

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Spectrum Center

Clemson Tigers

Brad Brownell

Dillon Hunter

Chase Thompson

Postgame Press Conference



Didn't shoot any in the first half. What went into them getting 13 attempts in the second half?

DILLON HUNTER: It started out as a physical game. We started at the jump, so we didn't want to give them any fouls in the first half. As the game goes on, they're going to make calls on certain things. But we felt like we wanted do what we wanted to do.

They're a good free-throw shooting team. They didn't shoot as many as the past previous games, so we just wanted to keep that number low and made sure we rebounded the ball.

Q. Seven steals on the night and Wake Forest had 12 turnovers compared to single digits with y'all. What have y'all been doing defensively in order to kind of apply pressure toward the Deacons?

CHASE THOMPSON: Just a lot of intensity and effort. I think Coach Brownell has been honest about that for sure, as of late.

Q. For Chase also, the platoon is a pretty unique thing. Y'all in the bench unit, what are you thinking when you come into the game, and how are you so effective in that system tonight?

CHASE THOMPSON: Yeah, personally it's just how can I affect the game, winning plays, use my IQ to my advantage. It brings five fresh guys going against guys that have been in the game four or five minutes. That's an advantage, as well.

Q. Dillon, with the way the tough finish to UNC last time, what's your excitement, your motivation to have a chance to get them back here in the next round?

DILLON HUNTER: Yeah, we're definitely motivated as a team. Even coming into the tournament, we had a bad stretch coming in. So we knew as a team we wanted to come in and prove we're one of the top teams in the ACC, and we're ready to go kill tomorrow.

Clemson 71, Wake Forest 62

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, really good win for our guys. Steve has had Wake playing really well here recently and that was a big win last night for them.

I just thought we played really well. We decided to go back to our platoon system, which I thought was terrific for us, energized our guys. We just kind of coming into the tournament, we wanted to do something a little different. That really ended up being a good decision. I thought our guys off the bench were terrific. I thought it kept us fresh, and I thought we played about as well as we can play in the first half.

Then had to manage it a little bit in the second half, but really for the most part, did a lot of good things. Our rebounding was outstanding. We took care of the ball. Just a good, hard-fought win for our team.

Q. Dillon, they cut it to 10 or so points there late. How did you close it out from there?

DILLON HUNTER: We knew as a team, they're a Division I team, so they're going to make shots. We knew they were going to go on their runs, so we just wanted to stay level. We told the guys keep rebounding, every play just go in, and we're one away from making the game a further game.

We knew as a team stay together, play better defense and rebound, and that'll get us the win.

Q. Dillon or Chase, Wake Forest was great at the line.



Q. Coach, Welling had a really nasty spill towards the end of the first half. What is his update right now?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, I don't have -- obviously they're going to do MRIs and all those things. I find it unlikely that he would play tomorrow. But I haven't been told anything definitive.

Obviously disappointing because I thought we were playing really well tonight and would love to be at full strength. But that's part of it. So regardless, we'll figure out a way to combat that. Obviously it's a little harder to do the platoon system when you only have nine. We're not going to play North Carolina five-on-four. We're not that arrogant.

Q. Wake in the first round against the Hokies had seven players score in double digits. What went into minimalizing that and focusing on just the three players that scored tonight?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, obviously Juke Harris is at the top of the scouting report. He's an unbelievable player and had another great game. He had a tough game last night. So you would think that he's probably going to play well.

They have a lot of good players that can score. Mason hurt us last game. Colvin hurt us last time we played them. Akins the point guard played well. But our guys were highly motivated. We knew that Virginia Tech and Wake had both beaten us during the regular season, and I think in some way that motivated us to whoever we were going to play, they were going to get our best.

That was certainly the message, and I think our guys played with really good discipline tonight. I thought our preparation was really good, but our discipline, attention to detail, we wanted to keep them off the foul line, we wanted to rebound against them, attack them on the offensive glass, which we did, and then we only turned the ball over four times, I think, compared to 11 or 12 for them.

Those kind of numbers and then obviously when you shoot the ball as well as we did in the first half, it's usually a recipe for success.

Q. You just mentioned rebounding several times now, and big disparity, 17 to 7 in offensive rebounds. That wasn't the case the first time around. Was it something on film or was it just --

BRAD BROWNELL: No, that's probably one of Wake's weaknesses. We're not a great offensive rebounding team by any means, but tonight that was a point of emphasis that we talked about their offensive rebounding against us at their place, the few shots they missed it felt like they got

some offensive rebounds. We just -- to win the game, we knew we would have to rebound better than they did, and again, try to limit the free throws. Those were a couple of the keys.

Q. You dominated points in the paint against Carolina in the first game with Welling. Do you feel like you can do that without him?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, I don't know. Some of it was the way North Carolina was guarding us. I thought they really were staying pretty tight to our perimeter players, and so there was a little more space maybe.

But we'll have to see how it kind of stacks up tomorrow in terms of how they play and where we feel like we can find some holes to make a play.

Q. You're up 20 early in the second half and Wake kind of cuts into that. What were you struggling with in that stretch until about four-ish minutes?

BRAD BROWNELL: I didn't think defensively we were -- I thought we were still pretty good. They started to make some shots, which it's just different when teams are down like that, you're playing with such a free mind that you're probably playing a lot looser.

I thought offensively, we took a few threes that we did not need to be taking, and at one time we were 8-for-12 from two and we were like 1-for-9 or 1-for-10 from three in the second half. Then the next possession we came out of the time-out and took a three. That shows you how much they listen to me.

Just I did think that that was part of it. We might have grinded a little. We couldn't get out in transition as much because they were scoring, and so it just -- then it kind of grinds to a halt on you, and you've got to really execute.

We did some good things because a team like that who can really score -- Mason can score, Colvin can score, obviously Spillers, who's not a great shooter, makes three threes against us. I just thought our guys made enough good plays and obviously built the lead, and we actually played okay with the lead for most of the second half.

Q. Godfrey, the only player to have double-digit points but the rest of the team looked like they played fairly evenly in scoring. What did you like about your team's ability to pass the ball around?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, we've been using a phrase "everybody all the time." We're an NCAA Tournament team. We've had a good year in the league. I don't think

many people thought we would be this good.

The one thing we've done it without an all-conference player. RJ was honorable mention, deservedly so. But if you've followed our team, we did the platoon system most of the non-conference and part of the beginning of the league, and then obviously Zac Foster's injury changed that a little bit.

We have pretty good depth, but guys have to earn all their time in practice. Chase and Dallas are kind of the two that are kind of earning their spurs with us.

But I just thought we needed a jolt coming into the tournament. I didn't think our team was in the best place. I don't think we were playing as well. Obviously we practiced with those two teams, the starters and the second five go against each other. So they're all very familiar with how everybody plays and fits together. We tweak things a little bit in terms of how we play, and tonight it proved to be really good for us.

Q. You guys made nine threes in the first half tonight. That's the most in any first half this season. What did that floor spacing give the offense to set a tone there?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, I thought we did a nice job of spreading the court, playing out of some pick-and-roll stuff, moving the ball, whether it's through the pass or penetration and making good decisions. They were swarming some in the post, as well, and I just thought our guys -- we talked about it, we talked about they're going to fly to the ball, you've got to make good decisions, and if you do, you'll have a chance to get some shots. Thankfully we knocked a bunch down in the first half.

Q. It hasn't been long since you guys saw UNC. What have you learned in the last two weeks that you can take into that game?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, I don't know if I've learned anything different. It was a heck of a game the first time. I thought we played very well. Give North Carolina credit; they found ways to make plays down the stretch, made some big threes against us. But it was a heck of a matchup. Our guys competed our tails off. They did, as well. It was a great college game. Hopefully tomorrow is the same.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.