

Virginia Tech Women's Basketball
Head Coach Kenny Brooks Q&A Highlights
Saint Francis Game Press Conference
Nov. 5, 2019

On freshman C Elizabeth Kitley's impact in her first collegiate game:

"Well she's had a big impact on our program since the day she committed to us. Obviously, it's the coveted post player that we've been trying to get. Regan Magarity was a fantastic player but she wasn't traditionally a post player, she was more of a point forward. Now Liz gives us an opportunity to have a low post presence. We can throw the ball inside and she's pretty crafty in there even with her size, she is very nimble. She can move, she can slide through. There is probably a whole array of moves that she didn't show tonight that she's pretty good at. Just very excited about her. Obviously, she was a top 30 player in the country and when we got her we knew that she was going to be a really impactful person that we needed. Tonight is a glimpse of what she can be. She is going to continue to get better, she just turned 18 last month. Tremendous asset for our program. She made some mistakes tonight, but the thing that I love about her, she is a smart player. She's very smart player and I think she is going to really help our program in more ways than just scoring points."

On the team's performance as a whole in the season opener:

"It's funny because turnovers have been a point of emphasis all preseason. I've been harping on it, putting it on the line, tracking it and I thought tonight we did a fantastic job of sharing the basketball which is evident of our 28 assists. I don't think I've ever been associated with a team that has 28 assists. That's like Golden State-ish, old Golden State. It was fun to watch, and this group is going to be more like that because we don't have that one dominant player. Obviously, Taylor Emery broke so many records in her short time here and we really force fed her a lot. This group it's just going to happen organically. Whoever is hot that night is where we are going to go. We have a lot of capable players. We are still short one, we don't get Kendyl [Brooks] back but we get Taylor Geiman back and she is just as talented as any of the freshmen that we have."

On the newcomers and their first impressions as Hokies on Tuesday night:

"The Foreign Tour gave us an appetizer of what they could be, but they were nowhere as good then as they are now. Then obviously the five-week camp that we had gave them an opportunity to gel and get that chemistry. I thought Taja Cole was fantastic tonight, setting the tempo, getting the ball where it needed to go, setting the tempo on the defensive end. She was phenomenal, it was what we've been needing for a while is a point guard that can do that. Lydia Rivers she was tremendous. I mean she was a stat sheet stuffer. Nine points, eight rebounds, six assists, four blocks, I mean that is unbelievable so you add that production of the bench. Then her leadership, because she has played a lot of basketball games in her career. You add that to a very talented younger group and then you also add in three hungry players who are ready for a more prominent role in Trinity Baptiste, Dara Mabrey and Aisha Sheppard. As long as they continue to play together, some pretty good possibilities of success for us. I didn't

even throw in Alex Obouh Fegue who had a tremendous game in compliment of Liz Kitley. It's a really good group, they've worked well together. They love each other, they like each other and they seem to be playing well together."

On the Hokies' defense allowing 26% shooting from the field and how proud of the effort he is:

"Very proud. We actually had a scrimmage against West Virginia last Saturday and our defense was very bad in the beginning and then we kind of clamped down. Once they saw that, they got better offensively. We can't just be able to outscore people. We have to be able to stop people and they are taking pride in that and we understand that if it was a one-on-one game we probably wouldn't win very many. But, as long as they learn to play collectively, and play as a unit and rely on each other and trust each other, that's where the chemistry starts and that's why we were successful tonight."

On the team cheering for C Alex Obouh Fegue during the game:

"You know the kids love Alex. I've been really hard on Alex throughout the preseason because I know her capabilities. I know what she is capable of doing. Sometimes she doubts herself, so even when she fell, normally she probably would've come out. We were egging her on 'You're tough, you're tough' and she goes down and lo and behold she gets a steal and goes 75 feet and gets a layup. She goes down on the other end and realizes her backside was hurting again. It was a start, you can tell she is a team favorite coming here from France, being her for a year and a half she was nervous tonight. Nervous for her opportunity but I thought she played extremely well and I'm very very happy for her."

On having Dara Mabrey, Taja Cole and Aisha Sheppard all in the backcourt:

"It's great, it really is and we haven't really touched the surface of what we can do. They're still learning each other and again, I mentioned earlier, it's a shame we don't have Kendyl [Brooks] because she would have been another aspect of that being a senior and having logged the most minutes, but what we are excited about is we will get Taylor Geiman back in about two weeks. She doesn't score like Liz, but she's a jack of all trades, she's like my Swiss Army Knife. She can play the one, two, three, if I need her to play the four she can do that. She's a smart player and just having her out right now, maybe it's a silver lining that the other two freshmen are getting more minutes and then all of them will be ready. If we can continue to stay healthy, we'll be a much deeper team than we have been in the past and you add Taylor Geiman back to that mix, we'll be very excited."