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NO. 3 DUKE 75, NO. 7 NC STATE 67

Duke Coach Mike Krzyzewski
Jabari Parker
Rodney Hood

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: It's better if I get hurt than you.

MODERATOR: Whenever you're ready, Coach.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: We beat a heck of a basketball team today. We played very well. The first half, neither team could stop one another, and, I mean, guys look, they're really good. And Warren is a great, great player. But their other guys are really good. Barber hurt us a lot in the first half.

In the second half, we just played better defense. They shot about 70 percent from the floor in the first half and in the second half about 35 percent. And we made some big hustle plays. Thornton made one of the biggest plays of the game. We were up by seven right at half court for the loose ball, and it put us up by nine. I think that was the score.

Then Jabari made a big play to force a time out before that, to give us a thought it really kind of energized us defensively to make those two plays defensively.

We were poised. We missed free throws, but I think a lot of that had to do with, one, just being tired. I know they're tired. They've played three straight games. We're tired. We played the late game last night. So the fact that we're getting to the line was good. We couldn't close the door on them by missing those free throws.

Open for questions if you want to ask the players.

Q. You just mentioned T.J. Warren. He kept them in it in the first half.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Barber did too. I think Barber was as big for them in the first half as was Warren. Warren's a great player. I mean, he's not a good player. He's a great player. He's had one of the special years that a player has had in our conference. He's terrific.

As a result of all the stuff you have to do, you have to be aware of him. It opens it up for his teammates. He's not a selfish player either. He's a great player. He's a great player. I'm so impressed with him.

Rodney did a good job on him, just to keep him to 21, although he had to take a lot of shots to get there.

Q. You jumped my question, actually.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: This is part of what I'm doing. I'm going through stuff like this to try to anticipate. My wife says I do this all the time to her. Would you like to meet her? So now you have something in common.

Q. If you and Jabari would talk about how impressed you were by the

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Together, would you like to listen to us?

Q. Sure, whatever works. Then, Rodney, if you could talk about if you had a certain approach to guarding him, or if you kind of just went out and played normal defense for yourself.

RODNEY HOOD: I wanted to contest him. In the first half he beat me a little bit. I wanted to make him take tough shots. You can't contain a player like that. Team wise, we did a great job in the second half of shrinking the floor and making him see multiple people.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Rodney made a big adjustment. You can overcoach. We overcoached our preparation. He was doing what we asked him to do and it wasn't working. He said, "Coach, let me play him my normal way." That was better.

Q. Jabari, you obviously weren't guarding T.J. on a regular basis, but what could you see what he did tonight and what were your impressions of his performance?

JABARI PARKER: Like Coach said, he's a real good player and one of the pivotal roles on the team. He's going to be one of the top scorers offensively. We wanted to put him in tough, tough situations because we knew that he

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can score anywhere on the floor.

Q. To the players, there are other coaches and other teams that really don't put a lot of emphasis, as much emphasis on this tournament as the next tournament. Now that you're in the finals, you've got a chance to win this thing and put a banner up and everything, what does it mean to be in this tournament and have a chance to win this thing?

RODNEY HOOD: Every kid dreams of winning a championship. Especially this one. It's a special tournament. We worked all year to get where we are now, and I think we're in a really good spot. We're going up against a senior led Virginia team who is a great team, had a great conference schedule. It's going to be a battle. We've dreamed of being in this position and are ready for the fight.

MODERATOR: Jabari.

JABARI PARKER: Like Rodney said, we dreamed of this from the beginning of the season. We had a couple of bumps and bruises in the midseason during conference play where we knew it would be important for us to play in the tournament.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Our school has valued their relationship, being part of the ACC. I mean, it's evident for all these years the number of championships that we've been fortunate enough to win. Each one is special. Each game is special. I said that last night.

For me, it will always as long as I'm coaching, coaching an ACC game is an honor, let alone coaching multiple games. If you have a chance to win a championship in this league, it's the best.

Q. Coach, I have two totally different questions for you. First of all, with the national spotlight so much on Jabari, has it maybe put Rodney in the shadow unfairly a little bit?

The other question is on Virginia and the job that Tony Bennett has done in reviving that program.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, Jabari's a guy that people want to be good, and there are no jealousies because he's a good guy. And Rodney has his own place. Rodney, to me, has a special quality. I mean, Rodney's as good a player as there is. He played Warren head on.

He's okay. He just wants to win. But also, Jabari just wants to win. And they both know that. There's no jealousies at all, not just with these two guys but with any of the guys on the team.

You have a freshman and a guy who hasn't played before for our program come in, guys have to adjust their roles who have been playing, and they all have done that.

As far as Tony, Tony's done a sensational job. What he's done is, has built a program. It's not just a Virginia team. It's a Virginia program. It's based on solid play and solid character. Those kids on that team have great character, and it's obvious that they don't care who scores, as long as Virginia scores.

Q. For either Mike or Rodney, I'm curious, what was the original strategy on T.J. before you went back to just normal approach?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Just to high contest him where you didn't have contact with him. And as a result, he got back doored a couple times. Our help wasn't there. And then it was tougher for him to stay with him because he was playing up.

Then T.J. moves so well that Rodney just said, "Coach, I can stay it's going to be tough, but I can stay with him better if I do it our normal way."

Q. For anybody up there, Cook and Sulaimon combined 30 points. How much tougher does it make it for teams to guard you when you're getting contributions not just from Jabari and Rodney but from that sort of you know, four guys?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Obviously the last part of your question steered the question to me. Quinn and Rasheed were terrific in the second half. Again, these two guys are okay with them being terrific. If somebody's hot like Rasheed really got it going start of the second half.

Then Quinn came in and gave us a huge lift. When they went zone, Quinn hit that three, I think that gave us a

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double digit lead. Either 11 or 13. I forget what it was. But he handled that well. Quinn had a heck of a second half in this game.

Q. Coach, do you think tomorrow's winner should get a number one seed?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I don't know. I haven't followed that at all. I haven't. I really don't think either team will care, because we're both in, we'll both get treated very well, I would think, because of the seasons we both have had.

Q. For the players, Coach talked about Virginia building a program. What kind of challenge does Virginia present to you tomorrow?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: They haven't watched Virginia yet. I haven't watched them either. I mean, we just got through with a helluva game, you know, so I wasn't watching Virginia tape last night, and if we did win, apparently Pitt played pretty well today too. So we played them two months ago. So it's a long time.

We just know that they've been great all year and been as consistent a team as there is in the country. We'll study them tonight and hopefully be ready by 1:00 tomorrow.

Q. Mike, you've been pretty consistent all year, saying the ACC as a conference deserves maybe more respect from the committee, more teams in the tournament. When you look at a team like NC State, their season long resume puts them on the bubble. I imagine from a coach's perspective, it's hard to think of a team playing as well as they are not getting into it.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I said to Mark at the end of the game, "I hope you guys get in." I don't understand it, Luke, really. They won at Tennessee. They probably should have beaten Syracuse twice. I think they've played a really good schedule, and they've got one of the best players in the country.

I don't think our conference the fact that I don't know. That there's discussion about it, I don't understand it. I'm not against I'll get in trouble probably for saying it. Like the Atlantic 10, they're a really good conference. I hear people saying there are six teams in there. Come on. I mean, they're good, but put them in our conference and go through the meat grinder that our conference has to go through.

That's the thing. I don't know if there's a quantitative way of measuring the degree of difficulty that there is in playing in this conference or like a Big 12. You've got to be on all the time.

To me, Florida State's there. The only reason I'm saying that is Stan's in the audience. He still has something to do over me. So he has hidden videos on me so I got to say something nice about it.

But really, Luke, our league should get more respect. The fact that Pitt comes in here and people are saying they have to do something, come on. Come on, man. I don't get it. The Clemson team we played last night is a heck of a basketball team.

But this team we played today is really good. I think Mark's done a fabulous job with this team. And again, you watch Warren. Do any of those kids look jealous? None. I mean, they got it going. They're a tough out, man. They're a tough out. They'd be a tough out. I wouldn't want to play them in the NCAA Tournament.

Q. Mike, you mentioned the better defense the second half. Is there a why to that, whether it's effort or

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: We talked more. I think these guys would tell you. Why don't you guys answer the question. I'm talking. I've got verbal whatever.

RODNEY HOOD: I think we played more connected on the defensive end. We made some subtle adjustments. We knew T.J. was going to get his points. I mean, he's that great of a scorer. We wanted to limit them on the defensive rebound. We gave him some, but we did a good job of helping each other out, especially in transition.

Q. Jabari, last time you guys played UVA, you obviously opened each half with a three pointer. Otherwise, it wasn't your best outing of the year. What do you remember from that game?

JABARI PARKER: All I just remember is us winning and Rasheed coming through with a big play. A lot of

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games aren't going to be won by me but by my teammates and they pull through. Hopefully, I can be there for them.

MODERATOR: Thank you.

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NC State Coach Mark Gottfried
Jordan Vandenberg

COACH GOTTFRIED: Start off and say, you know, this is a tough one for us. My guys are really disappointed. They really believed we could win, and they played with great courage, I thought. We played really hard. We competed, and we just came up a little short.

I thought maybe we got tired in the second half. We didn't seem as fresh as we have been. The three point shooting, I thought, was a difference. They stepped up and made a number of them and we couldn't seem to make any.

Happens like that, and I still think there's something special left for this team, wherever that may be. I'm really proud of our guys. We're really disappointed but really proud.

Q. Mark, obviously, the committee judges these things over the whole season. You have to feel like the way your team is playing now, there is no question you deserve to be in the NCAA tournament.

COACH GOTTFRIED: I think so, but I don't have a vote. I think when you look at teams, you've got to look at a lot of things and I learned the hard way back in, I think it was 2001, didn't schedule very good in the non league and we learned our lesson.

Even with this team, we lost all that we lost last year and played a really good non conference schedule. Could have lightened it up. I didn't think that was the right thing to do. I wanted to do what the committee has asked us to do. The selection committee has asked you to play a tough non conference schedule, take your team on the road, which we did at Cincinnati our second game. Went to Tennessee and won.

I think our league is a great league. I hope that we don't get penalized with our record in the league when you play in a great league like ours. I certainly think the committee I've talked to a number of members different years, not this year. I trust them. I do. I hope they really take a good look at our team and see how much better we are than we were at the beginning.

To win at Pitt late in the year, beat Syracuse. Honestly, if you win at Pitt, beat Syracuse, beat Duke, hell, you're about a Final Four team by then. It's hard to ask of anybody. We showed we certainly believe in the field of 68.

Q. Jordan, Coach talked about how you guys might have gotten tired in the second half. Did you feel like the legs were starting to go? If so, at what point did they start feeling heavier and did that start kicking in?

JORDAN VANDENBERG: I don't think that's the case. We played hard. We came up short. There was no fatigue in us, really, even though we played two games all right. You can't blame it on playing games. That's what we're here to do.

We're not going to sit here and say we were tired, that's why we lost. We missed a couple of defensive plays and came up just short. We looked after the ball. I can't ask anything more from my teammates. Sure, we were a little tired, but it has nothing to do with the fact that we lost today.

Q. Mark, what did you see on their defensive strategy on T.J. in the second half?

COACH GOTTFRIED: They tried to full front deny him, deny his catch, eliminate his touches. They made it hard for him to catch the ball, and it became hard for him to get it where he wanted to get it. They did a great job of switching when they needed to switch and denying when they needed to deny. They made the game a little bit harder for him than some other teams have.

MODERATOR: Any other questions? Thank you.

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