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NC State Coach Mark Gottfried
Ralston Turner
T.J. Warren

COACH GOTTFRIED: Well, obviously I'm very, very excited for our players. I'm really, really proud of them. I'm extremely proud of a young team that keeps battling, doesn't get down, bounces back. Even within the game, lose the lead and respond when their back was against the wall.

And I don't know if I could be more proud of a group than I am of my team. And they believed they could win, which I think was the most important thing. And obviously Syracuse is a great team. They're so long and athletic and can score the ball. Their zone gives you so many problems, but our guys just seemed to stay the course, not get frustrated, just stay with it and stay with it. And we had answers because of our resiliency. So I'm extremely proud and happy for our players.

Q. Mark, could you go through what was going through your mind while you were watching all of those shots go up in that last possession?

COACH GOTTFRIED: Well, I was saying to myself can we just get a rebound, just somebody grab the ball. And it was interesting every time it left their hands, it never really looked like it was going in. So we were okay. But we escaped on that one obviously right there.

But, you know, sometimes those kind of things balance out in life. You know, you have a tough one earlier in the year where we didn't finish the game today, maybe fate was on your side on that last possession.

Q. Before this game, what did you stress to stop CJ Fair? What was the game plan to you know, game plan for CJ?

COACH GOTTFRIED: It was TJ Warren, period. I thought, you know, TJ gets a lot of praise for his offense and he is a great offensive player. But I thought tonight TJ Warren locked in defensively and made every shot that CJ took tough. Every single one of them. I don't know that he had an easy shot all night long.

Obviously he's left hand dominant and we wanted to push him to his right, those type things. But I think bigger than that was TJ Warren, showing everybody he's not just an offensive player, but he's a phenomenal defender as well. He showed it tonight.

Q. Coach, you mentioned the finishes and the finish you had at Syracuse. What does it say about your team now that you've had these games here in a row where you haven't been able to finish?

COACH GOTTFRIED: Well, we've learned, we've grown up, we've gotten better. We had some games where we didn't finish and they hurt, they hurt bad. And that's what I said earlier, that's why I'm so proud of our guys, because you bounce back from adversity. We had some. We pour a lot into this. It's a lot of sacrifice and a lot of effort.

When you come out of there short, it just cuts you. But our guys have been able to kind of get themselves back to together and we talk about finishing, let's finish the game. So, you know, our young guys have grown up, gotten better and improved.

Q. With 18 minutes left in the second half, Christmas went out of the game with his fourth foul and that kind of sparked an 11 2 run on your part. Were you guys trying to go inside and really score there or was it just kind of just where open shots came up?

COACH GOTTFRIED: It wasn't necessarily by design we were going at him. We wanted to get the ball inside. It's got to go in there some. I thought our big guys did a great job tonight with our interior passing to each other.

Jordan had a couple great passes. Lennard, Kyle, they found TJ a couple of times. We don't want to be against Syracuse, a team that just plays outside the three point line. We were able to get the ball around the basket

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and we were fortunate there when he got his fourth foul.

Q. Coach, you called this game an opportunity yesterday. What does this win mean now for your team in its NCAA hopes?

COACH GOTTFRIED: Well, I hope that we're a legitimate contender. I really do. I look at our team and people forget we played four games early without Jordan Vandenberg and lost two of them, one of them to North Carolina Central and the other to Cincinnati. He's a big part of our team of what we do and he didn't play.

Then we had a young team that got better. We're not the same team now that we were in November and December. When you're playing and, you know, you lose 80 percent of all of your scoring from a year ago, it's going to take awhile to figure yourselves out. I look around the country and figure out how many teams can go win at Pittsburgh like we did.

We watched them today and they're pretty good. And at Tennessee and all of the things we've done. We have a great league. It's a great league. And I hope that these young guys have a chance.

Now, we came to Greensboro thinking about one thing, and that's to play on Sunday. That's our goal, was to play on Sunday and win on Sunday. And, you know, today was just the next step. So our eyes were there more than anything. I hope that we have the greatest chance to play in the greatest show on earth.

Q. Could you go through that last possession and what's going through your mind after shot after shot after shot keeps going up like that? TJ?

T.J. WARREN: They got a lot of opportunities to tie the game. Luckily they kept missing.

COACH GOTTFRIED: He's the man of many words, TJ.

RALSTON TURNER: I was definitely holding my breath. They got a lot of opportunities. Every one of them seemed like it was taking forever to miss so unfortunately none of them went in.

COACH GOTTFRIED: That's probably why we couldn't get a rebound, we were holding our breath.

Q. TJ, time for some more words. Coach said you're the reason why you guys were able to hold CJ Fair to three of 16 shooting. Take us through your mindset from the beginning of this game to the end and really being able to shut him down.

T.J. WARREN: I just wanted to stay on his left hand, try to force him right a little bit, make him uncomfortable. I think I did a good job tonight. I had a lot of help from back side, Jordan and BeeJay, so it was an overall effort.

Q. Coach, three minutes to go, Lennard Freeman, if you can just talk about the job he did, he got six rebounds for you after the bench took that big charge and from that point on you didn't lose the lead, you got it back from that point on.

COACH GOTTFRIED: I thought Lennard was huge. I thought the charge was too. I think we took two charges late. I thought his was really important. One thing Lennard has done pretty consistently all year long is go get the ball off the rim.

We felt like going into the game and watching film, watching the last game, you got to keep them off of the backboard. You got to find a way to get a defensive rebound and I thought Lennard was really big in that regard.

Q. This is for all three of you regarding coaches in motion at the end of the game. A lot more than we're normally used to seeing. So for the players, could you go through how excited you were to see Coach that emotional and pumped for the win? And then, Coach, what was so special about this win? Why were you able to get that emotional? Starting with the players.

RALSTON TURNER: I think like Coach mentioned earlier, it showed our growth. The last time we played these guys, it was about the exact same situation. So I think that not only was it a big win, but it also shows that we've come a long way since then.

T.J. WARREN: We've been working towards this since the last time we played them up at their place. We



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adjusted the at the end of the game and came out with the win.

COACH GOTTFRIED: There was a timeout late, I'm not sure which one it was, but I remember telling our guys, "I want you guys to experience this win. I want you to experience it. And stay in there. Hang in there. Keep getting shutouts." And they were able to do that.

And, you know, they're happy. They should be. They feel good. At the same time, we know that we're not done. We didn't come here just to play and beat Syracuse. We came here to do a lot more. I was just really proud of them.

Q. Mark, was that the best game Jordan Vandenberg has played in your three years?

COACH GOTTFRIED: He's played really good lately. He's winding down at the end of his college career. Block shot here, rebound there, he had two baskets early for us in the game that got us off to a good start. He started to direct traffic defensively and really do a nice job of communicating with our guys. So really proud of him. Told him in the locker room I think it's the best he played the last couple of games. And certainly we can't win without him in there.

Q. For the players, there was a crazy sequence right there at the end where Syracuse had like five shots, something like that. What was that like for you guys? Did you get close to the ball? It seemed like you could never get your hands on. T.J., were you ever close to the ball? What do you remember about that closing sequence?

T.J. WARREN: They were taking long shots. It was going to be a long rebound. We was trying to secure the rebound. Like I said before, luckily we didn't miss and we was able to get the win.

RALSTON TURNER: You know, I was on the bench at the time, but looking on, it just seemed like the ball was coming off of the rim really hard. It just happened to keep bouncing to them wherever they were we were. Just fortunate none of them went in.

Q. Coach, you referenced that you're not done yet. Any concern about being able to crank this thing back up for tomorrow against the team, either one of them, got you pretty good the only time you saw them?

COACH GOTTFRIED: No. I think our guys will be really anxious to play. We're going to back to the hotel, get a bite to eat, get a lot of rest. This time of the year, you don't have time for any of that. We're going to get ourselves regrouped and we got a little confidence now we've played some good games here recently.

And we came here we talked about it before we came. We talked about playing on Sunday and winning on Sunday. So whoever we end up playing tomorrow, we're going to be really excited about it and really focused in.

Q. Coach, on that same theme, your first two years at Raleigh, you made it to Saturday. What would it mean what you're trying to do for the program to actually get to that Sunday game?

COACH GOTTFRIED: Well, I think it would mean a lot. I don't really look at it like that too much, the big picture of our program. I want these guys, this group right here, I want these guys to experience something special. And they've had the odds against them all year. We lost so much from last year. So many questions coming in to this year, how are we going to play, how are we going to score? Who's going to do what?

I look back to November the 8th when we opened up until now, we just come a long way. I want them to keep going. I want them to experience something special. We'll look at the big picture later on. Right now the most important thing is getting ready to play tomorrow.

Q. You obviously felt the presence of Wolfpack Nation in the house tonight. When it was close late, there were people wearing Duke T shirts, people wearing UVA T shirts, Syracuse, the Big East transplant, versus the home state Wolfpack. Did you sense that bigger home court advantage at all?

COACH GOTTFRIED: We've got amazing fans, I do know that. The Wolfpack Nation is strong, they're loud, opinionated, which is good. They care about their team. There might have been some Duke and some other people cheering, probably not very many North Carolina cheering. But I do know our guys feed off of our fans. They do

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a great job for us. They put a little wind at your back always because there's so many of them and we feel it and appreciate it.

Q. Ralston, just talk about that three. Was that one of the biggest ones you've ever hit and how did you get the bank to be open so late on a Friday night?

RALSTON TURNER: Definitely one of the biggest threes I've ever hit throughout my college career. That was one of the reasons I came here to play in games like this. When it happened, I just let it go. I caught bank inside my head. I'm glad it went down.

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Syracuse Coach Jim Boeheim
C.J. Fair

COACH BOEHEIM: I thought we got off to a slow offensive start and we just really never could get anything going offensively and but I thought we made some really good plays to get back in it and we made two bad plays to get back out of it.

Q. Jim, if you could go through your last offensive possession there if at any point you wanted the guys maybe to slow down because they had time?

COACH BOEHEIM: Well, we needed a three at that point and I think we got four looks at it, which is more than you're normally going to get. But we had to get a three at that time.

Q. Same thing to you, what was that last possession like? It looked like you had the best look on that last one?

C.J. FAIR: Yeah, our last possession we got a few good looks and myself, I got a clean look. I just didn't knock it down. And from there, we was just scrambling trying to get in another opportunity.

Q. CJ, you know, Warren was on you all game. Was his defense tight all night or were you just missing shots that you normally get?

C.J. FAIR: I mean, you do a good job denying defense. But I thought I was getting my normal shots that just wasn't falling and, I mean, that's what it was really.

Q. Jim, how much did it hurt when Rakeem got his fourth foul early in the second half?

COACH BOEHEIM: Well, you'd like to have him in there, there's no question about that. But he was out of position three times and if he had been in the right position, he wouldn't have been in foul trouble.

Q. Jim, Tyler was pretty good from behind the arc today, more emphasis on shooting that he's been this year. Is that something that you want to see more out of him considering Trevor's recent struggles?

COACH BOEHEIM: Trevor was hurting a little bit. He wasn't moving as well as he can. He turned his ankle a little bit. Tyler tries to score when we need points, and we needed points.

Q. Jim, forgive the timing, but can you kind of talk about, the ACC started this season with a lot of hype. Can you kind of give the impression of what you thought the league was like in the first year and how many teams you think deserves in the NCAA Tournament?

COACH BOEHEIM: I have nothing to that, any of that.

Q. Jim, can you talk about your team and how it's trending? Are you worried about slumping heading into the NCAAs?

COACH BOEHEIM: We played our best game of the year Sunday and that was a very optimistic turn for us. When we didn't play well, you know, two of our last losses, we didn't have Jerami Grant. So I just discount that completely.

But we played extremely well at Florida State. And I thought that we would play well here. And I don't think that we played that poorly. I think we shot the ball badly and it's hard to recover when you're not shooting the ball well, it's very difficult to win. The ball's not going in the basket.

I thought we did everything we could to come back and we tried to get to the basket more, get to the foul line, but we just have not shot the ball well from the three point line the whole year.

But we've been able to get back in the games and when we get back in them, we've been able to make good



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plays down the stretch. And tonight we made two offensive fouls and we took a bad shot when we had the two point lead. Tyler got in traffic and took a bad shot and they got the ball out and we had the foul and they made two shots. It was a really bad play and we haven't been making those plays in the close games.

Even the close games that we've lost, we made good plays, we make good plays down the stretch. We missed the lay up in the Duke game. We made really good plays down the stretch. But tonight, when we did get back in, you're going to make a bad play, we made two really bad offensive plays.

I thought we really made some unbelievable steals to get back in it. They had the game pretty much under control. We made a couple of really good steals in our traps and got down and gave ourselves an opportunity to win the game. But we made some bad plays down the stretch.

But I'm not concerned about our team. I think we played well all year. I think we struggle shooting it. I think that's pretty well documented. But in spite of that, we won 27 games. So I'm pretty pleased with what these guys have done. And I believe that we'll be a very good tournament team.

Q. I don't know if you've heard that the ACC tournament will move to Barclays Center?

COACH BOEHEIM: I haven't heard.

Q. 2017, 2018. What are your thoughts?

COACH BOEHEIM: No thoughts. I'm concerned about one thing. I think you may get that point. I'm not speculating or talking about anything. We're concerned about this season, how we're playing, how we're going to play this week. When the season is done, we'll try to talk about all of this other stuff.

Q. TJ Warren led the ACC this year in scoring, but tonight he played defense on CJ throughout the game. Could you talk about what he was able to do defensively?

COACH BOEHEIM: I thought CJ got the shots he normally makes. I think he's the best offensive player in the league. I think he was clearly the best player in the league this year. And, you know, he is a tremendous offensive player. CJ got the shots we'd like him to get.

Q. Just because this is a first time experience for your university community as a whole, could you share your perception of how the fan base and everybody else rallied around this experience compared to past experiences?

COACH BOEHEIM: I think it's great. I thought we had huge fan support tonight. You know, I thought we had a lot of people down here and I thought that was we've had great support wherever we've gone this year. The people in Greensboro are great. They try to take care of everything you have. But it's just a matter when you go to a tournament, there's only one thing that matters is how you play. If you don't play well, then it's a bad experience.

Q. CJ, what did you think about the shots that you got tonight and what do you kind of attribute to not a ton of them going down?

C.J. FAIR: Every game I take the normal shots I usually take. And today was one of those nights where I couldn't really get going. You know, Tyler and Jerami had a good little team man game going on. I had to fit around that and not really force things. Because I didn't get anything going. But it was one of those games where we didn't play good offensively and we gave up too many easy buckets.

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