

**March 4, 2013**



An Interview With:

**JEFF BZDELIK  
WAKE FOREST**

**Q. The first time you played NC State, it's about six weeks ago. How is your team different, if any significance from then, and how is their team maybe looking a little different?**

JEFF BZDELIK: I think so much of this game is just the mental approach. Everybody is who they are in terms of who they do defensively or offensively, maybe a little sharper, maybe a little bit more detailed in how they execute. But when you approach this time of the season, so much of this is the intensity, the passion, the excitement that you do things with. You know, it's like the offense doesn't make the player, the player makes the offense. And defensively what is that? It's everybody knowing what they're supposed to do. But defensive passion, it's energy, it's imposing your will. Same with rebounding. And we see so many different types of scores. One game a team just plays really well and has a great win, and then the next time out maybe they don't, maybe they get beat soundly. So much of this game is emotion and passion and energy, and I think that everybody has got a lot to play for at this time of the year. It's really just doing what you do and doing it as well as you possibly can with your heart and your soul and paying attention to detail.

They're very similar in terms of their schemes as far as NC State is concerned, and they're very, very talented, and they'll be at home. Their crowd I'm sure will supply them with great energy, and we in turn as a young team, we need to make sure that we handle that environment well. And at times on the road we have and put ourselves in position to win, and at times we haven't. So this will be a big test for us.

**Q. In the game you won against them in Joel Coliseum Devin Thomas had a terrific game and more than held his own against one of the league's best low post players in Richard Howell. Are you going to need a similar kind of effort from him in this time out?**

JEFF BZDELIK: No question, but we can't expect that kind of effort -- I mean, result. 25 points, 17 rebounds, he had assists, blocks, steals, he was just terrific. But Devin is really improving. He's worthy of all the notoriety he's getting. You know, it's interesting, the first 23 games of the season, he shot I think 46 percent from the foul line. I think going into our game just the other day, I think he had hit his last 15 out of 20 and he was 9 for 12 in our game against Maryland.

You know, he's constantly getting better. He's working really hard. He's a young player, and he's in -- it's interesting, I asked him the other day about who has been the players he's really -- that have been really, really tough for him, and obviously Howell's name was one of the first out of his mouth. So he has tremendous respect for those players.

**Q. I know you've played everybody now, and I'd like to ask for a little help. We've got to be voting pretty soon on all-conference teams and everything. The part I need some help on is defensively. Who are three or four guys around the league that have really impressed you as defensive players?**

JEFF BZDELIK: You know what, I'm going to plead the Fifth on that. I am. I know I'm going to omit someone and I'm going to upset someone, so I'm going to be politically correct.

That's a tough question, it really is. I know that when we as a staff have to sit down and vote along with all of you, there are several names that come up, there really are.

So much of this game is also from a team defensive standpoint. It's all five players helping on defense on every possession. But I'm not quite sure. I know if I mention a couple of names, I'm sure after I hang up here -- you kind of caught me

by surprise here. I'll go, good gracious, I forgot that person and that person.

**Q. Don't make fun of us if our team is not very good when we pick it.**

JEFF BZDELIK: No, I'm not going to do that, trust me. I've got my own problems, okay?

**Q. Let me ask you this: Tell me about your own team. Are there a couple of guys that defensively that anchor what you try to do as a team defense?**

JEFF BZDELIK: Well, I think Devin Thomas. I think Devin Thomas is an outstanding defender. When you think about who he has to go against, the great big men in this league, Howell, Plumlee, Len the other day, Booker from Clemson. Everybody has got some size and bulk down there, and they're veteran players. I mean, I just mentioned Booker, Howell and Plumlee as seniors, and Devin is a freshman, and then you throw in Len who's a predicted lottery pick, and deservedly so, and for him to be doing what he's doing from a defensive standpoint I think also says a lot about who he is. He gets deflections, he blocks people off on the boards, which is an extension of defense, it's a culmination of defense, his defensive rebounding.

I think Aaron Rountree on our basketball team, he's played limited minutes, but what keeps him off the floor is he needs work from an offensive standpoint and he needs strength. But at 6'9" he's versatile enough to guard three or four positions on the court, and he gets -- if you look at his minutes per game, he gets a lot of deflections, and I know he won't be considered in the mix because of his limited minutes, but when he's out there, he's very effective defensively, as well.

And those would be probably our two best defenders on an individual basis.

## **JAMES JOHNSON VIRGINIA TECH**

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, obviously we're coming off a very good win here senior night versus Clemson. We're headed down to Durham to play a very good Duke team with a very good player in Ryan Kelly being back. We've got the end of season here with two road games here at Duke and at Wake Forest.

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**Q. You've played these guys once obviously, and they really got the better of you. Now with Kelly back, how much better do you think they are right now?**

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, I mean, they're a very good team, but with Kelly back, of course it gives them another guy that can stretch the floor, stretch your defense with him being able to shoot the three from deep. That opens things up for drives with Cook and Sulaimon and Curry, that opens things up for Plumlee inside, also. He's a guy that you've got to guard him out to 23, 24 feet. So he makes them a lot better.

**Q. In the first match-up obviously Seth Curry had the big game and you switched Erick on to him. As you go into this game would you like to avoid using Erick in that defensive assignment?**

JAMES JOHNSON: Definitely. Erick is going to have to expend too much energy on the offensive end of the floor, so we're not looking at that match-up early in the game. There will be times where we'll put Green on Curry, but we're not looking at that match-up.

**Q. To continue with Ryan Kelly, obviously since you didn't have to face him the first time, how tough a match-up is he going to be for you, and who draws that assignment?**

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, he's a 4. Our 4 is going to draw that assignment. It'll probably be CJ Barksdale who's playing at a high level right now, and he'll have to do the job like Marshall would and get a little bit of assignment on him, and then we could play big some and we'll put Cadarian Raines on him and put van Zegeren inside on Plumlee, so we've got a few different options for him. We'll try to mix it up on him a little bit and different guys will guard him in different ways.

**Q. What's the message to your team in terms of what you have to do better in the second meeting with Duke versus the first meeting?**

JAMES JOHNSON: We've got to defend. We've got to defend. Offensively I thought we did a pretty decent job. I thought Raines gave us an inside presence down there, he had 10 points, and I thought Barksdale played pretty well at 14 and 8,

and Green of course hit his 22. But we've got to defend. He shot 53 from the floor, they shot 73 percent from the three-point line and scored 88 points. We've got to do a better job of defending.

**Q. Were you a little taken a little aback with the struggles defensively in that Duke game because even during that losing streak you were pretty competitive in almost every game but they came out and punched you in the mouth there?**

JAMES JOHNSON: No, I wasn't taken aback. They were coming off a loss there, and I knew they would come out and be ready to play. Curry did not -- he hadn't played well in recent games, and I knew he would come out and be ready to play his last game right there at Cassell, so I wasn't taken aback at all. I knew they'd come out and be ready to play, and I knew we'd have to come out and defend.

**Q. For a young guy like Marshall that hasn't played in Cameron before, what's the message to him about getting ready for that environment?**

JAMES JOHNSON: No message. He's played in ACC venues. I mean, that's not an issue. We're not going to address that. We're going to play basketball.

**Q. You mentioned the win on senior night. Erick only taking 12 shots and having such an efficient game in his final outing there, it just seems he would have been so tempted to try more shots and enforce more opportunities. What did that performance tell you about him and the season he's had?**

JAMES JOHNSON: It sums his whole season up in one game, what type of player he is and what type of kid he is. He'd much rather have the win. He makes the right decisions as a basketball player, the right decisions as a point guard. If that means shoot the three, I'll take the three; if that means use my middle game, if that means make the pass off over to the big man or kick it out for a three. And that's how it's been all year long.

Again, there's times where I look at it and I think he should be a little bit more aggressive or needs to be a little bit more aggressive, but he makes the right basketball play. Very unselfish young man.

**Q. What have the NBA types who have been through your building for practices and games told you about his draft stock?**

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, they just -- it's going to come down to things that he does. He's definitely improved it with the season that he's had. He's definitely improved it, but it's going to come down to things that he does in the postseason and these camps and things that he goes to. But he's definitely improved it.

They've seen a lot, the unselfishness, the ability to pass the ball, the ability to score the ball in different areas, the ability to defend. They like his length, his size and length for a point guard. So he's got a lot of things going for him right now.

But I haven't talked to him about that at all, and he's just concentrating on finishing up the season strong for us.

**Q. I was wondering if I could take a little bit of a different turn. Allan Chaney is a guy who's spent time in a couple different programs and has had a health issue and is now playing well for High Point. I was wondering if you could share a little bit about him and just maybe your thoughts on where he's come from and where he is now.**

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, I'm happy to see the young man having an opportunity to play the sport that he loves, and he loves basketball. He's a great kid. He's a basketball junkie. He talks basketball, he works on his game, he watches basketball. I'm just happy to see him getting an opportunity to play and having a good year. His team is having a good year.

Just happy to see that young man. He's a good kid.

**Q. You mentioned CJ earlier. What's he doing differently these last few weeks? I know back in September you sat him down. Has his attitude changed? What is it that's sparked his surge here recently?**

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, I don't think of that. He's always had a good attitude toward that. I think his energy and his effort has changed, and I think he's putting more time in outside of practice time in the gym and working on his game. I think those are the things that have changed and is carrying over to his game and play.

I think he's just playing harder, he's playing with a lot more energy, getting to the offensive

glass, he's getting in the gym, working on his game, and I think it's just carrying over right now.

**Q. I'm trying to put together some info to pick an all-ACC defensive team and just looking for some input. Can you give me just a sense of two or three guys you've seen around the league that have really impressed you defensively?**

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, I think Durand Scott down in Miami is a really good defender. I think Joe Harris at Virginia is a really good defender, as is their entire team, of course. I think Tyler Thornton down at Duke is a really good defender. I think Strickland at Carolina is a really good defender. I think those guys got to stand out to me right now. Alex Len at Maryland with his ability to block the shots; Day, as well, at Maryland, are really good defenders. Those guys right now stand out to me.

**Q. How about with your own team? Are there one or two guys that have been your defensive anchors?**

JAMES JOHNSON: Well, I think our guy -- it's hard for -- my best defender it's hard for me -- he's doing so much on the offensive end, he's a guy that could possibly be a lock-down defender, but I've got to make sure they're up in spots and play them in certain situations, our guys, but that's something we've been searching for all year long, and we're trying to develop some guys into that.

## TONY BENNETT VIRGINIA

TONY BENNETT: Just coming off of a tough loss yesterday. The ability to respond, and that's always what we talk about, try to bounce back, play well and obviously going into a road situation playing against Florida State, we'll have to play well. Every game is important, so I think our guys will understand that and hopefully will -- I think we learned the excitement of a big win on Thursday, and then you feel, as I told the reporters after the game, the pain or the agony of a tough loss. But that's where it's at, and you fight to get your team as ready as you can and now we'll have a couple days to do that to prepare for a tough-minded Florida State team in their own building.

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**Q. I guess I was wondering, Jontel seems to get the ball at the end of the shot clock a lot lately, just out far away from the basket, shot clock inside of 10 seconds. I guess I'm just kind of wondering if that's kind of by design or if maybe you've considered some other options, too, in addition to Jontel always having the ball in that situation.**

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, you know, we try to run our offense, and I think everybody has a red zone or an under-10 situation, and sometimes you just continue to run your offense, and then sometimes if you're in a certain spot you try to space the floor and put the ball in certain someone's hands, and Jontel has actually been pretty effective for us. Leading up to it we've tried to make some adjustments in what we do with him, and I feel like he's been pretty solid. You just have to be careful that you don't run your offense half-heartedly just to get to that point, and that's the thing, you've got to run your offense to score, and then obviously if you get to that spot you want to have, depending upon personnel on the floor, spacing and opportunities for whether it's Jontel off of a ball screen with good spacing or that, but that is more by design if we get to a certain point in the shot clock, which a lot of teams will do. Some people run a flat ball screen, some people do different actions. We sort of have worked on putting him in a spot where we think he can be successful, at least creating or scoring.

**Q. You mentioned briefly coming down off the high Thursday and losing over the weekend. It seems like that's happened to a lot of teams when they've had the big wins this year, Maryland lost after beating Duke and Wake lost after upsetting Miami. Can you talk about the difficulty in -- a bad defeat can hurt you but sometimes a big win can be difficult to carry over or respond to.**

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, I think human nature comes into it. You just -- in our situation, a different environment, there's so much energy and passion from our crowd on Thursday, then you go on the road and you just don't have that. So really what it comes down to is your ability to be real sound.

I watched our game closely, and I don't think there was a lack of effort. I don't think it was likely we just laid an egg. We played well enough

to win. We had some breakdowns down the stretch, they made some plays. But it wasn't like someone just had an off game. I said it after, Joe Harris didn't play as well probably as he's been playing, and that's probably true. He was a little out of sync, partly because of their defense.

But overall it was an okay-played game, but it's a fine line, and you're not -- the emotion side of it is going to be different when you go into different venues, and that's the test of your team, to be able to play at a very sound level, to minimize mistakes on the road down the stretch because that's what'll get you if it's, again, breakdowns on defense, missed shots, free throws, turnovers, all those things come into play.

You're always in that spot, again, after a big win to guard against overconfidence. I don't think our guys battled that. That's why I watched the game. I wasn't confident that was the issue.

**Q. You guys are locked in a pretty tight race for a third, fourth, fifth seed in the ACC tournament. How important is it to get out of the fifth seed where you have to play on Thursday to get the bye to play on Friday?**

TONY BENNETT: Well, of course you want to finish as high as you can and you want to be playing as good a basketball as possible heading into the ACC tournament. So all that stuff is -- you just know every game you play, and the last few when you're in the hunt for postseason play for seeding, they're all important. So when you can get those big wins, you take them, and then you know you've got to be ready, and then you've got to, as I said, respond after tough losses. But yeah, it's all coming down to it in those spots, and really there's a crunch of a lot of them. A lot will be shaken out here the last couple games.

**Q. And if I could follow up, I've been asking coaches about defensive players because we've got to pick an all-defensive team, and frankly I'm baffled this year. Are there two or three guys around the league? I know you guys play great defense and have great candidates, but are there two or three guys around the league that have really impressed you as defenders?**

TONY BENNETT: Around the league, not counting our team, yeah, Durand Scott did a heck of a job when we played against them and he locked on to Joe. Michael Snaer has that ability, there's some shot blockers out there, Len, just going through. There's a number of guys that can

do it individually, but those maybe off the top of my head stand out. I'd probably have to sit down and really think about it.

**Q. I know you guys have a team defense concept, but who are the two or three guys that you feel like anchor your defense?**

TONY BENNETT: Well, I think Akil Mitchell is very active, and he's done well certainly and played some very good defense for us. You always start your defense at the point of attack with Jontel. As Jontel has gotten healthy and all that he can really put a lot of pressure on the ball and is tough-minded that way. Those two would probably stand out, and other guys have played well, but I'd go with those two.

**Q. Could you talk about your last defensive position yesterday? It was kind of a worst-case scenario.**

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, right.

**Q. What were you after that play, or was it just a guy -- they elevated and got off the shot. What could Evan have done differently other than foul?**

TONY BENNETT: Sure. Well, actually that wasn't Evan's man, that was Justin's man. We talked about guarding the three-point line, and we knew we were up two, and as you always say, just stay between the man and the basket and make him make a tough shot, guard the three-point line, and we played initially good defense. And you'd have to ask Coach Donahue, I don't think that was the design of the play. I think the kid made a play. We guarded for a while, whatever it was, and then the -- I can't remember who made the pass. I know Rahon made the shot. I don't know if it was Odio or --

**Q. Yeah, I think it was Odio. That was in the quotes we got.**

JIM LARRANAGA: One of those two, right. He started driving, and he kind of got down the lane line, and we were in front and Akil was over there, and it pulled Evan -- I think the shot clock is going down, and Justin and Evan sort of pulled in, and they sort of sunk in as that ball went over there, and their guys exchanged, Justin and Evan's, and the kid made a nice pass. He jumped up and he rifled it back behind him, and then we responded a little late, and Evan was closest to it

so he went out.

But obviously like I said, if we could have stayed tight on those guys and let that guy make a shot over the top, not foul him, worst case scenario, it goes to a tie game. But we left the three-point line is the thing we didn't want to do. We were on it tight for a while, and then as that ball got deep in the lane, it just pulled them in, and then that guy got the rhythm shot they exchanged on the weak side, and obviously that one hurt.

## MARK GOTTFRIED NC STATE

MARK GOTTFRIED: Well, we had a nice win last night and now we've got to shift gears and get ready for Wake Forest on Wednesday. We've got a lot of respect for Wake Forest obviously. They played a phenomenal second half against us earlier in the year, and they've gained our respect. We've got to get ourselves mentally ready to play for this one.

**Q. After the North Carolina game, you talked about CJ Leslie and about how he needed to improve. Just his play, since you said that, and just some conversations you've had with him and how impressed were you with him down the stretch last night?**

MARK GOTTFRIED: He's played better since the North Carolina game. He just needs to continue to play at a high level for our team. I think he understands it. I've talked to him about it. When you're a good player like he is, you have a responsibility to play well every night.

**Q. This program for quite some time has been the hunter instead of the hunted. Talk about that adjustment this season and how in the last -- at least the last few games or the last few weeks you've seen progress with finishing the deal, especially on the road.**

MARK GOTTFRIED: Well, I think we're getting better. I'm not sure we handled that early in the season, being in a different position than any of our players have ever been in, where we were the hunter and not the hunted.

I think you always want to stay aggressive and be the hunter. You know, really if you look at our season, we had the three games there in the middle there without Lorenzo and lost all three of

those games. That set us back. We didn't handle that very well when he was hurt.

But I do think our team right now is playing with a lot of confidence. I think we're coming together as a unit. We're getting better defensively. I think we just need to keep going day by day.

**Q. The first time you played against Wake, Devin Thomas had a tremendous impact on the game. Now that you've -- of course you hadn't seen him before that other than watching him on tape. Now that you've seen him and your team has played against him, what do you think you could do a little bit differently against him this time?**

MARK GOTTFRIED: Well, he's really good. Obviously he's left-handed and he was great over his right shoulder shooting the left-handed jump hook, and we gave him about six of those, so we've got to take that away.

But he's a good young player that is going to become one of the best interior players in this league over the next couple years. He's had a great freshman year, and he's big and strong. He's a good offensive rebounder. We've got to keep him on the backboard. He manhandled us early. We can't let that happen again.

**Q. Maybe when you go back and watch the film rather than during the game itself, but do you have kind of a coach's appreciation for a battle between guys like Howell and Thomas going at it as hard as they do and both being productive, too?**

MARK GOTTFRIED: Yeah, and I think Richard will have a lot of incentive for this game. But Jordan played a lot in that first game, and Devin Thomas just kept getting offensive rebounds. He just kept getting them and scoring them. So I think that our guys will be very tuned in when it comes to guarding him this game.

**Q. You guys are locked in a tight battle with Virginia and North Carolina for three, four, five seed in the ACC tournament. Last year you were five and had to play on Thursday night. I just wonder how significant is that to get out of that fifth seed, to get the bye for the first round?**

MARK GOTTFRIED: I don't really -- you know, you never know. Obviously you'd like to be

in the top four. We would love to be in the top four. But if not, if you don't get there, you've got to roll on and play. Maybe it helped us last year, you never know. We played a game, had a game under our belt, Virginia had not played a game. That may have actually been an advantage for us at that time, so you never actually know. Certainly you want to be in the top four.

That's where we're trying to get to, and so we'll see what happens.

**Q. I've been asking coaches about defensive players. We've got to pick an all-ACC defensive team and I need some help. I wonder if there are two or three guys around the league -- you've seen everybody. Have there been two or three players that have impressed you as defense players?**

MARK GOTTFRIED: I'd have to stop and think about that one for a while. I haven't really thought that through. I'd have to -- I'm going to pass on that one right now just because I haven't thought it through, and I'd hate to say somebody and then miss them.

**Q. Tell me about your own team then. Who anchors your defense? Are there two or three guys on your team that you see as defensive anchors?**

MARK GOTTFRIED: I don't know that there is one on our team. Obviously Lorenzo does a great job as a point guard. He creates a lot of havoc. He gets his hands on a lot of passes and deflections and those type of things. Quiet as it's kept, Scott Wood is not the most athletic guy, but he defends things so well with his intelligence. He's figures out how to guard and take away other people, their options.

I don't know that we have one guy that's just a standout guy right now. I think collectively we're all pretty good.

## ROY WILLIAMS NORTH CAROLINA

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, it was a good week for us. We had two wins, one on the road and one at home. I feel good about our team but know that we've got so much work to do and so many ways that we can get better. You're just like every team down the stretch; you're trying to get better from

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one day to the next, and hopefully it'll show up on game day. My team has gotten better as the season has gone along, but we still have a long way to go.

**Q. Talk a little bit about the communication that you've had with your team as the season has gone along. I know that early in the season you talked about coming out of a time-out, trying to get a play done, and you had a hard time sometimes with that and there were some frustrating moments. I'm sure that a lot of has attributed to youth, but here the last four weeks or so, it seems like we've seen dramatic improvement from your team in just about every area. How much of a factor has the improvement and communication been?**

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, the communication has been a lot better, not only from our bench to the players, but from the players themselves. One play early yesterday Michael Snaer runs a baseline, Dexter loses him, and we don't communicate very well, and he gets a wide open three right in front of our bench. A few minutes later after a time-out, we said, guys, you've got to talk, you've got to see what's going on, and PJ made a really nice switch when Leslie got hit by the screen and switched out to Snaer, and Michael missed the shot, but Leslie -- when TJ switched out, Leslie took his man and tried to front the low post guy.

So the communication has gotten better from the bench to the players and then the players themselves I think were talking better than -- by a hundred million miles better than we were early in the season. But I think you hit it when you asked the question, that we're so young, and particularly in the start of the season getting them to understand something quickly and be able to put it into play on the court is something that all young teams struggle with, and we've got a bunch of teams in our league that are really, really young and have struggled with that quite a bit.

**Q. So many people want to talk about the game with Duke. When you have a young team, how do you make sure they're focused on the next one, and as for the next one, what are your thoughts about Maryland leaving the conference?**

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, I think that we are

a young team, but my team has been pretty grounded the last -- once we got past December, they've understood a little bit more about what we're talking about. I think they'll understand how good Maryland has been at home and who they've beaten at home and that we have to play every single day down the stretch. We've done some nice things here the last couple of weeks, but I tell them all the time, every play matters in every game, and every game surely matters during your schedule. There's no difference, you don't get any more credit for beating Duke than you do for beating anybody else. It's all just one game, and I think the kids will understand that and realize how significant a task it is going to play a very good Maryland team on their home court where they've been really, really good. And so for us, that's the way we'll look at it.

The question about them leaving the conference, I hate it because I think Maryland has been part of the ACC for a long time, but they chose to do what they thought was best for their school and their athletic department. If this is the last time that we play up there, I hope we win, and if it's not the last time we play up there, I hope we win. But those kind of things are out of control of the coaches. The whole scenario is so ridiculous, who knows what's going to happen next.

**Q. I can't remember exactly what you said about PJ's footwork, but you had made a comment about his footwork not being the best, I guess, up to a certain -- at some points in his career. Could you sort of walk me back through that, and have you noticed an improvement now that he's playing this bigger role and more minutes?**

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, I don't know exactly what we're talking about when we say footwork, but the two things that come to mind is when he came here the first day as a freshman, I said, PJ, you can't keep kicking your right foot out there in front, you don't have good balance. Somebody that's supposed to be a great shooter has got to go up, be balanced, have both feet on the ground, come back down hopefully in the same spot and be balanced when you come down. We preached that to him all year last year and a good portion of this year, including one day at practice last week.

I said, PJ, your right foot is back out in front, and I sat there beside of him and not looking at the shot at all, just looking at his feet, and I said, good, good, bad. And the first shot went in, the

second shot went in and the third did not. If that's what you're talking about, that's the way we've tried to attack it. If it's footwork and getting around in front the low post guy, which is what we talked a little bit about in the game yesterday, is that he's -- he hadn't played the post position, but as a 4 man you've got to be able to guard somebody in the post, so we've got to work on his pivot defense.

**Q. I was asking about the shot specifically, about kicking the leg out. Do you think that part is generally better then?**

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, it's better, but it's an everyday occurrence. I mean, I'm serious. There was one day last week in practice, I stood there and watched three shots, and I called -- and never looked at the ball and got all three of them right just because of his footwork. It's a habit that he's got to get out of, and sometimes he does -- yesterday he came down on the break and shot twice from almost the same identical spot, and both of them looked really good, and one went in and one didn't. So it's not the only factor. But you're never going to be a good shooter if you don't have good balance; I don't care who you are.

**Q. I'm going to take you in a different direction. Your background with Michael Jordan, I'm working on a story taking a look at the history of the dunk, and I thought you would be a guy who could share a little bit of a perspective here. How did Michael change the game given his athleticism and his ability as a dunker?**

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, I've been asked about that, but the athleticism -- there were other guys in the NBA before Michael that were really athletic. Dominique was in the league when Michael got there and that kind of thing, so there were some. But Michael, just his ability to control the ball in the air, and it seemed like Michael always was in the air longer than anybody else, and Michael was one of those guys who could jump vertically straight up a long way, and he could also do the broad jump, the dunk from the foul line kind of thing. Michael could jump off both feet, but he was fantastic jumping off of one foot on the break, too. There was no hole in his game about his acrobatic play in the air.

But he could move the ball around because of those big hands more so than a lot of people, and then the other thing is he had a great

flair for the game. I mean, I remember his dunk at the end of the Maryland game up at Cole Field House, and that was one of the early ones, and that was the "rock the cradle baby" or whatever the dickens it was.

But there were things that Michael could do and would try to do more so than other people, but again, saying -- Dominique was up there in the league at least one year before Michael, and very few people did it like Dominique. At the same time there was a guy named Julius Irving that was up there even before that. So I just think that Michael had the great hands and the great ability to move things around in the air and stay up there a little longer than most people, and then he had a tremendous flair, and I think if you added all that, and he didn't mind dunking over people and telling them he was going to and then telling them about doing it after he did it, too.

**Q. If I could add to that very quickly, from a broader perspective, how do you feel the implementation of the dunk coming back in the '70s changed the game of basketball and whether or not there's a negative or a positive connotation when it comes to fundamentals and the decline overall in those?**

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, I think it was bad for the game when it was outlawed those few years in the '70s. I don't think the dunk is anything wrong with the game. I don't think it makes you be any more fundamentally sound. I love the dunk, and I love the power and taking the ball to the basket strong. Some guys may be older than me or even more corny than I am if that's possible, might say that they wished guy could just lay it up strong.

But the size and the ability and the strength of the athletes today, those guys can block those shots, whereas it's awfully difficult to block a dunk. So for me I love the dunk. I just tell my guys all the time, if you're going to try to dunk it, then make it. I tell them, if you can't dunk, don't try to. So for me I think the dunk has been very good for the game. The fans like it. The game is not just meant for coaches.

**Q. Going into the last week of the regular season you guys still have a chance to be the second seed in the tournament, but you also have a chance to drop as low as five. Is that significant at all, to stay out of that fifth place and have to play on Thursday as opposed to getting the bye on Friday?**

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, I think it is significant because you need to keep winning to stay out of that spot, and so we want to win every game, and so I think it's significant for that part. But I don't think it's the end-all if you end up fifth. It still means in this league you've had a pretty doggone good year, and us, Virginia and North Carolina State are it looks like going to be three, four and five, and I'm sure all of us would like to be in the top four and not play the first day. But it is significant, you'd like to have that, but I don't think it ends your season if you end up fifth. It just means you play on the first day. In some ways you get a little bit of a head start by having one game under your belt and not opening night jitters in the tournament that somebody else would do when you play them on the second day.

So I think it's significant because you want to keep winning, but if I'm not mistaken, State was there last year and played well, and then played well in our tournament and then went on to the NCAA Tournament and played well.

**Q. I've been asking coaches about defensive players since we've got to pick an all-defensive team, and I'm a little clueless about that. You've seen everybody in the league now. Are there two or three guys that stand out in your mind as defensive stoppers in the league?**

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, that's a hard question because I'm going through, okay, Miami is in first and the first person that comes to my mind there is Kenny Kadji because I think in our game here he had three big blocks at the end of the game and had two big blocks I think it was down there, and with his size and being able to play some people out on the floor, I think that was good. Jimmy Larranaga may not like his defense, but I know he did some great things against us defensively.

Duke, Mason Plumlee makes it hard around that basket, as well. Lorenzo Brown from North Carolina State I think sets the tone. He's got quick hands, long arms and does some things. I think Joe Harris is a much better athlete than people give him credit for, and Joe has had a couple of steals, a couple of blocks that you say, wow, that kid is good.

But that's a hard question to answer. I think if I've got to vote on one of those teams, I want to take some time to go through every team

in our league. I think Reggie Bullock for us is really a guy that I think does a great job defensively, and Marcus Paige defensively the second half of the season has been light years better than he was at the start of the season.

If they ask me to pick that team, I'm going to take quite a bit of time.

## **JIM LARRANAGA MIAMI**

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, we had a nice win at home last week over Virginia Tech, and then a tough road loss at Duke in what I thought was a tremendous college basketball game, very entertaining for the fans. Ryan Kelly was sensational, a kid who missed seven or eight weeks of the season, to come back and play that way I thought was remarkable.

But we're excited about being at home on Wednesday night.

**Q. I've been asking coaches about defensive players. We've got to pick an all-ACC defensive team and I need help. A couple coaches right off mentioned Durand Scott as one of the best defenders in the league. Could you talk about him? Roy just mentioned Kenny Kadji because of some defensive plays he made against Carolina that impressed Roy. Those two guys, anybody else, and then who else around the league really impresses you as a defensive player?**

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, first of all, Durand Scott is just a tremendous competitor, and he concentrates more on defense than almost any player that I've had, and he just works relentlessly. He wants to always guard the other team's best perimeter player, and he takes great pride in his defense.

I think Shane Larkin has done a terrific job of being our catalyst at the defensive end of the floor with the number of steals that he gets. I think he's either leading the league or very, very close to it right now.

Kenny Kadji has blocked a lot of shots this year and gotten a lot of defensive rebounds.

There are a lot of different categories on defense. I think in my mind Jontel Evans is a really key player for the league because he's a heck of a defender on the ball. That's where your defense

begins. Joe Harris is a very good defender. You've got a guy like Daniel Miller who's a very good shot blocker, Mason Plumlee blocks shots and get rebounds. I think there's just a lot of good defense being played in our league, so you've got a lot of choices there.

**Q. With senior night approaching this weekend coming up, can you talk a little bit about your five seniors and how much they've meant to the program these past four or five, sometimes six years for some of these guys?**

JIM LARRANAGA: Yeah, well, I've only been here for two, but just being around these guys has been a real joy for me. I love coaching players who want to be coached, who want to get better, who want to improve. I think Durand Scott has just been a treasure here. He's such a unique individual. His toughness, he just radiates confidence in himself and brings out confidence in his teammates.

Trey McKinney Jones really gambled by leaving UMKC and coming to the ACC and playing at the highest level of college basketball and yet has moved into our starting lineup and done a fantastic job, can really shoot the ball, very, very high character. He's working on his Master's Degree.

Kenny Kadji is also a transfer student who I think has improved dramatically throughout the course of his career and really has adjusted and made the transition to a new coaching staff very, very well.

Julian gamble I think is the story of our team because of his torn ACL and not played and being in his sixth year working on his Master's Degree, and his toughness in the post defensively, rebounding wise running and scoring and around the basket has been one of the major reasons we've enjoyed the success we have.

And then Reggie Johnson has overcome probably more adversity than probably any player last year and then this year with injuries, suspensions and more injuries and now having to come in off the bench for a major portion of his senior year.

It's a great group of guys, and I'm very, very fortunate that I inherited them.

**Q. I was wondering if you could go back in time with me a little bit. You played in college if I recall correctly at the time when the**

**dunk was outlawed and you were an assistant in the college game when it was brought back. I was wondering what your thoughts are on the dunk itself. Are you a pro or a con guy when it comes to just dunking in general?**

JIM LARRANAGA: Well, I'm very much in favor of the dunk. I think it really hurt my college career that I was not able to show my Dr. J-type dunking ability. But I mean, the dunk is a major part of the game. It's a fun part of the game, and I think players enjoy it, fans enjoy it. I mean, I do. I just want to be sure that when our guys go to the basket that they take it strong, and if you can dunk the ball, you should. If you can't, you shouldn't. And you shouldn't feel like you have to entertain the fans, but you've seen players over the course of their careers, guys like Michael Jordan and LeBron James, guys like that, who are just unbelievable in what they can do in the air. So I think it's a big part of the game. I am certainly glad that we came to our senses and got it back in.

**Q. Do you feel as if there's a correlation between fundamentals declining over time with the current generation of players and the fact that you have more and more focus it seems, whether it's ESPN or whatnot, on kind of highlight-type plays, including the dunk? Do you feel as if there's any correlation there between those?**

JIM LARRANAGA: No, not really. I don't think it has to do with that. I think it has to do with a lot of rules. We don't get a chance to coach our guys very much. Thank goodness we can now have two hours a week during the summer. But kids don't get coached very well in elementary schools and high schools because of time limitations. Don't have enough time to spend with your players.

Our high school coaches only get a chance during the season. They can't work with their players during the off season.

It would be a whole lot better if we treated sports like we do education. No one would discourage a student from studying or -- I don't know why we discourage kids from working on their games more.

**Q. And you mentioned that you were against the dunk being outlawed. I was wondering if you could elaborate a little bit on that. Did that set the game back in your mind at all? And how nice was it to have it brought back? It is kind of strange as a historian**

**looking back on some of the games where you have these incredible athletes who were not allowed to do what they could do, and that's dunk.**

JIM LARRANAGA: Quite honestly I believe, and no one would say this back then, but I believe they outlawed the dunk so that Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, who was Lew Alcindor at the time, wouldn't just dunk on everybody every game and average 60 points like he did when he was a freshman playing against the UCLA varsity where he scored something like 56 or 58 points and dunked on them all the time.

I think all the rules come as a result of things that are happening or are anticipated will happen in the game. They widened the lane back when it was a keyhole to prevent big guys from just dominating in around the rim, and the NBA expanded it even further to give more room for players to get to the basket. And then we added the three-point shot to give smaller players opportunities to add something to the game that they felt they couldn't do near the basket. Big guys have always dominated the inside, and we've given now the guards opportunities to dominate the perimeter. It's developed into everybody shoots the three now, even big guys, like our Kenny Kadji.

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**March 4, 2013**



An interview with:

**COACH MARK TURGEON  
MARYLAND**

THE MODERATOR: We have with us now Maryland head basketball coach Mark Turgeon. Coach, a few comments about your team, then we'll open it up for questions.

COACH TURGEON: Well, we are happy with the weekend. We had a good road win which hasn't been easy for us, but played really well. Proud of our guys. Looking forward to this week. Obviously North Carolina coming in, Senior Night. Probably one of the hottest teams in the country right now. They're really playing well. Went to the small lineup, different team. Be a great challenge for us. But looking forward to it.

THE MODERATOR: Open it up for questions.

**Q. Was that the most mentally tough your team has been, given it was on the road, given the foul trouble? Was it a matter of just time that it would happen?**

COACH TURGEON: Well, yeah, I think it was as mentally tough as we've been on the road this year. We were pretty tough early at Northwestern, but the game kind of flowed for us.

To overcome what we've overcome, we weren't very good on the road, then get out of the foul trouble we were in, keep plugging.

Comes down to a couple things. We had a not-so-fun film session on Thursday after the way we defended at Georgia Tech. We had a good practice on Friday. I think it was a mindset going in with our guys.

They decided, hey, it's time for us to grow up and start winning on the road, at least play with a little toughness on the road. I think they made up their mind they were going to do it. They had to do it.

We were pretty good offensively, take away the turnovers. But you don't take them away

because we tend to do that. So we fought through the turnovers and fought through the foul trouble and got it done.

On the road trip we got outscored I think 11 and 11 on the foul line both games. You better be good defensively. We got to play without fouling, but we got to be tough enough to overcome those type of things on the road, too.

**Q. After the game you were talking about how defense determined who was going to start your players. I've been asking questions about defenses because we have to pick an all-defensive team. Who has been fundamentally your best defensive players this year?**

COACH TURGEON: Like our team, we've been up and down. I think our best defender obviously around the rim is Alex Len. He's been inconsistent, but when he's on, a really good defender. Not only blocks shots but affects shots, a good rebounder for us.

Probably fundamentally most sound and has a chance is Pe'Shon Howard. He did a great job on Harris Saturday. He's been inconsistent, up and down throughout the year, but hopefully down the stretch he'll continue to guard that way.

**Q. You played everybody in the league. Are there two or three guys around the league that jump out at you as great defenders?**

COACH TURGEON: Boy, I don't ever think about it. I think the Jontel Evans at Virginia does a good job, really starts their defense. I'm sorry. I think the big guys at Miami are smart and as good of big defenders as there are in our league. They're really good, all of them, but especially the starters with (Julian) Gamble and (Kenny) Kadji.

I haven't thought about it because we don't have to vote for a while. Just trying to figure out how to get another win at this time.

**Q. Before you played Duke, there was a lot of talk about your NCAA chances, how**

**important that game was. Obviously responded with a great game. Seems to be a feeling that you guys are still right there on the bubble and need help. Do you think that translates to the same kind of emotion with North Carolina this week?**

COACH TURGEON: Well, we try not to think about where we are just because people think we're on the bubble. We might not be. You don't know what the committee's thinking, where they have us.

We're fired up to play North Carolina because it's North Carolina. They're one of the hottest teams in the country. Hopefully should be ranked this week by the way they've been playing. So we'll be excited for the game because of that.

It's our last home game, Senior Night. It's a tough week for us, North Carolina at home, and at Virginia who is pretty good at home. Tough week.

We put ourselves behind the eight ball, lost a few games we shouldn't have lost maybe on paper. We did, so we are where we are.

We got 20 wins with this young team. Headed in the right direction. Proud of this group. Haven't been as consistent as we'd like, but hopefully we can get some wins down the stretch.

**Q. Can you talk about the process that you've gone through with Pe'Shon the last few weeks. Is it a combination of your patience and his perseverance or are there more factors involved?**

COACH TURGEON: Well, I've been extremely patient with him since the summer. I think I've been patient.

I think when I told the team that our best defenders were going to start at Wake Forest, he sat right up in his seat. He knows he's one of our better defenders. I said, I'm going to base our decisions on defense, not who can make a shot. So I think he just was right away in tune to what we were trying to do.

It's been no fun for him. Been up and down, in and out of the doghouse. But he responded, which was good to see. It was good to see him smile again.

I kept telling him through the drought, Pe'Shon, you're so important to this team. Mentally he wasn't where he needed to be. Saturday he got back into it mentally and hopefully he'll finish the season that way.

**Q. Were you surprised how well he had given how little he had played the last few games?**

COACH TURGEON: I was a little surprised how well he played for 30 minutes. I was pleasantly surprised that his endurance was good. He continued to guard. Didn't seem to get tired. He got a little tired defensively. Took him out. We were able to rest him when we had the lead three or four minutes in the second half. Probably got seven or eight minutes on real-time. That was good for us.

But took care of the ball for the most part. Made good decisions. Got us into our offense. He was talking out there, communicating, which we're not great at sometimes. It was good. I was happy for him. It was good to see.

I kept telling him, A lot of basketball left in your career, son. Let's don't wait till next year. Let's try to get it going right now. And he did.

Hopefully he'll stay consistent. That's been our biggest problem. I just told him, Pe'Shon, we don't need you to score, we've won 20 games without you scoring. We need to defend and get into our offense. I think he took that on as a challenge to do those two things.

**Q. The game you had against Carolina, was that sort of the start of when things started to fall apart? He really had a tough game down there.**

COACH TURGEON: No, no. We lost to Florida State at home before that. I think it was a start of showing who we really were. We've been right around the .500 mark, below it, above it. We've been up and down.

But 75% of the teams in the country may look like you're up and down, but it might be who you're playing. League's a lot better. Carolina was great that day, especially in the first half. The first half, they were tremendous. Got to give them a lot of credit. They were ready to go.

This will be an entirely different game because they're in a small lineup now, it's at our place, much further along. It will be interesting. But they are one of the hottest teams in the country, I really believe that, right now.

**Q. Coach, seeing it's Senior Night, James (Padgett) and Logan (Aronhalt) had some big shots over the weekend. How important is it to see those guys finish strong**

given this week?

COACH TURGEON: Well, James has been here. He was on the championship team when he first got here. Didn't play a lot. He experienced some thrills. The last two years, his sophomore and junior year, haven't gone great. He's continued to stick with it and gotten better. He's a great kid, will graduate. I'd love for him to go out on a good note. If he doesn't play well that night, he's had a great career. There's a lot of basketball left after that.

But then there's the final game, ACC in a post-season tournament after that. I'd like for him to play well. You always want your seniors on Senior Night to play well.

Logan, it's been a one-year deal. I think it's been great for him. I know academically it's been great for him. It's been great for him to be a part of the ACC. He's had a good time with it. You'd like to see him play well, too, on Senior Night.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, 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**

THE MODERATOR: We have with us now Georgia Tech head coach Brian Gregory. Coach, a few comments about your team and then we'll take questions.

COACH GREGORY: Last week did some good things. Obviously had a great win on Wednesday night against a very talented, very good Maryland team. For even them to be talked about being a bubble team, I think they are more than good enough now, playing in the NCAA tournament, but winning games in that tournament, they've proven that.

We played well. It was our best 40 minutes of the season. Did a lot of good things. Really moved the ball well on offense, defended well, rebounded the ball exceptionally well. I was pleased with that.

We just didn't play well enough yesterday against, again, a very good NC State team to win the game. NC State is two last-second tip-ins away of from being 12-4 in this league and

probably being a top-15 team in the country. I think there were two losses with Oklahoma State and to Michigan, neither one at home, one on the road and one a neutral site. That's how close it is.

Unfortunately, with five or six minutes to go in the game, it's a one-possession game. So although that shows the progress you're making, you still want to figure out a way.

I heard Mark (Turgeon). You want the seniors to end up on a good note. It's unfortunate the two seniors, probably their impact and their sacrifices they made for this program won't be maybe realized until down the road. But that's how it goes when you're rebuilding the program.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

**Q. I've been asking questions about defensive players. Daniel Miller leads the league in blocked shots. Is that a reflection of his defensive value? Anybody else on your team that you consider a defensive anchor?**

COACH GREGORY: Well, Daniel is our defensive anchor. Maybe it's our fault in terms of our program, and I'll take responsibility, I'm not sure he's getting any credit at all for how good he is defensively.

I think maybe if the coaches took a step back and looked, hard to score around the post, not just our post players, but guys running to the basket and so forth.

It will be interesting to see if he's on the all-defensive team. He very rarely gives up offensive rebounds, he anchors our defense. We are one of the better defensive teams not only in the league but in the country. A lot of times, three freshmen out there, two on the perimeter, the guy alongside Daniel is a freshman, so he has become a very good defensive player.

He maybe doesn't have the SportsCenter type blocked shots that you see, but he gets his hands on a lot of stuff. If you had to list the top five defenders in the league, you'd be hard-pressed to find four better ones than him. The way I look at it, defenders make an impact on the game, and that's something he does.

**Q. Can you help us out picking that all-defensive team? Are there three or four guys around the league that jump out at you as great defenders?**

COACH GREGORY: (Florida State's



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Michael) Snaer is a great defender on the perimeter. I think if you looked at it, you'd say Alex Len is a great defender due to size. I don't know where his block total is at, his rebounding total is at. You keep going down the list. Those would be the guys that kind of jump out.

Virginia's a great defensive team. You can maybe throw (Jontel) Evans in the mix there. Sometimes you got to be cautious. He leads the league in steals. Sometimes it's because he is the guy that gambles the most and is not really a solid defender. You're always a little cautious of that.

Again, we got to win more games to get more accolades. Would you throw (Julian) Gamble in there from Miami? The difference is, with Daniel, he's as good of a big guy in terms of getting out on the perimeter, guarding guys on the perimeter, trapping ball screens. Some of the post defenders are so good because of their sheer size, ability to eat space around the basket. Daniel is unique in terms of he can step out and do a pretty good job of defending on the perimeter as well.

**Q. You've played three freshmen extensively. With only two games left in the regular season, then the ACC tournament, in what areas have you seen the most improvement?**

COACH GREGORY: I think their understanding of the game. Sometimes it's hard to pinpoint. But their defensive rotations, which four months ago they would have looked at me like I was speaking a foreign language when you talk to them about dropping to the line, with the big guy rotates over, that you got to drop, help the helper, stuff like that. They wouldn't have had any idea what that was. They've really picked that stuff up.

Their overall basketball IQ, understanding of the game, understanding of the multiple plays that you have to make. Talk about offenses, multiple actions, multiple efforts, they've grasped that. They don't always do it, but at least now we're on the same page with it. That has been the biggest thing.

They have become more consistent. Our challenge, you just look at the stats, if our freshmen, those three guys, don't play exceptionally well, we haven't won. It's when two of those guys have played very well that we're a different team. So that's been the challenge, not so much playing freshmen, because a lot of guys are playing freshmen. But in a lot of ways, we depend on them.

I thought T.J. Warren yesterday played exceptionally well, maybe his best game. Everything he did, he played off of C.J. Leslie and Lorenzo Brown and (Richard) Howell. That's not to take anything away from him, because he's going to be a great player in this league, but that's where our challenge with our freshmen has been at.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for taking time being with us today.

COACH GREGORY: Thank you.

An interview with:

## **COACH LEONARD HAMILTON FLORIDA STATE**

THE MODERATOR: We have with us now Florida State head coach Leonard Hamilton. Coach, a few comments about your team, then we'll open it up for questions.

COACH HAMILTON: Well, obviously we played a game on Sunday against a very high-shooting University of North Carolina team. I felt we had a point there in the first half where we had, once again, about five or six possessions where we allowed them to get on top of us, and we had a very difficult time overcoming that period. We dug a hole for ourselves that we just couldn't seem to get out of.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach Hamilton.

**Q. I'm working on a story looking at the history of the dunk in the game of basketball. Could you share your thoughts on some of the good and maybe the not-so-good things that have come away the influence the dunk has had on the game.**

COACH HAMILTON: It's always been amazing to me how that athletic maneuver seems to energize the crowd. I remember before Kareem Abdul, when he was Lew Alcindor, came into college basketball, it's interesting to me how the dunk was outlawed for a year or so, which I thought was absolutely the best thing that ever happened to Lew Alcindor at the time, because that made him develop the famous sky hook. Once people realized that was a little bit unfair, they went back to allowing people to dunk.

It seems as though that is one thing from

an athletic standpoint that seems to energize the crowd and get people almost in a hysteria. We had it at the NBA All-Star Game. Guys receive recognition, endorsements, commercials, all kinds of things as a result of demonstrating that athletic maneuver.

It's part of the game. I'm sure it's here to stay. Little guys always want to dunk and big guys always want to shoot threes.

**Q. Do you feel there have been any negatives that have come away from the influence? Some have talked about it's had an effect on overall fundamentals.**

COACH HAMILTON: I don't feel so. I think maybe most of those guys are guys who can't jump, who complain about it. I think you're always going to have people who look at things differently. It's part of the game.

I don't see any negative other than sometimes you just got to be careful not to get yourself overextended and unbalanced, get undercut. I see it as part of the game that makes it more exciting.

**Q. I've been asking coaches about defensive players in the league. Several coaches have mentioned Michael Snaer. I know he was a great defender last year. Has his individual defense been as good this year as you had hoped coming off of what he did last year?**

COACH HAMILTON: I think early on in the year we took Michael off the ball trying to develop some other youngsters for the future to defend the ball. Michael has the ability to defend smaller, quicker people, and he also has the ability to guard the setup guy as well as the guy who is the scorer.

I think Michael, if there's been any lack of defensive execution, it's not been because of Michael's execution, I think it's been because of the youthfulness of players around him in terms of how they shrink the gaps, how they plug certain parts of the floor to make it easier for him to defend. We have not had the soundness as we've had in the past, which has made it more difficult for him to be as effective as he's been in the past.

I don't think it's taken away from his ability. I just think that our team has been in such a learning mode in so many different facets, we have not been as good a defensive team. It may appear he's not playing as well defensively, but I think he's

probably been better than he has been, it's just that we have not had the experience to support it.

**Q. You played everybody in the league now. Are there three or four guys that jump out at you as outstanding defenders?**

COACH HAMILTON: I think the (Durand) Scott kid at Miami is a solid defender. He just seems to create issues for people that are somewhat different. I think he's a good on-the-ball defender, he seems to be play people without the ball. He has that quickness, that ability to make life difficult for us. He stands out to me as much as anybody.

**Q. This past weekend Terrance Shannon returned to the floor after missing 11 games. How do you view his performance? How is his neck or the injury he had?**

COACH HAMILTON: His injury is just about healed. There's no reason why he can't play. It's just that because of the neck injury, for those 11 games, which I guess spanned six weeks or so, somewhere thereabouts, he was not able to ride a bicycle or do any type of cardiovascular that would have jogged the vertebrae. He has not been able to do anything. He was able to do some light lifting, which was not very much.

So when you take an athlete out of circulation for that long, he loses his conditioning. I told him we'd try to play him here and there, get him back on the court, that sometime during the season we might be able to get him back on the floor.

We just gave him a couple minutes so the contact wouldn't bother him. He's not anywhere close to being in condition enough that we can utilize him for extended minutes.

Our fear is that we need to be very careful with the condition because it could cause him to injure himself. Two days last week we did let him have some contact in practice, not very much, but a little, just to get him used to it. He responded pretty well in the game. We'll probably utilize him more in the next game, but not extensively. We're going to try to get a feel for where he is.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thanks for taking time to be with us today.

An interview with:

## **COACH MIKE KRZYZEWSKI DUKE**

THE MODERATOR: We have with us now Duke head basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski. We'll go right to questions for Coach Krzyzewski.

**Q. Coach, Saturday night, you've seen a lot of brilliant performances of players in your history at Duke, how does Ryan Kelly's performance match up?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: It's a completely different type of performance. Other guys performed while they were in good health, with practice. I've seen some exceptional performances from players over the last 33 years. But nobody had a performance like Ryan, considering the fact that he was out for 51 days, really practiced part of one practice.

It's one of a kind. In awe of what he did really.

**Q. How does him coming back differ from when Kyrie Irving came back a couple years ago and seemed to disrupt the flow of the team, where Ryan Kelly stepped in and seemed to elevate the team?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Kyrie Irving did not disrupt the flow of the team. I think we were a really good team and Kyrie gave us a chance to be an exceptional team. In some ways Ryan disrupted our team on Saturday. I thought we were standing around and watching him. He disrupted it in a really nice way.

But still there's a period of transition. To think that there's no transition just because he had this exceptional performance would be naïve for me to think that. So I'm not going to think that.

The other thing is no one really took Ryan's position at the level that he had played it before. So they didn't redefine a position. It shortened the court on us and made us less of a defensive team because Ryan is an outstanding defender.

I think, to be quite frank with you, that had more significance defensively than offensively. So him coming back, he really doesn't change anybody's role at all, he just makes everybody's role better.

**Q. Ryan and his impact on the defense, is it the kind of way he directs traffic on defense?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I think in a number of ways. First of all, he guarded. Just take an Ohio State game, he guarded Deshaun Thompson. He's guarded outstanding players. When he's guarded them, they've always scored less than their average. They haven't had as significant of an impact on the game as they normally do.

The other thing, he's a great help defender. His talk on defense helps put everybody in position. He's a great position defender. He knows the game. His intelligence, his basketball IQ, is very, very high.

He impacts the game in every way. That's why losing him for 13 games was such a significant loss. Although I'm not sure people wanted to say that. In fact, I know they didn't. But he was. That's why our guys did such a great job when he was gone because we lost a lot.

Now, can we become really comfortable with him being back during these next couple weeks? That's the goal, to get back to the level that we were at when we had him on a continuous basis. That's our goal. That's what we're trying to do.

**Q. Josh Hairston got a lot of extended minutes when Ryan was out. In what way is his game different or better than it was before?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I think the primary way is he has more confidence. I would think Amile Jefferson does, too. They both started games. They've made big plays and wins. They've been out on the court in critical end-of-game situations, some that we've won and some that we've lost.

Just the experience of having been in those situations is invaluable. I mean, that's a plus from having Ryan injured, that we got that type of playing time, court experience for those guys.

**Q. I was curious how Ryan came out physically after the other night.**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Good. I just saw him a few minutes ago. Yesterday we only watched tape. We've been on this murderous schedule really during the last few weeks. All our kids are a little bit rundown. But he felt pretty good. Sore, but his foot wasn't sore. His body was sore. He feels pretty good now.

We won't have a rigorous workout today, but we'll go through our game plan and try to move

ahead and get prepared for Virginia Tech tomorrow night. But he's feeling pretty good.

**Q. I was wondering, once you did review the film from Miami, what did you see that you would like to improve as you get more work in with Ryan?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: With Ryan? I mean, I'd like for him to play that way all the time.

I think the main thing is to see how different the court looks. That's what we tried to show our players yesterday on tape. The court, the spacing of the court, looks different. There's more space. You have to be ready to make some moves, some looks, some reads that you had on Saturday you didn't see because it was the first time in a couple months that they were there, just as a result of having Ryan run our sets and where he is on the court.

So that's the type of thing, to instinctively react to the things presented which are different. It's different. So we have habits with the last 13 games that we have to adjust to now that we're doing this.

Our guys played well. I thought Miami played really well. It was just a big-time game. A lot of times you're playing good defense, and even when you're playing good defense, you can't stop guys who are exceptional players. I mean, (Shane) Larkin and (Kenny) Kadji, (Durand) Scott's drives, you're talking about three of the better players in the country.

**Q. Given your experience in the college game, even internationally, could you help me looking at the history of the dunk. What do you feel are some of the good or bad influences that the dunk has had on the game of basketball in general?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I only think of good influences. I think it was bad when it was outlawed because it was us putting a rule against athletic ability and a great play.

I like the international rule, the ball being alive on the offensive rebound at the rim, to go after it. I think it's more exciting play, instant reactions, and protecting the goal, where you could knock the ball away. I like that part of the international game.

But even though I never did it, I did on an eight-foot basket a lot of times, but even though I never dunked, I think the dunk, it's all positive.

**Q. How have you seen that progress over time? Going all the way back to the ABA, other coaches have talked about that. There's been a transformation and progression where it's really become more of an art and even now you can argue it's a huge part of entertainment for the crowd.**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, things that the normal person can't do, exceptional things, become watched. I mean, people love it because they can't do it. A huge thing is when you dunk and there's resistance. It's not just a straightaway thing. That's where Dr. J was so unbelievable with his. He would maneuver, then at the end still have the ability to elevate or stay elevated and complete it. Jordan would do that.

It's a beautiful part of the game.

I do think as we celebrate it, sometimes we don't celebrate other aspects of the game: our movement without the ball, reads, things like that, so that a lot of youngsters just get caught up with dunking. So as we celebrate one part of it, I'd like to see other parts of the offensive game celebrated a little bit more, especially the pass.

**Q. Can you talk about the ripple effect that Ryan has, how he helps other people on the team by having him back there as part of your offense.**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, he stretches the defense, how you defend the pick-n-roll with Ryan whether he's involved in it or not involved in it is huge. It's huge. How you step in if he's setting it, his spacing, gives the guy coming off of it more room. You know, you have to cover him so when he has the ball it creates more space. It goes on and on.

I mean, the more good players you put on the court, the harder you are to defend, especially when those players have complementary skills. Ryan, Mason (Plumlee) and Seth (Curry) of very good complementary offensive skills. That's why when Ryan was out, the performances of Seth and Mason were even more exceptional because they didn't have the spacing. You could game plan against them even better.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you for being with us today.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Thank you.

An interview with:

## COACH BRAD BROWNELL CLEMSON

THE MODERATOR: We have with us Clemson head basketball coach Brad Brownell. Coach, a few comments about your team, then we'll open it for questions.

COACH BROWNELL: Well, we're obviously struggling here a little bit. Lost another close game at Virginia Tech. But looking forward to the game Tuesday against Boston College. We're celebrating the careers of two seniors, Milt Jennings and Devin Booker.

**Q. Coach, I was going to ask you about the two guys you've inherited, what they've given your program.**

COACH BROWNELL: First of all, really appreciative of the two kids staying. I think when you're a sophomore like they were, rising sophomores, end of your freshmen year, really when I took over, it's kind of a tough time for new kids. You haven't really been at the place long enough to have your roots established.

Really both those guys as freshmen weren't established as players, so it would have been very easy for them to go somewhere else. I'm obviously very happy they didn't, that they stayed with us.

I think both guys have had nice careers. I think Devin Booker is having an all-ACC type year in terms of what he's been able to do night in, night out, averaging 14 or 15 points a game in league play with eight, nine rebounds. Does a lot of blue-collar heavy lifting, as I like to call it, things that you need to get done that doesn't always get noticed that helps you win games, whether it's playing in the post, rebounding, setting screens, doing all the little things that big guys have to do.

I think he's really improved throughout the course of his time here from a guy who really wasn't very comfortable at times playing with the ball to being able to make moves around the basket, make a high-post shot. Having a good senior year, very consistent.

Milt has had a tough career in some ways that expectations have been extremely high on him. At times he probably hasn't met what our fans would like out of him. In all honesty, he's really played pretty well for us in a lot of games for us over the last two years. He's been very consistent here, especially defensive rebounding

and pretty consistent, reasonably consistent, scoring-wise, getting us anywhere from 10 to 12 points a game. A guy who has really matured over the course of the last three years since I've been here and is completely different now than he was when I first got here the beginning of his sophomore year.

**Q. What is the situation with K.J. McDaniels?**

COACH BROWNELL: He sprained his ankle the day of the Carolina game and has not been able to play obviously the last two games. He's probably doubtful for Tuesday I would say right now.

**Q. If I could stretch your memory a little bit, Daniel Miller, he had 16 points against you in the first game and 1 the second. Do you see him as an X factor, that Tech is a different kind of team to have to defend?**

COACH BROWNELL: Well, they certainly do a lot of things in their high-low motion when they're looking inside. He's a big, big kid that certainly is hard to guard. I think he's a very high-level passer for a guy his size. He makes a lot of good decisions that way. I think he's a good defender.

In some ways what's happened a little bit, some of those guys that are freshmen have probably gotten comfortable, starting, playing, have gotten more shots. Sometimes that happens. You have to really work to try to get the ball inside to a big man. He's not the kind of guy that is going to go do a lot of things on his own. He's not flashing up to the top of the key, making threes, beating guys off the dribble. You have to look for him, be patient for him. Sometimes that's hard.

Same thing for us with our inside guys at times. It's not as easy to get the ball inside consistently, to be a consistent scorer, because there's things the defense can do to take things away, and also you're at the mercy a little bit of your personnel, your teammates being able to find you.

**Q. When they do get him the ball, he's looking to score, it opens things up for inside-out stuff.**

COACH BROWNELL: He certainly is a talented guy. He certainly can score around the basket some. Again, he's a good passer.

They're like a lot of teams in it seems like they have a lot of guys that can all score. When you don't have just one option, it's not as easy to focus on one guy. I don't know if they can just focus on getting him the ball all the time at the expense of all the other guys. Brian knows that better than I do. He coaches them every day. I would guess that's part of it.

**Q. I've been asking coaches about defense because I'm baffled about trying to pick an all-defensive team. Can you talk about your team? Are there two or three guys that you feel are your defensive anchors?**

COACH BROWNELL: I think Rod Hall is a pretty good defender for us, does a good job of guarding the ball, keeping guys out of the paint. He's been a guy that's done a good job on some different people. Maybe didn't do a good job on (Virginia Tech's) Erick Green over the last game, but in all honesty Erick Green makes incredible shots sometimes.

I think Rod is one guy that really on our team is probably the most consistent defender. I know K.J. (McDaniels) blocks a lot of shots, and Book does a good job of defending his position, blocking some shots, but Rod is probably the guy on our team that does the best job of affecting the game defensively consistently.

**Q. You played everybody in the league. Are there three or four guys that jump out at you as great defenders?**

COACH BROWNELL: Off the top of my head, I'm trying to think of who that would be. I know there's guys that certainly defend very well, but I don't know who that is off the top of my head to be honest with you. I have too many other things right now to try to think about it.

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

COACH BROWNELL: Thank you.

An interview with:

**COACH STEVE DONAHUE  
BOSTON COLLEGE**

THE MODERATOR: We have with us now Boston College head coach Steve Donahue.

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

COACH DONAHUE: Thank you.

We had an interesting week. Last time we talked we played Sunday at Duke. They gave it pretty good to us early. NC State was a game in the first half, just wore us down in the second half. Came back and played a very good game I thought against Virginia. I thought Virginia played well.

We started guarding once they got a lead, persevered, made some plays down the stretch to help us win another close game, which seems like the MO every time we play now.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it for questions.

**Q. You have played 16 games that were decided by five points or less or in overtime. You're 8-8 in those games. Can you talk about why you play so many close games more than anybody in the ACC?**

COACH DONAHUE: I would say in my 10 years at Cornell and my three years here, I don't know if I played this many combined. My last three years at Cornell, we had maybe one or two close ones each year. Even here at BC.

I look at it, maybe I'm spinning this in a positive. I just think with this young a team, to go out every night and really compete, it just shows you where we're headed with the right guys because we probably don't have enough to win all those 16. We went 8-8. There's a couple of one-point losses there that changes your whole season.

But in the same sense there's probably a side of me that says coming in if we had 16 close ones, I'm going to be happy because we didn't lay an egg, we didn't get down by 20 and forget about it. All those things are positive for us, in particular on the road.

Florida State, basically a one-possession game, basically as was Wake Forest, basically as was Maryland. Those are three good road games we played that we have a chance to win in the last minute.

I look at the positive. But it's been an incredible season for me to go through and our guys, just the nature of competing in those many close games and figuring out ways to win, obviously the disappointment of losing at times.

**Q. I've been asking coaches about defensive players. I know that's one of the things that comes usually from maturity. Are you starting to develop anybody that you see as a defensive anchor for this team?**

COACH DONAHUE: Yeah, arguably we're the least defensive team in the league. I don't want to say the worst team because we're trying to get better at it. Obviously it's a sign of youth and experience when defense calls. When you look at good defensive guys in this league, it's veteran guys.

In our group, I think Joe Rahon has developed a mentality. He came in here as a good defender, and he's getting better. I thought he guarded Joe Harris both games we played them as good as anybody in this league. Joe is a strong kid. He's 6'2". He has the right mentality. He's not too up. He's not too down. He values defense. I think he's become a good defender.

The other kid that's really evolved into a very good defender for us, I think you'll notice him as a junior and senior, is Eddie Odio. His ability to guard so many positions, if we go for a switch on a pick and pop, he's down, athletic, blocking shots and ordering shots that I just didn't anticipate him doing at this point in this his career.

The play of the game I thought yesterday was, down three, Joe Harris, who to me is the best player in this league this year, he goes in the lane, and Eddie blocks it, it's two points down the other end that quickly. To have someone out there that can do that is a difference maker for us.

There's a lot of veteran guys in this league. Names that come off, I think Joe Harris is a very good defender, Mitchell, Evans, Michael Snaer is a very good defender. I think Plumlee for Duke is very good defender. Older guys that to me are consistently there, understand the game, they're the guys to me that are the hardest to go against.

**Q. Going back to the game yesterday, you call a timeout after Harris misses a second free throw. What were your options in order? It didn't look like that was your first option.**

COACH DONAHUE: It wasn't. Virginia does such a great job on so many different things you run. You got to be very careful of what you do.

I didn't want to go straight ball screen is what I didn't want to do. We had some action on the strong side elbow that we'd go through Ryan Anderson, who to me is one of our better passers. We gave what we call a run-at, a dribble handoff

option. They defended both of them very well. Then Ryan gets it to Patrick (Heckmann).

As I said, in the postgame, I may have called timeout last year with Patrick driving it. This year we talked constantly how well Virginia loads up on the ball, and we have to skip the ball against them. There's no way to drive it and think you're getting to the rim.

I think that was in Patrick's mind. He drove it, he comes to a great jump shot, he comes to what we call an alley drive skip. Joe Rahon was there. He was in a good spot. They were playing Virginia defense. They were loaded up, did a good job. I just think Joe did a better job of being shot-ready with great concentration to make a hard shot.

**Q. You thought you would get the three would be your likely look there?**

COACH DONAHUE: A lot of people say that, like when you're down two or you're down three with 40 seconds left, what are you getting? I don't know in college basketball if you got the ability to pick and choose, especially against a team like Virginia. Virginia is not going to let you get off a good shot near the basket. They're just that good at it.

You got to anticipate. To me, the standstill three from a kid who can make it, and open standstill three, is a better, higher-percentage shot than going to the rim. It's just the way we're built. We always do that.

No matter what our option is, we're going to try to make people guard us. If they do, we're going to try to kick it out and get a standstill three. I think that's more of what took over there, is that mentality.

**Q. Yesterday you said after the game this game was for Dick Kelley. I know the assistant coaches and some of the players made sure they came over to see him, were pretty emotional. Can you talk about that a little bit. You have a Senior Night coming up, but this was like Dick Kelley's night.**

COACH DONAHUE: It was. To be honest with you, it's a lot more meaningful to me than any Senior Night, and that's with all respect to seniors. That's someone that has given his life to this institution, and I'm late to the party.

Personally what he's meant to me was an opportunity when I came to bring someone like

myself who was completely new, not knowing what that place was about, and have someone that was so positive and encouraging to me, just an incredible, motivating guy to our kids, without any strings attached. We're going to make these kids better human beings, I'm going to be a part of their life, I'm going to try everything I can, not be their buddy, but a mentor and a critical eye that they're going to need that isn't a coach, that isn't someone that has another method of trying to get them to play better. This is a guy that just really loves the guys in his program and always has.

To me, for us to go out, play the way we did, you can't control if you win or lose, but you can control how hard you play, show how much you care about a guy like Dick Kelley. I think our guys genuinely love Dick. I think that's what showed yesterday in the game.

As I said, I was emotional just because of what he's going through. We're very similar in age. When I first got here, we worked out together. To watch what's happened is very hard to see, but it's also an incredible inspiration to all our guys in how he's handled it. It's been amazing.

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

COACH DONAHUE: Thank you.

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