good.

Q. I just wonder, you just obviously played a tough game with Boston College. Can you talk about them? Have they made an improvement this year from last year, and if so, what's the difference?

MARK GOTTFRIED: Well, I think, yes. The answer to the question is yes, they have improved, and I think in a lot of areas. The first one is Ryan Anderson is better. He was a freshman a year ago, and he has a year under his belt and he's a tough match inside. I think the two freshman guards that they recruited are both very good, Rahon and Hanlan. I think Hanlan is going to be a great player in this league.

And I also think it takes the pressure off of Jackson to be a ball handler like he had to last year a lot and frees him up to have fresher legs and be a more effective shooter.

I just think they're a lot better, the freshmen who became sophomores are better, and then I think the freshmen are both very good. I think they're much improved.

Q. How sweet is it to open the conference play with a road victory?

MARK GOTTFRIED: I think when you win on the road in your conference it's always significant. There's a -- it helps you in a lot of ways, and what you can't do is give one away at home, which we did a number of times last year.

But I do think that it certainly helps you in a great way to win on the road.

Q. Senior Scott Wood, he's averaging 11 points a game shooting, 43 percent from three-point range, 91 percent from the line, and in the game with Boston College the other day it was he that was getting the ball in the last minute and continuing to sink the free throws. What does he bring to your team?

MARK GOTTFRIED: Just what you just said. He's a great shooter, and he's a senior, and he's got great confidence. I think the part that's a lot of times overlooked about Scott is even defensively, he may not be the most gifted athlete, but he's been through the wars of college basketball, he understands how to defend, he communicates very well, he switches when there needs to be a switch. A lot of times he's coaching these young guys on how to defend as the play is happening. He brings a lot to our team.

ROY WILLIAMS NORTH CAROLINA

ROY WILLIAMS: Not a good night for us at all at Virginia last night. Tony's club really did some things that took away what we wanted to do, and we didn't do a good job on either end of the court, but give them credit for what they're -- it was a rude awakening for us to have that kind of loss where every play down the stretch they made and we didn't make. That's hard to gain confidence when you're doing that. But again, congratulate Virginia, Tony and his club and his staff, and we've got to play a heck of a lot better. We only have 17 more of these in a row now.

Q. You're playing obviously a lot of youngsters that are getting a lot of minutes. As a group, how are they coming along, and individually what have you seen that strikes you about them?

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, it's a hard question. You're asking me just after we lost and didn't perform at all the last eight minutes of the game last night, so every coach's thoughts is going to be so much more negative at this point. I think we're getting better. I think some individuals are not progressing as fast as I had hoped, and that would probably be everybody on my team as well as every other team in the league probably.

But we're getting better, better than we were last month, better than we were in November, but last night was a tough pill to swallow here at 11:00 on Monday morning. We got back at 1:00 in the morning kind of thing.

But each individual has got to step up. The guys who have played more, Reggie and James Michael, we need those guys to have good games on the same game. Reggie last night was really good. We didn't do a good enough job of getting him enough shots, bouncing back from the concussion the week before and the whole bit, I thought he was really good offensively and yet our whole team was making mistakes defensively, and that's something that we spend more time on than anything.

We've got a long way to go, but I do believe my team is going to get better and better as we go along.

Q. The young players in particular, how are they adapting, and now that they've got an

ACC game under their belt, do they realize what they're up against?

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, we don't have any idea how they've adapted yet because that was the first one last night, but there was one time out on the court last night I had four freshmen, I think, on the floor. We are young, but we've played 13, 14 games, whatever it is now, and we should be gaining experience each day and not use that as an excuse.

Q. I know it's tough to lose the ACC opener, but you did that two years ago and came back and won the regular season, and even last year, although it wasn't the opener, it was an early game, you had a horrific performance at Florida State. Can you talk about the idea of the long season and people panicking and going nuts over one loss, and the last two years you've proved it's something that happens?

ROY WILLIAMS: Yeah, and I think you're right, it does happen. It's a pretty doggone good league. I can even go back a little deeper, you go back to 2009, we were 0-2 in the league if I'm not mistaken. We were either -- I'm pretty sure we were 0-2, and we won a national championship, so it is a long year, it is a marathon that you're facing. You can't panic, and we don't intend to panic but we do intend to work harder and try to be more alert mentally and physically in every game because last night we just made some errors that -- Virginia had a greater sense of urgency last night than we did, and that is disturbing as a coach. But it is a long season, and if you start panicking, then you really have problems.

Q. I asked Coach Bennett about this: The idea that they play one of the most patient tempos in the country, you guys want to play a faster tempo. How hard is it to speed up a team like Virginia and get them to play a tempo that you like?

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, it is difficult, and I'm not trying to say that it was a one-man game, but Jontel was really impressive in the second half. You know, you have a guy who's only played four of their games, I think, and sat out a lot, and in the second half if the statistics were correct he had six assists and zero turnovers in the second half. It's hard to speed him up because he is so quick himself and good with the basketball.

But it is hard to speed guys up who practice it all the time, and again, we're not as good in our traps as some of the more veteran teams are. So far it's harder for this team to speed people up.

JIM LARRANAGA MIAMI

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, the first thing I'd like to say is I want to give a lot of credit to Eric Konkol, my assistant coach, who helped develop our non-conference schedule, and what we've tried to do is put a non-conference schedule together that is very challenging. I think from every computer ranking I've seen, our non-conference schedule was in the top five. And so we challenged ourselves in the non-conference, and Eric did a great job with that, and then we started conference play on the road, and I think our non-conference schedule prepared us to play a very fine Georgia Tech team, and we were able to get our first road victory in ACC play to start the season.

Q. You played several games now without Reggie. You've done it in the past and other years. How does that change what you want to try to do on the court, because it's hard to just keep playing the same way without his presence I would think.

JIM LARRANAGA: Yeah. Well, first of all, Reggie was playing extremely well rebounding the ball very well and giving us a great inside presence at the offensive end. The great thing is he has continued to work very, very hard. He's got his left hand in a cast, but his attitude has been great, his work ethic has been great. So hopefully when we get him back, he'll be ready to really get back and contribute vitally.

The other guys realize that the two things that Reggie did for us, the rebounding and the scoring inside, Julian Gamble, Kenny Kadji, Raphael Akpejori and Tonye Jekiri, have all realized that that's a major part of their responsibility, and so far they've done a nice job.

Q. Particularly offensively, I know Julian Gamble is a pretty big body, but can you still come down and have him post-up the same way that Reggie was able to?

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, we can. They're obviously not the same kind of player. But the whole key for us offensively is to just have good balance, to have different guys step up and make shots for us. The other day against Georgia Tech it was Rion Brown. Often is the case Shane Larkin and Durand Scott are our leading scorers. But Kenny Kadji can really shoot the ball well, and in Julian Gamble's first start against Hawai'i he scored 16 points and had 13 rebounds. So if we can get a contribution from five or six different guys -- Trey McKinney Jones is shooting the ball very well. He's been in double figures most games. If we can get four or five guys in double figures, then I think we're in good shape offensively.

Q. You're taking kind of an interesting path on the way to 500. You left a head coaching position for an assistant's job, and probably there were some times when you wondered whether you would get the kind of job that would take you to 500. Was there ever a time that you despaired whether you would have this kind of career?

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, I don't look at it in the whole, I look at it in a day-to-day. I love doing what I am doing. Terry Holland hired me in 1971 as an assistant coach at Davidson College. I enjoyed the heck out of working at Davidson and working with those kids and giving whatever I could, contributing whatever I could to the program. I got a chance to be a head coach at a Division II level and enjoyed the heck out of that, and then Terry Holland hired me again at Virginia.

We had great teams in the ACC. That was really just a tremendous experience coaching at the highest level against some of the greatest coaches in the history of college basketball.

And then given the opportunity to be a head coach again at Bowling Green and then at George Mason and now here at Miami, to me it's just the daily work that we do, working with young kids and helping them grow, teaching them the game but also teaching them about life, and I've had great assistant coaches and great players that -- the players win the game. Those are the guys that do all the work on the court.

Q. I believe you had family members, your son was at the game --

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, my son Jay, who

played for us at Bowling Green State University, is now the assistant coach with the Boston Celtics, and the Celtics were in Atlanta to play the Hawks while we were in Atlanta to play Georgia Tech. So after our game against Georgia Tech, Chris Caputo and I went over to our Celtics-Hawks game and had a chance to go out to dinner with my son and some friends afterwards, and that was great fun watching him and the Celtics being able to come away with a win. The Larranagas had a great day that day.

Q. Watching the team just kind of celebrate and cheer for each other, it seems like there's a certain chemistry and camaraderie that's a little bit unique compared to maybe some of the past Miami teams I've watched. Can you talk about how that translates on the court?

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, I think what you see is a group of guys who are dedicated to one goal, and that's winning. You know, like Rion Brown on Saturday had a great game, and everybody was very excited for him. His dad was an all-American at Georgia Tech, and Rion had not been shooting the ball particularly well, and then all of a sudden goes 9 for 11 from the field, scores 22 points, and even those some of our starters had kind of had sub-par scoring games, they were far more concerned and happy that we won than any personal statistics. And I think this team is very unselfish. They play very hard, and they like sharing the ball with their friends, and they're doing a good job of it right now.

Q. I wanted to ask two things, one about Rion Brown. Obviously that game that he had the other day, like you said, you've been kind of waiting for him to get his stroke back, and to get 9 of 11 where his dad was an all-American, do you see that giving him confidence going into the next few games, and how much do you need him to contribute? And the other question is just in general if you could talk about the conference, the ACC, and what you've seen so far and what you expect, especially with not having Reggie to help you out.

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, first of all, the great thing about Rion Brown is he's got a tremendous attitude and a great work ethic, and he's been working very, very hard, and that's why he's earned so many of the minutes despite the fact that he hasn't been shooting the ball the way

he's capable of, and I certainly think that him making 9 of 11 will help him relax a little bit and give him a lot of confidence going forward.

But every game is different, every opponent is different, the kind of shots you get are different, the opportunities, the size of your match-up and what have you. One game may not represent what you're going to see in the next game.

But I know one thing: He's still going to have a great attitude and a great work ethic and prepare himself to help us in whatever way he can.

I think the ACC has had a great non-conference, one of the top two or three conferences in the country, and I think the league is very deep and talented, maybe more depth than last year because last year I thought we were very young as a league, and those young kids have gained valuable experience and are improving. You see a team like Maryland who's gotten off to a fantastic start, I think they're 13-1 right now, and their only loss is to Kentucky, like way back early in November. So there's a lot of talent in the league, and I think the league is going to enjoy great success.

Q. Going into the North Carolina game, what are you expecting from the Tar Heels and how do you think you guys match up?

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, one of the key, I think, statistics with Carolina is they're 7-0 at home, and they have some young players. They also have some veterans, and they've got a great support system in that home court crowd. So the nice thing for our players is we've been on the road. We've played at UMass and we've played at Central Florida, we've played at Georgia Tech, also very good teams in hostile environments. Hopefully we'll be ready. Carolina is a tremendous running team, No. 1 in the country in scoring, and it's going to be a real challenge for us to defend that kind of versatile team.

Q. Durand Scott right now is in his fourth year at Miami, a four-year starter. Among active players in the league, he's first in points scored, first in field goals, second in free throws, second in assists, third in steals and fifth in rebounds. Talk a little bit about what he brings to the table game in and game out for you. He seems to do just about everything for you.

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, I love Durand Scott. He is such a great competitor, and he involves himself in every aspect of the game and every aspect of our team. He's been a great leader for us. He just plays as hard as he can as long as he can. He only cares about winning. He's from New York and so am I, so we have somewhat of a kinship, having played in the same Catholic high school basketball league, and when we didn't have him, we didn't have our emotional leader. When he came back and we went full strength, he was terrific, and we were much improved. He's going to go down as one of the best players in Miami basketball history, and I think he's on his way to a great senior year.

Q. When we talked to you preseason, you were talking about the defensive potential of this team, especially with Scott and Larkin in the backcourt together. When I look at the numbers right now, I don't see it, although obviously numbers can be skewed by the schedule you play, but can you talk about the development of your defense? Is it where you thought it would be and where you hoped it would be at this point?

JIM LARRANAGA: Tell me what stats you were looking at that have disappointed you so I can respond to that.

Q. Well, it's just field goal percentage defense, assist turnover ratio, you guys are maybe at the lower upper-middle of the pack. It's nothing outstanding; it's okay. Maybe I am reading it wrong, that's why I'm asking, is the defense playing better or as well as you hoped it would be?

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, there's a lot of categories in defense, and here's what I would say: I thought we started the season poorly defensively and have improved a good bit. And we started the defense primarily not as good because we had made some changes, and that was my fault. I thought we were going to have a little more depth and a little more speed and quickness, but with Durand Scott out and Fisher Daniels hurt and what have you, we were not playing the kind of defense that we needed to play to start the season.

We've made some adjustments. We've lost Fisher Daniels, he's gone back home, so the guys who are available and playing and playing hard are getting better and better at what we want done.

Q. Is there something you still need to do, or are you pretty happy where you are right now?

JIM LARRANAGA: Oh, no, I don't think any coach is ever satisfied with where you are. But if you look statistically, we follow Ken Pomeroy, Kenpom.com, and we've moved into, I think, the top 50 or top 40 defensively in field goal defense efficiency. And basically if we can continue in that direction, we could be a very, very good defensive team before the season is over.

Q. You mentioned Carolina's scoring offense. How do you slow them down?

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, North Carolina traditionally is in the top two or three fast break basketball teams in the country. It's their style, it's what they do best, and they've always had plenty of offensive talent to get that done.

You have to be very, very good defensively, but you also have to be very efficient offensively so that you've got to be scoring enough that they have to take the ball out of bounds, which would give you one more split second to get your defense back in set. But even when you score, they've been terrific at inbounding the ball and scoring in the first five seconds of the possession.

So getting your players to understand the importance of getting back, setting your defense and making them play five on five rather than five on four or four or three or two or one, that that's a major key in the basketball game and major key in any basketball game.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

January 7, 2013



An interview with:

**COACH MARK TURGEON
MARYLAND**

BRIAN MORRISON: We have with us now Maryland head basketball coach Mark Turgeon.

Coach, if you could, a few comments about your team, then we'll open it up for questions.

COACH TURGEON: It was a fun game Saturday for us. A lot of guys played well. Guys stepped up with Nick (Faust) being hurt. It was a good win for us.

But we're looking forward to Florida State, a physical team. One thing we didn't do well is rebound Saturday versus Virginia Tech. We have to get a lot better at rebounding. We're looking forward to this week. A couple really good games on our slate.

BRIAN MORRISON: Open it up for questions for Coach Turgeon.

Q. I wonder if you would comment about the fact that your record is so good. You're not showing up in the rankings or anything, there's been some criticism you haven't played the toughest schedule. How would you respond to that? Do you think your team is as good as its record or ranking?

COACH TURGEON: Well, we're as good as our record because that's who you are.

But I don't care about the rankings stuff. We have plenty of time to prove ourselves on that. We have a tough league schedule ahead of us with a lot of good teams a couple times on our schedule.

I don't worry about all that.

We took care of our schedule. You see teams that lose games they should win. We took care of it, which was important. Most importantly we had young guys getting better during that stretch. They played with a lot of confidence on

Saturday because we were able to give them confidence through the non-conference schedule.

A lot of people say what they want. We have plenty of chances to prove ourselves over the next eight weeks.

Q. Could you fill us in, what is the situation with Faust and the back spasms?

COACH TURGEON: Yeah, it's become more than I anticipated. I expected him to play Saturday. It locked up on him when he went out and played. He took yesterday off. He's going to take tomorrow off. I'll be shocked and disappointed if he doesn't play Wednesday because he's gotten a lot of good care. I think he's feeling better. I think tomorrow he should be hopefully full go in practice.

Q. With Florida State coming to town, what are your thoughts on them compared to last year?

COACH TURGEON: I'll be honest with you, I haven't watched a lot. I watched a little bit last night and some this morning.

The thing about them, I'll watch more this afternoon, Leonard (Hamilton)'s teams are always going to guard you, be very physical. The snare kid can score. The Miller kid (Ian) is healthy, makes them go, too. (Okoro) White is playing well for them.

They're going to guard you. They're going to execute. They're going to be physical, which we need. We haven't been playing as physical as we need to play. Hopefully Florida State will be able to bring that out in us on Wednesday.

Well-coached. Had a great year last year. Have a lot of confidence. Whenever I talk to Leonard, he loves his team. Lost a couple of games they shouldn't have lost early in the year. They usually come on when it comes to league schedule.

Obviously had a big win on the road against Clemson on Saturday. Should be pretty confident coming in here on Wednesday.

Q. Mark, with Nick, when he is healthy, can get back out there, do you anticipate easing him back into the grind or do you anticipate he might be able to go full speed quickly?

COACH TURGEON: I'd like to think Nick never really gets out of shape. I think he can go full speed.

I'll know more tomorrow when we practice. The doctors advised us to give him today off, so we did. He was down on the bike when we finished practice this morning.

I expect him tomorrow to go full tilt and be ready to go on Wednesday. I'd answer that question differently tomorrow with media after practice, but we'll see.

Q. Statistically Pe'Shon Howard doesn't do anything that dazzles you, but what is it that you like about him at that position and how is he playing right now?

COACH TURGEON: Well, stat-wise he's doing pretty well at the assist. I think he's averaging five and a half, six, something like that. That's pretty impressive.

But he's solid. He runs the team. He communicates. He talks. He takes on the challenge defense. He's usually in the right spot. He's gotten so much better at not turning the ball over like he did last year. He's just become a more complete player and a solid player for us.

He's a really good shooter. He's going to make a lot of big shots for us in the ACC. He's been shooting the ball great in practice, not last game, but the games prior to that, three of the last four games, shot the ball well, over 50% in those games. I'm not concerned about his scoring.

The thing about Pe'Shon is he's not going to force shots. That's nice to have. A lot of kids like to shoot. It's nice to have a kid that likes to shoot open shots. Helps our offense flow better.

Q. All your bigs, but particularly Alex Len, how does he benefit from a guy like that?

COACH TURGEON: Pe'Shon finds him on the break, in our offense, out of the sets, getting in a position to score. I think Pe'Shon makes Alex better. I think Dez is the same way. A lot of guys benefit. Running on the break, he's going to find you. He's a pass-first guy, which is fun. It's nice to have somebody like that.

He's really having a great year for us. I didn't anticipate him coming off a knee injury for

him to be this good this early. He's really played well for us.

Q. Could you talk a little bit about the emergence of (Jake) Layman on Saturday, what you forecast for the freshman going forward?

COACH TURGEON: Well, he had practiced well. He's always tried hard. He's competed and tried hard every day in practice. He came back from Christmas with this renewed confidence. Nice little break. We gave everybody four, five days off. He came back with more confidence, practiced well, played well in the first game back.

Got an opportunity on Saturday, made his shots, gave him confidence. More importantly he's gotten better defensively. That's the key. Early in the year, he was a liability there, and now he's not. He uses his length and his speed to be a good defender and is becoming a better rebounder. He's getting tougher.

Going forward, I don't know if Jake will get 20 every game, but I think he's capable of getting 20 in games. It will be a little bit harder when Nick is back in the rotation to get the minutes.

We're happy. He's a great shooter. Coming out of high school we expected him to make shots. He did on Saturday. I was really happy for him. It's been a tough go. For him to have that day, it was great for him.

Q. Speaking of confidence among the young guys, given the ACC game over the weekend, how big do you see ACC play with the young guys?

COACH TURGEON: It was a good day. It's just one day. They made shots. I thought Shaq (Shaquille Cleare) played well, too. He didn't have the opportunity because we had to go small at times. Shaq was 2-3 in 13 minutes. Clearly our best physical presence in the game.

I thought they all played well. I thought all the guys, Dez Wells, not his best game, Logan played well. Six new guys that played well. We had a great environment, a great crowd. It was a lot of fun.

Just because we won by 20 doesn't mean we're 3-0, we're 1-0 in the league. Don't get too high or too low. Practiced today. Thought we got better.

Just got to keep those guys levelheaded. That's the key as we move forward. They're pretty

mature kids.

BRIAN MORRISON: Thanks for taking time being with us today. We'll hear from you next week.

COACH TURGEON: Thank you.

An interview with:

COACH BRIAN GREGORY GEORGIA TECH

BRIAN MORRISON: We have with us now Georgia Tech head basketball coach Brian Gregory.

Coach, a few comments about your team and we'll open it up for questions.

COACH GREGORY: Played a very good team on Saturday. Miami has had a couple weeks now to kind of adjust. I thought they played extremely well. They were very good defensively. I thought we did some good things. In this league, you got to do them for 40 minutes and you have to make some shots.

With younger guys at times we're going to struggle making some of those shots, making some of the plays you need to make. But in this league you have to move on.

Now we move on and we go to Raleigh and play an explosive team in North Carolina State. Again, the most important thing is we look at today, take advantage of today and continue to improve.

BRIAN MORRISON: We'll open it up for questions.

Q. You did something very odd. You added two players over the Christmas break, the Poole brothers. I've been watching their so far very limited role in the rotation. Is that going to change as they catch up? What do they bring to the team at mid-season?

COACH GREGORY: With Stacey we didn't have a choice of when we added him. He transferred mid semester last year. Sat out. Got all his things in place academically. Did a great job both in the summer and in the fall semester in the classroom.

He's in a tough situation. He didn't play much his first year and a half at Kentucky. Obviously, sat out a year for us. It's been two and

a half years since he's really been a factor where how he played was important to the team.

With that, he's played some minutes and played in the first half of the game on Saturday. He needs to catch up to speed in terms of what we're trying to get done, how we do it. It's difficult mid semester transfers because when he came last year, you're already engrossed in the season. He misses the whole first part of practice and so forth.

But he's a tough kid. Right now we really need him to play grade defense, get on the glass, let the offense kind of come to him.

With Soloman, different situation. Kid who wanted to graduate early, kind of get a head start in the college game. Discussed back and forth what was best for him, what he wanted to do in terms of potentially redshirting this year, practice, getting his feet wet in college.

But him and his family and I talked. They said even if he plays four, five minutes a game right now during this first month, kind of see where he's at, that's only going to benefit him in the years to come.

I see them playing more as they get more accustomed to how we do things. Obviously you're throwing him in the mix in a great basketball conference. Every possession is important. Sometimes when a guy hasn't played much or for a high school kid, those are difficult challenges.

I think they both understand it. I think both of them look at the big picture as opposed to right now.

Q. Soloman is a true point guard. Can you talk about maybe that's something this team could use. Is it possible later in the season he could be mature enough to play a significant role?

COACH GREGORY: Well, I mean, that remains to be seen. He plays the point for us, and any dynamic, he was a big scorer in high school, different things like that, out on the circuit. Really wants to learn how to play at this level with the ball in his hands, making good decisions, different things like that.

As he continues to progress, then that role may definitely increase.

Q. NC State has had an odd season, a lot of pre-season attention. Where have you seen them improve over the years? Compare

their first and second months of the year.

COACH GREGORY: With NC State, again, sometimes expectations are difficult to meet. I think Mark has done a great job. They're 12-2. It's not like they're 6-8. Their two losses were on a neutral court to a top-25 team in Oklahoma State, and they lost to No. 2 or 3 Michigan I believe on the road as well. Those are their two losses. Neither one of those would be considered bad losses.

Obviously they have an upper class that is tremendous in Lorenzo Brown, in Scott Wood, in C.J. Leslie and Richard Howell. They've done a nice job of adding freshmen to the mix. Those guys have impacted the program as well.

You have a team that has six guys averaging in double figures and are so explosive offensively, adding those three new guys does take some time and adjustment, and I think you're starting to see that over the last three or four weeks. They're starting to hit on all cylinders.

Again, you can say close game on Saturday. On the road, those are the games that you have to win. The veteran teams, the teams that understand it's a possession-by-possession game, every possession is important. I think they clearly demonstrated that on Saturday with the win over Boston College.

Q. Are you surprised to any extent that your top two scorers are freshmen?

COACH GREGORY: Maybe a little bit. Again, those guys are logging some minutes. We brought them in here to play. I think our upperclassmen, if you go down the list, are all playing extremely well for us. That's probably why we're 10-3 right now.

I think Daniel Miller and Mfon Udofia and Kam (Kammeon Holsey) have done a good job, and at times Brandon Reed has really filled in terms of his role, doing a good job in that. With Marcus and Robert, we knew that those guys that could make an impact for us. They're taking advantage of the opportunity, they're getting better every day, learning every day, much improved on both ends of the court since we started.

They made plays defensively and offensively obviously against a very good team in Miami on Saturday that they just weren't capable of making in our first game against a very good Tulane team.

I like the progress they're making, their development. In this league, it's hard sometimes

to rely on freshmen, and that's why our upperclassmen are so important to us.

Q. Carter you pretty much anticipated would make an impact. Georges-Hunt I don't know as much about.

COACH GREGORY: Maybe the media didn't. I did (laughter).

I thought he was potentially maybe, for us, didn't get as much hype as some of the other guys around the league, but I felt from day one he would be one of the premiere freshmen in our league. He lost about 15 pounds from his senior year to when he entered Georgia Tech, got in great shape.

Has a high basketball IQ, has a great motor. Basketball is very, very important to him. He's in the gym non-stop. When you got a guy like that that has the physical tools and you add the IQ to it and the feel for the game, the different ways that he can impact a game, I just felt that he would really make a big impact for us.

I just loved everything about his game. The best part is I think he's only scratching the surface. I think he can really improve in some key areas that is going to make him, when all is said and done, one of the best players in this league.

Q. Could you talk a little bit about your defense. You've held eight of your opponents to under 40%, four of those to under 30%.

COACH GREGORY: I thought we played pretty darn good defense on Saturday. If you would have told me that we were going to hold their starters to I think it was 13 of 39 from the field or 12 of 39 from the field, 3 of 13 from the three, I would say, I'll take it.

The problem is we let (Rion) Brown lose on a couple plays. Give him credit. This game is a big game for him. His dad played at Georgia Tech. One of our great players here. We told our guys, he always kind of has a little extra juice. I wasn't here during the recruitment of him. I don't even know if Georgia Tech recruited him or not, but at the same time he's always played well against us. He's streaky, but he still plays with great confidence.

Overall our defense has been pretty good. I still think it's an area we can continue to improve in. Most important thing with our defense is guarding the dribble, keeping the ball in front of you, defending with five guys. That team concept, I think our guys have done a great job of not only

buying into but then also going out there and executing.

You have a senior point guard in Mfon that kind of sets the tone for that, then a pretty good anchor in Daniel Miller who is leading the league in blocks, top three or four in blocks. If we can continue to do a better job on the defensive glass, that's going to help out every aspect of our game.

BRIAN MORRISON: Coach, thanks for taking time being with us today. We'll hear from you next week.

COACH GREGORY: Thanks, guys.

An interview with:

COACH LEONARD HAMILTON FLORIDA STATE

BRIAN MORRISON: With have with us now Florida State head basketball coach Leonard Hamilton.

Coach, a few comments about your team and then we'll open it up for questions.

COACH HAMILTON: I think our team has been somewhat inconsistent. We played some outstanding basketball at times this year, then we've played like we're an inexperienced team. That showed last week where I thought we gave an inconsistent effort in execution and focus at Auburn. I thought we played a lot better on the road in our first ACC game at Clemson.

Overall I think we've had better practices than we have played. I do believe this team is just now kind of figuring out the way we got to play, the effort we have to deal with in order to be successful.

Three of our first ACC games will be on the road. I think that's good for a young, inexperienced team that we have. It's going to raise our consciousness. Anxious to see how we're going to do when we play against a very hot Maryland team on Wednesday night.

Q. Coach, where is Ian Miller right now? I know he missed several games. Is he back to what you expect from him?

COACH HAMILTON: It's almost impossible to be back when he's been inactive for as long as he was inactive. He missed four or five games with a bone bruise. We had to shut him

down. He was in the swimming pool, riding the bicycles, shooting standing jump shots.

He practiced a couple days prior to the Auburn game, played four or five minutes in that game. He did play 23 minutes in the Clemson game. He gave us some good stability and I thought he made a big difference in the game.

We have had a rash of nagging injuries with the bone bruise with him, Terrance have what you call a stinger, most of the time football players have. Robert Gilchrist, he had a little groin pull.

Seems as though that's what's been happening with our team.

Ian seems to be back now physically, but I'm sure it's going to take him a little while to get back on top of his game. You don't miss all those practices and games and pick up. I have the film on Saturday at Clemson. He did a good job, made some big plays for us, thought he made a big difference in the game.

Q. You know pretty much night in and night out what you'll get from (Michael Snaer and Okaro White. The rest of the guys, are they kind of the inconsistencies you were talking about?

COACH HAMILTON: I think we've been in somewhat of a learning mode. All seven of our first-year players have had their moments where they played pretty well. We have not been able to get everybody hitting on all cylinders at the same time. They've always shown potential.

I think we're getting closer and closer as we move into conference play. I'm anxious now to see where we are going on the road as much as we have to early in the season.

But we've had very good practices. They've shown signs in some of the games, in New York, on the road against some people, the Tulsa game, I think we've shown signs of having some potential to develop.

I think now we're just starting to figure it out. I think they have been inconsistent, like most freshmen are. I'm sure you have a few freshmen occasionally that figure it out coming in the door. My guys are still learning, growing. Three of my first-year guys are international players. That just kind of heightens the adjustment they have to make.

But I feel good about this team. I think potentially we have a chance to be where we have been. Now it's a point for us to go out and get the

job done.

Q. Coach, after the kind of rough start in non-conference play, how pivotal is this next little stretch with Maryland, UNC?

COACH HAMILTON: I think it's very important. I guess you might say our backs are against the wall a little bit. We're going to have to do something exceptional. We've been moving up every year getting better and better. In order for us to continue that, now we have to do it in conference play against tough competition with 18 conference games.

But I'm excited about that. I like this team. I think the talent is there. It's just a matter of us putting it together and being more consistent.

It seems we almost got our entire team back now somewhat healthy. But I think we're capable. But we're going to find out a lot about us against Maryland because they're about as good as we've seen them in a while. They're loaded with talent, very well-coached. If we're going to keep our post-season opportunities alive, we're going to have to do something unusual, unexpected, and that's winning games on the road against people that are playing well.

Q. Some people have called you one of the most disappointing teams in the country. How do you respond to that?

COACH HAMILTON: Why should I? I mean, I think most teams that have five freshmen, seven first-year players have been inconsistent. I don't think our team is a lot different than what some of the other people are going through.

That's one thing good about basketball. It's a season. It's not the beginning. Last year we were 9-6. This year we're 9-4. I'm sure we have plenty of time to overcome our inadequacies.

BRIAN MORRISON: Coach, thanks for taking time being with us today.

COACH HAMILTON: Thank you.

An interview with:

**COACH MIKE KRZYZEWSKI
DUKE**

BRIAN MORRISON: We have with us now Duke head basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski.

Coach, a few comments about your team and we'll open it up for questions.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: You know, I'm just ready for questions.

BRIAN MORRISON: We'll proceed with questions for Coach Krzyzewski.

Q. Coach, with the veteran players that you have playing at a high level, how has that helped Rasheed Sulaimon blend in and what have his contributions been so far?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, it's always easier for a younger player if he's playing with established veterans. There's stability most of the time. They can talk to him during a game, not just us talk to him during a timeout.

Rasheed is very athletic and can guard. He's an outstanding driver. He's just done a really good job bringing us a high level of athleticism to our perimeter, the ability to defend, then put the ball in the basket also.

Q. I heard you say a few weeks ago about the '11 team, having a shot to run the table. Almost 40 years now since we've had an undefeated team. Besides talent, what do you think it takes for a team to go undefeated and is there anything about college basketball that has made it harder over the last few decades?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: First of all, just everything has to go right: health, you need veterans. Kentucky almost did it, but they had some veterans on their team last year. Yeah, I don't think you can just do it with young guys.

It took a blend on that team. Kyrie was like an older young player, which obviously he's shown in the NBA. He's just way ahead in maturity to go along with exceptional, exceptional talent. You need good guys, where you don't beat yourself with team issues, jealousies, things like that.

I'm not sure, that's a pretty tough thing to do. That team had a chance because we had the big guys, depth. We had Nolan and Kyle as the veterans. Then we had the best player in the country in Kyrie.

Q. One of the more noticeable things about your team statistically is you've got five guys who can shoot the three and all at a very high percentage. Is this maybe the best collection of this many good three-point shooters that you can recall having?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: No, I don't think so. I think we have good three-point shooting. I think the three-point shooting is enhanced by the fact that we have a player inside that demands attention in Mason. As a result, I think sometimes you get more wide-open shots when you're trying to take away the post.

I think the type of threes we've had this year have been a higher-percentage three overall than in the past.

Q. I want to go back to the undefeated thing again. It's obviously pretty ridiculous to project that. This is the sixth time you've had a team start 14-0. Does pressure build on a team that's undefeated? When Illinois and Saint Joe's got close a couple years ago, there was a suggestion, They might be better off if they lose a game, take the pressure off. Do you buy any of that?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: No, I think some of that is true. It just depends on the team and the situation. Overall I think pressure has something to do with it.

I think one of the biggest things is you get accustomed to winning and you expect to win, but you have to keep the hunger for preparation and the hunger for competition while you're winning, while great things are happening for you. And that's very difficult.

It's very difficult to keep your edge at that level for a long period of time. Therefore, a team has to be really good because it would have to win games when it doesn't have that edge, where talent sometimes just does that.

I don't think that's our team this year. But I think you need that. And I agree with you, though, that there is some amount of pressure there.

People start talking about you being undefeated and not talking about the game you're playing. You end up answering a lot of questions about being undefeated and not the competitor that you have to face. That can be distracting and reduce your edge in preparation.

Q. The other thing is obviously people get pumped up to play an undefeated team. You're No. 1. You've been such a good team for so long, you face that when you're No. 4 or 5. Does it get any different when you're No. 1 and undefeated?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I think if it's someone that hasn't been No. 1 as much. If it's us, I think people get pumped up to play us. I've

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coached in over 200 games where we've been the No. 1 team in the country. I know that people are pretty pumped up when they play us.

That comes with the territory. Thank goodness you're in that territory because it's nice to have that attention.

Q. Can you recall the last time you lost a game on the road and fans did not rush the court?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: No (laughter). Well, neutral site. If it was a neutral site on the road. At an opponent's gym, no.

That's a sign of respect, a sign that it means something. But also it makes what our kids have done over the years even more impressive because you're getting everyone's best shot all the time. That's what each Duke team has to learn. Even the guys who have been on other Duke teams but they were in different roles, like our seniors need to understand that now. They understood it as underclassmen, but now they're the leaders. It takes on a different level of significance for those kids.

Q. Mike, what about Quinn Cook's makeup allows him to be so effective even when his shots aren't falling?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, he's a natural point guard. I think if you're a natural point guard, and there aren't that many anymore, there's scoring point guards, different names for point guards, but just a natural point guard is somebody that is judged by winning. That's the way they used to judge all point guards.

So Quinn understands that. If we win, he's done a good job. If we didn't win, he hasn't done as good a job, no matter what his stats are.

He's been exposed with USA Basketball and now at Duke with a high level of expectation for the point guard. He's got a really good personality for that.

BRIAN MORRISON: Coach, thank you for taking the time for being with us today.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Thank you.

An interview with:

**COACH BRAD BROWNELL
CLEMSON**

**ACC Coaches Second Hour -
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BRIAN MORRISON: We have Clemson head basketball coach Brad Brownell.

Coach, if you could, a few comments about your team, then we'll open it up for questions.

COACH BROWNELL: We're coming off a very disappointing loss against Florida State where we didn't play as well, showed a little bit of our youth and inexperience. Certainly going into one of the most difficult environments in college basketball against a great team. Look at Duke this year, they look better than last, and they were very good last year.

I just think the development of Quinn Cook and Mason Plumlee has really taken them to other level. (Seth) Curry and Ryan Kelly have always been good, good shooters. Sulaimon kind of plugs in the whole there where Rivers was. They're a very talented group. Mike has them playing extremely hard, very unselfishly.

They've done an unbelievable job in the first 13, 14 games, had good wins against a very difficult schedule.

BRIAN MORRISON: We'll open it up for questions.

Q. Coach, of course you lost a lot of veteran leadership in your backcourt from last year. How has Rod Hall in particular done in stepping into that role as your floor leader, just how is he playing right now?

COACH BROWNELL: Reasonably well. A guy who was under-recruited, who has a good mentality for the game, plays very hard. He's a bright guy. He passes the ball well. He doesn't turn the ball over a lot. That's one of the reasons I really like him.

He's not vocal, though. He's not a very vocal guy. That's been a problem for a young team. Devin Booker and Milt Jennings are certainly our two only upperclassmen and even Devin is a quiet guy. We don't have that kind of dynamic leader on the court. That's something we're trying to work with Rod on, trying to get him confident in being a vocal leader.

He's a good competitor, understands how to play, really gets after it on both ends.

Q. For somebody who is naturally on the quiet side, how do you bring out that maybe more vocal style?

COACH BROWNELL: Well, it's a challenge. It is. It's a challenge. You've got to make those kids understand how important it is they communicate, how important it is that they understand that people are looking at them for answers.

When you're a point guard, things aren't going well, the ball is in your hands, guys are looking at you for strength and leadership.

Rod hasn't always been a point guard. He played some point guard and some wing in high school. He's always been a good ball handler, a pretty good decision maker. It's something that we're trying to work with him on, have worked with him on for the better part of a year. I think he's getting better at.

It's a hard thing. Sometimes in practice you have to make it so he's the only one that talks so kids get used to listening to him. But it's not an easy situation to rectify, to be honest with you.

Q. A lot of coaches, when they play Duke, talk about the difficulty in the matchup with Ryan Kelly. They call him a stretch four. You have a guy very similar, Milton Jennings, that can play inside, outside, shoots the three, handles a little bit. Can you talk about that. Is that a favorable matchup there?

COACH BROWNELL: I don't know if it's a favorable matchup. I think Ryan and Milt have similar games in terms of strengths of shooting the basketball and they have size. They're guys that also are very good passers. That's what you can miss with both of them.

I think Milt does a good job for us of moving the ball around and sometimes feeding high-low passes to Book. I think Ryan Kelly does the same thing with Mason (Plumlee).

I think they're very similar type players. I would think that the matchup in that game will be a good one.

Q. I also was going to ask you about your defense. That's been a foundation. Can you talk about how your defense has played this year and are you happy with it?

COACH BROWNELL: You know, reasonably well. We didn't play well against Florida State, especially in transition. We were awful, in fact. We gave up 10 threes, and about seven of them were kind of in transition in situations where we normally are very good.

It's one of those things where you struggle a little bit with young players. We have young players that maybe aren't used to all the responsibilities and the communication involved in defensive transition. When you're not scoring, not playing well offensively, you're constantly in transition like we were in the first half against Florida State, it becomes a problem.

We made mistakes. In the halfcourt, we were pretty good. We defended Florida State pretty well in the halfcourt. Have done a pretty good job all year defensively in that. There have been a couple games we haven't played quite as well.

I think our ability to guard the ball has been better. I think we've rebounded reasonably well and we've been able to contest people and limit some threes on certain teams, have done a good job. Certainly against Florida State we didn't play up to par.

Q. So much of the league has been impacted by freshmen. Can you talk about your freshmen players, how they're progressing.

COACH BROWNELL: They're doing well. Both guys play with good confidence. Both guys can make a shot and are aggressive in terms of thinking about scoring. Adonis (Filer) is certainly physically bigger and stronger, more ready to play at the level right away because of his physicality, his competitive nature.

Jordan (Roper) is a little bit more wispy, 5'11", 165. He's athletic, can jump, he's pretty quick. He has a knack for making some shots.

Both kids have had good games, have played well. Been up and down. Certainly Adonis didn't play well against Florida State. Jordan played okay.

Did we need them to go through these kind of experiences for later in their careers. Certainly the experience they're going to face tomorrow night will be a big one.

Q. I know it's a different location having to play at Cameron, but you played some of the best teams in the country, Arizona, Gonzaga. Would that help you prepare at all for playing a team of Duke's caliber?

COACH BROWNELL: Well, it will help a little bit in having faced some very good teams, talented teams. I'll tell you, I believe Duke is better. They're ranked No. 1 right now.

In watching the film, I think the way they play, the pieces they have, how they fit together, obviously the way Mike's got them playing, I think they're playing better than either of the two teams we played. Arizona is still undefeated, Gonzaga has only lost one.

The other thing difficult for us, those games were neutral court, at home, this one is going to be in Cameron. It's an even bigger challenge for us.

I think in examining the three teams, Duke is clearly better than those two teams right now in terms of talent and execution.

Q. Coach Krzyzewski talked about how as the season goes along, players might take Plumlee and Curry away. Is it a challenge when they spread the floor, space, the challenges of doing that with the option of what you can do?

COACH BROWNELL: That's what is really hard about the way they play. First of all, they maintain great spacing, they run good sets to put their guys in very good positions.

Mason is scoring inside on his own. Shooting 63 percent, which is incredible. Obviously because of all their shooting, you're afraid to go down and double or dig for fear of letting them get hot and make some threes. When you don't do that, he goes to work inside. Certainly might do a job on the three, but now he's scoring. If you go down there, he's a pretty good passer. They have shooters spread out. They beat you on the shot, closeouts. It's a difficult challenge and why they're very hard to guard.

BRIAN MORRISON: Coach, thanks for taking time being with us today.

COACH BROWNELL: Thank you.

An interview with:

COACH STEVE DONAHUE

BRIAN MORRISON: We have Boston College head coach Steve Donahue.

Coach, if you could, a few comments about your team and then we'll open it up for questions.

COACH DONAHUE: Well, I thought over the last month, month and a half, since our trip to Charleston, I thought the team has played much

better basketball. The younger guys, our two guards, have helped us greatly. I think just all of them coming of age a little bit, becoming a better basketball team. I think that's what you saw.

We played a very good NC State team. I thought we played well, had our chances to win, but didn't make the plays you had to at the end. In particular, shoot fouls. Very pleased with our development of our youth. Going to try to keep getting better every day.

BRIAN MORRISON: We'll open it up for questions.

Q. As you look at Virginia Tech, they have gotten a lot of scoring out of Erick Green, not much else from their supporting cast. What do you see from the dynamic of them?

COACH DONAHUE: I think obviously Erick has had an incredible start to his season. Not only does he score, but he has almost twice as many assists as anybody else. He shoots at a very good percentage. He gets to the foul line more than twice as much as anybody else. That's a handful there when you have a guy doing that much.

But I think Jarell Eddie and Robert Brown have done a good job. They've been scoring the ball at a pretty good clip. I think their offense has been really, really good for a large part of the year.

Q. What do you see defensively from them, particularly in the perimeter and their three-point defense?

COACH DONAHUE: Well, I think what they did, and they didn't do it as much against Maryland, but they scramble a lot, they put you in pressure situations, try to force turnovers. I think you have to be good with the basketball. When they've been successful pressuring the ball, they speed up opponents, they get the ball in transition. That's when they're very good.

Their defensive numbers say they're a good team in terms of guarding the three. I think teams that have made extra passes and have been a little more poised have probably given them more problems lately, in particular BYU.

But Maryland did a great job. Maryland made shots from three. Maybe typical kids that don't make them made them. They played great. I don't know if that's Virginia Tech's defense or Maryland playing a terrific game.

Q. Obviously some powerful teams at the top of this conference. When you're

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fighting in the middle of the pack, how important is it to beat the other teams that are maybe on your level in the league?

COACH DONAHUE: I honestly don't look at it that way. I just try to stay in our world here, play in the now. Really, NC State, people think they're one of the best teams, and I agree. But that was our focus, just to try to beat them.

I don't know if you could do it any other way. Virginia Tech is a talented basketball team. My focus is on trying to get a road win and getting our team ready to play with that kind of attitude. But I'm not necessarily saying, Hey, they're a team we can beat. I don't know that is the message you send.

We're going to have a championship mentality every time we go out there and we're going to try to win basketball games against whoever we're playing.

Q. You're getting terrific production from a freshman backcourt, (Olivier) Hanlan and (Joe) Rahon. Can you talk about how they've developed. Did you go into the season expecting to start two freshmen back there?

COACH DONAHUE: Honestly, I thought they would. They're two of the kids we recruited for maybe two or three years as soon as I got here, even before that. I know both kids very well. They're two kids we targeted.

Joe Rahon is probably one of those kids that's light-years ahead in terms of IQ, toughness, feel for the game. Plays more like his upperclassmen. The thing about Olivier, he's got a world of ability, he wants to be good, he learns, and he really competes.

The other thing is I think they're both physically ready to compete at this level, where maybe your typical freshman guard isn't. Both kids have good size and good physicality.

The thing I would say I'm surprised at is their consistency. Every day in practice they practice hard. There's none of those issues you typically see with freshmen. They really have an understanding of what it takes to win games at this level.

I think the rest of the team obviously sees that and respects that. I thought there would be more growing pains with that, but both kids, as I said, are really advanced in terms of their mental preparation for basketball at this level.

Q. How did you find a guy tucked away in Canada? Did you recruit up there occasionally when you were at Cornell?

COACH DONAHUE: I did. My teams at Cornell, I think I had as many as six or seven Canadians. Cornell, we were up in the 330 RPIs. I thought we can't bang heads with too many teams. We got to find guys. I did. I think it helped me be competitive in my first five years at Cornell.

With that I met a guy named Dave Smart, who in my opinion is one of the best coaches in basketball, not just in Canada, but he runs a program up there. He's a Carleton University coach. He's won five out of the six last national championships up there. He has a grass-roots program. Olivier is one of those kids.

For years, I've kept in touch with Dave and we've been talking about Olivier. That's where it all started.

Believe me, he was recruited. He wasn't just tucked away. He ended up playing at New Hampton Prep, and was recruited. I thought we did a good job early on in getting in there and developing a great relationship with him.

Q. Can you talk about solidifying your front court in the sense that Ryan Anderson was playing great, got hurt, when he gets back to health, you lose Dennis Clifford for a few games, rehabbing. Can you talk about getting to the point of getting the guys up front that you need to have?

COACH DONAHUE: It's been a tough stretch for those guys. I think we maybe would have won a couple more games if those two stayed healthy the whole time.

The reality of it is Ryan was hurt going down to Charleston and probably took another two weeks to get back. Cliff, his knees have bothered him really from September on. We've been trying to monitor him. Hasn't gotten the reps that he needs to. He's not there yet in terms of getting healthy or in terms of being the player he's going to be. He needs reps, he needs practice, he needs to get better every day. In that sense it's been frustrating. Then he had the ankle injury at Penn State that set him back.

I think both of those two are as healthy as they've been and I think we're able to see them together more. In the meantime, I think Andrew Van Nest was someone that was playing well for us at the time and he got a concussion, so he was out for a while. I'm hoping that now he's starting to

feel the game again like he was, start to play and feel comfortable out there.

It would be nice to get another bigger body to help in our rotation, for sure.

Q. Talk about Ryan. He's fourth in the league in scoring, second in rebounding. Can you talk about him making the jump from being a nice player as a freshman to one of the better players in the league as a sophomore.

COACH DONAHUE: I think the thing that has helped him out greatly is he did put in the time to get bigger and stronger. He has a terrific I say knack around the rim. This year he's gotten way more competitive. I thought he did a great job against NC State with their physicality. Rebounds he never would have been close to getting last year.

He plays 38 minutes a game. For a big kid going up and down, I thought he had a really great attitude about competing that he did not have last year. When he does that, really good things happen. He has tremendous hands, a great understanding of where to be. He's relentless on the rebounding side of it.

It really defies more that than his lack of athleticism because he's a good athlete, he's got fairly long arms, but not one of the better ones in the league. It's really in terms of IQ, a sense of where to be in all aspects of the game.

What I'm looking forward to with him is him continuing to get bigger and stronger so he can use all these tools that he has and be a better athlete than a lot of guys out there. When that happens, I think you're going to have a real special player.

BRIAN MORRISON: Coach, thanks for taking the time being with us today.

COACH DONAHUE: Thanks, guys.

BRIAN MORRISON: That concludes today's basketball teleconference. Thanks for taking part.

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