

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Virginia Tech Hokies

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Barclays Center

Mike Young

Storm Murphy

Darius Maddox

Postgame Press Conference



Virginia Tech - 76, Clemson - 75

Q. Darius, can you kind of take us through that final sequence there, the play design and if you were the guy to take the shot?

DARIUS MURPHY: I definitely wasn't. Coach subbed in all guards, all great shooters, and I think it might have been Hunter or Sean that got open to the left and they double teamed him, and it just left me open and I just took the ball, saw there was about five seconds on the clock and decided to make a move and make a shot.

Q. Darius, once you put up the shot, did you know -- did it feel good? Did you know it was going in? What was that like to make the three-pointer to win the game and get mobbed by your teammates there?

DARIUS MADDIX: Well, first --

MIKE YOUNG: He does it every other week. He did it like two weeks ago so it's old hat for him.

DARIUS MADDIX: I'm confident along with the rest of our guys, we're confident in shooting. We shoot a lot.

And getting rushed by my teammates you said? Yeah, I loved the feeling. It's amazing, especially to win a game in an atmosphere like this is great.

Q. Storm, could you talk about your performance tonight, and how good did it feel to have those shots going in and that shot before the end of regulation? What went through on that play?

STORM MURPHY: Yeah, I think my first two looks were pretty open, so once those went down, the rim just felt kind of big. And so the next two, I think were off the dribble in the first half, and then second half really didn't try to force it and shoot anything. I don't think I took another shot until maybe five minutes left or something.

But that last one, Keve did a really good job twisting the ball screen, we've worked on that all week, and I came wide open. I think they were expecting the skinny on the side, and just rose up and thankfully it fell.

Q. Coach, I'm curious, you alluded to that shot in the Miami game the other day that he hit. Can you just speak to Darius's ability to understand his role, to come off the bench, do what you need him to do, and knock down big shots when it's required?

MIKE YOUNG: He's been awfully, awfully good for us. He continues to get better defensively. I've said it to you and to others, he scores the ball so easily and picks his spots. I couldn't tell you the last time he took a shot and I thought it was a bad shot. He's one of those that has an innate ability to make a play with the ball in his hands off the bounce, catch it and shoot.

He's a good one. Glad he's a Hokie.

Q. Storm, Clemson obviously had that big run. They got back in the game. What was the mentality in your head, the rest of the group, knowing that, hey, it's not over, let's basically weather the storm as you guys have done so many times this season?

STORM MURPHY: Yeah, I think that was kind of our problem early on in the season when teams would make runs back or we would lose a lead and wouldn't be able to close games.

We really have grown there, and we were talking a lot in huddles trying to just stay together, stay connected, help each other be on the same page, know what defense we're in, know what offense you're running, and try to use the clock to our advantage, not panic, weather the storm, know



we're still right there, and at the end of the day, we're going to win the game. And thanks to this kid, we did.

Q. You guys were on fire in the first half. What enabled that offense to click so much in the first half, and what did Clemson do better or differently to climb back in that game?

MIKE YOUNG: I don't know anything they did better, and I don't take anything away from Clemson. We got a little goofy. We had a couple of quick shots. We had a couple of just really, really bad turnovers, just head scratchers. We got outside of ourselves a little bit. Continued to throw the ball into the post to Aluma. We continued to get shots. Didn't shoot as well in the second half, and then to Clemson's credit, they certainly stiffened up on us and took a couple of things away that were working in the first half.

Q. Great game, 14 lead changes, really enjoyed watching it. Storm, when you drove the lane and didn't take the shot with your left hand and passed it off, you looked dejected after that. I just wanted your thoughts on what happened there and why you didn't take the lay-up shot and passed it.

STORM MURPHY: Yeah, went in there, I thought PJ was going to jump and Justyn would have been wide open for a quick little flick-in. But mid-air I think I realized -- I was already passing it and he didn't jump.

Right after that, yeah, I was definitely hurt. I was like, man, it could have been an easy two with the left hand. But we won the game.

Q. Darius, 23 points off the bench. You had eight, and then Pedulla and N'Guessan really came out early aggressive off the bench. What's that mentality for you guys especially right away being able to contribute?

DARIUS MADDIX: We know we're in a game where being aggressive is the most effective, especially coming off the bench. Sitting down, obviously isn't the easiest thing to come in and make plays, but we just make as many aggressive plays as we can while we're in the game and try to affect the game in as many ways as possible.

Q. Clemson calling that time-out before Darius's shot, how did that help or play into that final possession?

MIKE YOUNG: You know, I think we probably caught Coach Brownell -- not that it would have affected anything, maybe it would have switched. I think we caught him by surprise when we went with the five guards. I've never done that. If we were in the same situation -- I've never

seen Brad do that. He had Hunter Tyson and PJ Hall on the floor. Again, not that that had anything to do with it. That was a guy making a big league play.

But I thought in looking at them as their thing is getting ready to come inbounds, I glanced at Clemson's defensive end of the floor, and they were having really to struggle to get matched, and that can happen. Somebody does something bizarre like that. And you take Aluma off the floor, you take Mutts off the floor. So that would be my response.

Q. Coach Young, with PJ Hall going down early in the first half, with him being such a focal point of their offense, did the game plan change at all, and when he unexpectedly came back in, did that affect you guys in the second?

MIKE YOUNG: He tweaked his ankle. I can't say it was unexpected. I expected him to come back, and then he did something to his shoulder. He's a tough nut. He's a really, really -- he's had a very good season in our league. He's a load. He can score in such a variety of ways, score over his right shoulder, a little jump shot, turn, face you up, a little NBA pro face and shoot it, and he's big, man. He's a big kid. Got great hands, a big long sweeping jump hook. He gave a lot of us problems throughout the course of the year.

But I certainly hope -- honest to goodness, it hurts to my soul when young people get hurt. I coached PJ's dad at Wofford. I remember that boy when he was that high a long time ago.

Glad he was able to come back. He's a good one. He's a really good one, will be a good one in this league for a couple more years.

Q. Just to clarify, during the time-out before Darius's game winning shot, what did you draw up there? Who did you want to take the shot?

MIKE YOUNG: Well, I wanted to see who PJ was guarding and I wanted to set a flat ball screen with him and see if we could get two to the ball and spray the thing out. But having said all that, we're luckier than hell. We're just lucky as -- that's basketball. That young man right there caught it and got in the air and banged a big shot, and we go home happy. And Clemson, who I think the world of, those kids and their coaching staff -- it happened to us. You saw it. Miami at home, Charlie Moore hits a ball from mid-court, it's the game. Unforgiving at times.

Q. On Monday Keve mentioned how physical Clemson was in that first game. What did you like about the

energy you guys brought from the get-go and the way you controlled the pace in the first half?

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.

MIKE YOUNG: David N'Guessan helped us in that regard. I was able to get Aluma off the floor for a couple more clicks -- well, it was overtime so it was a 45-minute game. Our minute distribution was very good. David N'Guessan was really good, really helped our team.

We've got match-ups for N'Guessan with Shieffelin, with Bohannon, and Hunter Tyson. But they are very physical.

I thought our team was more physical today. I thought Clemson was the more physical team on Saturday, and consequently they got us by a couple.

Q. I'm just curious can you give us some early thoughts on Notre Dame? Seems like a long time since you've played them.

MIKE YOUNG: Yeah, I just told these guys, you know, you get to this point in the year, everybody knows everybody. We've seen each other on film so many times. Been a long time since we've played them, but Prentiss Hubb, Dane Goodwin, who we love as a basketball player. Paul Atkinson has made a real difference in their team. He's a good basketball player. Blake Wesley is just outstanding. Cormac Ryan, Trey Wertz, and Coach Brey is sitting over there with a cold drink in his hand. Those guys had the double bye.

So we're just elated that we have the opportunity to come back over here to this great tournament and compete again tomorrow night at 7:00.

Q. Storm, I'm curious after four years of playing in the SoCon tournament what it meant to get a win on a big stage like this, and if you could speak to your journey to get to this place.

STORM MURPHY: Yeah, today actually I definitely started feeling those emotions, and whatever that sensation is with the tournament, the conference tournament, how big of a deal it is and with what each possession and each game means.

I definitely appreciate what that brings, the competitiveness and just the urgency. We were really desperate tonight. We talked about that as a team.

No, I think I've really learned through my four years in the SoCon and what that tournament is like, how big these games are. So on this stage it's nonetheless. I've appreciated it, and just happy to get out of here with a win.