

VIRGINIA TECH

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Virginia Tech Head Coach Mike Young Q&A Highlights
Postgame Media Conference at Louisville
Jan. 6, 2021

On Louisville's play in the paint

"I just think [Keve Aluma] didn't have his best stuff. He wasn't as explosive in the paint. Yes, they did a nice job on him but man we were getting the ball to him in spots where we just come to expect him to a score with regularity and he had some difficulty. I may have a different opinion as I go back and watch it tonight but I thought we got it to him where we want to get it to him, he just didn't have all four pitches working tonight."

On Jalen Cone and Naheim Alleyne

"Jalen probably kept us in it in the first half. I'm probably lucky to come in down 36-31. He was really, really good again in the second. Naheim - I got after him a little bit of the half I didn't think he had a very good look. I didn't think he was himself in the first, but really, really good in the second half."

On if the last shot was a good look

"I would take that from [Hunter Catoor], Cone or Naheim. Little tricky, out of timeouts, I called one – the first of the second half - look back on that and may question that a little bit. Johnson is a really good player and gave us a break missing that second foul down two. Again, he can really score the basketball, really shoot the basketball. Cone was running in front of me, he came off a little rub action at the top with Keve not contested, he missed the shot. Move on."

On the offensive gameplan

"Score. It's not like we change night in night out. We'd would like to get Alleyne going off screening actions. We want to be able to throw the ball into the post to Aluma. We want to get [Justyn] Mutts going. Not wholesale changes from Miami to this one."

On positive takeaways

"We had a bad start. Our starts have been pretty good all in all over the course of the season. Small sample size to some degree – what is that number 10 – but we didn't respond very well. We just mishandled a couple things and they popped us in the nose and took off on us a little bit. I was proud, I am, of our toughness. We missed some opportunities. There's a stop, I think it was No. 11 that corralled it on the lane line closest to their bench and stuck it back in and we weren't contesting that. But proud of them for hanging in there and doing everything but winning the basketball game."

Virginia Tech Player Q&A Highlights

JALEN CONE

On how tough was that to come up a bit short:

“It is tough when you think about the little plays where we gave up offensive rebounds and let them get second chances and they make shots. We think back to those little plays and that’s why those things matter, because sometimes it comes down to the end of the game.”

On if that was the look the team wanted from Hunter Cattoor at the end of the game:

“I think Hunter [Cattoor] took a great shot. I think out of everybody on our team, Hunter is definitely one of those guys everybody would choose to take that shot from that exact spot. He just missed, I’m sure if you give him that shot five more times, he’ll hit the next four. It was a great shot, but we just came short.”

On being down 14 points in the second half and what happened to make it a comeback:

“We started to fight, we started getting stops. They came out and they were getting possessions and scoring on double possessions and we finally towards the end started getting stops consistently. As we were getting stops, we were able to get some shots down at the other end. I think us really fighting and coming together, is what helped us get back into the game.”

On what did he see with Louisville’s defense to enable him to be so on-point today:

“They play a great defense, they have bigger guys and I know Coach Mack and Coach Gaudio definitely had the guys chasing me and staying right on my hip, and I had to just get the shot off quick and really elevate on my shot. I know I can go from 0 to 100 and then stop on a dime and make shots and I think that really helped. When guys are chasing me and running full speed, I’m stopping full speed going 100mph, and being able to make tough shots.”

JUSTYN MUTTS

On how good was Jae’Lyn Withers tonight and how difficult was he to slow down:

“This is the ACC, every player got here for a reason. I can speak from experience, we have guys on our team who normally don’t get much time at all who are extremely talented players. Going into any game and assuming any player “isn’t good”, that’s just a huge mistake for any team to make and that wasn’t how we approached this game at all. We might not have put as big of an emphasis on him as we should have, but you live and you learn. This is the first time I’ve played this team, and I’m looking forward to the next time.”

On how difficult is it to take this loss considering how close the comeback was:

“You live and you learn. Just like Cone (Jalen) said, we’ll get back and watch this game to see what we could’ve done better. Those shots we took are going to fall, those shots that we took are our shots. Definitely looking at that last shot of the game, Hunter Cattoor taking that game-winning shot, that’s a shot we want. That’s a shot I’ve seen him make hundreds of times and just because a shot didn’t fall one time, doesn’t mean it won’t fall the next. Every now and then you’re going to have a low and every now and then you’re going to get hot and be unstoppable as a team.”

On what he is focusing on for rebounds against guys sometimes bigger than you:

“I’m not focused on height, I’m not focused on anything else other than the ball being in the air. It just comes down to being hungry for it, when the ball is in the air it just comes down to who wants it more. Especially at a time like that, we need every possession that we can get and that’s really my main focus just trying to help my team win as much as possible.”

On what do you hope to improve upon personally and as a team in your upcoming game this weekend:

“As a team, definitely boxing out and getting offensive rebounds, looking to hold teams to one shot per possession and that might’ve been the biggest thing to kill us tonight, them being able to get offensive rebounds and loose balls. We have to be much better when it comes to group rebounding and not being afraid to get down there and get it. Also, taking care of the ball, in the first half, we had a lot of live-ball turnovers, where they were able to get out and get a layup and that is just something we can’t have happen. Those are two things, we’ll get back and watch film and for a fact, every single one of those things are going to be on the film session.”