

# Atlantic Coast Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

Virginia Cavaliers

Coach Amaka

Agugua-Hamilton

Paris Clark

Kymora Johnson

Postgame Press Conference



Clemson 63, Virginia 50

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Obviously this is very disappointing. First of all, credit to Clemson. I thought they played very well, very urgent, and really wanted it.

But I think we didn't control things that we could control that put us in that situation. Wasn't really expecting for us to play the way that we did. It was disappointing, but I do believe that we are still an NCAA Tournament team, and we've got to bounce back and get ready for that.

**Q. Going into the fourth quarter, you were only down five. What do you feel the difference was going into that last quarter? Because you were in striking distance.**

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Yeah, I mean, I think even in the first half, it was a little up-and-down. But I thought in the first half, we were more urgent, especially on defense. We were trying to contest more urgently. Clemson can shoot the ball. They can really shoot the ball from pretty much every position. That was part of the game plan.

Then in the second half, we kind of went away from that a little bit. And then they were packing the paint and we weren't getting the looks that we wanted to and weren't finishing plays, so they were able to gap the game a little bit.

**Q. Can you talk about how well Clark and Johnson both played down the stretch? 38-plus minutes and did everything to keep the Hoos in the ballgame?**

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Yeah, they played a lot of minutes, and they usually do. But I thought we were playing urgently. I keep using that word because that's the difference in March. They were able to get downhill, create. Paris was doing a good job finishing at the rim, always trying to get her shots, and also draw two and set her teammates up.

But that's the thing; we weren't settling, and we were trying to put more pressure on their defense.

**Q. For Coach and Kymora, how did Clemson limit you? And how did Clemson limit your opportunities today?**

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: I mean, I think early, we were missing a lot of open shots, especially in the first half. Really all game.

Then some one-on-one shots in the paint that we usually make from our bigs and things like that. I think that was a problem.

Where we hurt us was offensively, to be honest. I thought, yeah, they were packing the paint, but everybody packs the paint on us. But offensively they were able to take advantage of mismatches, put us in situations where we were switching. And then they were popping and driving or shooting the three, things like that.

I think that's where they hurt us.

**Q. Paris and Kymora. I know today didn't go the way you thought it would, but what good things can you take from today into the NCAA Tournament?**

KYMORA JOHNSON: I think we've just got to learn a lesson, unfortunately through a loss, but we've got to be more together. I'll take accountability for that. I didn't really lead my team the way I should have. But we've got to be together and we've got to compete. I don't think we competed for 40 minutes and not a lot of the game.



PARIS CLARK: Yeah, same thing she said.

**Q. Coach, you said you pretty solidly think you'll be in the NCAA Tournament. A chance to make your case to the committee, what would you say to them right now if you were in front of them? And what does the next week look for you right now?**

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Yeah, I think we have a really good NET. We've had some good wins. But we also had a lot of adversity, too. We had people in and out of the lineup, we've had injuries, things like that. I've talked about that all year.

I think we're trying to get in rhythm with our full group at this point. We had a couple kids have surgery, Breona Hurd had surgery. Sa'Myah Smith had surgery and then her mother passed away and another death in the family. So there was people in and out of lineups. We've had other people with injuries.

It's not an excuse, this is just part of what we've been through. I think there's something coming at the end of that for all of that.

I think we've got to take ownership of our part today. We didn't compete. We weren't urgent for 40 minutes. We didn't stick to the game plan. We didn't do the things we could do to control the outcome of that game.

But if you're talking about the course of the season, there's been a lot of ups and downs due to some adversity. I do think that we'll be ready to go, come NCAA Tournament. We've got a little bit of a break where we can get better and get more connected and be on the same page.

**Q. For the players, talk about how battle tested you guys have been in this ACC. Because like Coach mentioned, this is a very tough league. You guys had to battle through injuries and tough games throughout. How that will maybe prepare you for the NCAA Tournament?**

PARIS CLARK: Yeah, I think, like Coach said, it's not an excuse, but obviously it can be anybody's night in this conference. But again, we've just got to go and play our game and play 40 minutes and put that together.

We know what we can do. We see it every day in practice. But it's really just about executing.

KYMORA JOHNSON: I think every team is good in the ACC, and that's proven every night. But yeah, I think we've just got to be consistent. I think that's been our biggest struggle this season.

**Q. Coach, since you've come to Virginia, this has easily been your best year record-wise. How proud are you of these two and the whole group together?**

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Yeah, I mean, of course I'm proud. I'm a competitor and I want to win. And I want them to win, and I want them to reach their dreams and goals. And we wanted to make a run in this tournament, so that hurts.

But of course I'm proud. 11 wins in the ACC regular season first time in 26 years. NCAA Tournament, if that all goes as planned, that will be the first time in, I think, 10 years or so. There's milestones we hit along the way. Rejuvenated the fan base, we sold out season tickets -- or broke the season ticket program record two years in a row.

They've stayed -- these two have stayed and others in the locker room have stayed through a lot and have really committed to Virginia and put Virginia back on the map. So there's a lot of positives in the season.

That's why I'm hopeful that the season is not over and that we will be in the NCAA Tournament because I think we deserve to. Like I said, our NET is good. We've got good players. We've just got to come together and play for 40 minutes.

There's so many highlights of the season, but to me, it can't be done yet.

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