

# Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball Tipoff Media Day

Monday, October 6, 2025  
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

**Virginia Cavaliers**

**Coach Amaka**

**Agugua-Hamilton**

**Paris Clark**

**Kymora Johnson**

Women's Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the 2025 ACC Tipoff Q&A. I'm happy to have Virginia on the stage with us. Head coach Amaka Agugua-Hamilton, Coach Mox from here on out; Kymora Johnson and Paris Clark. You've returned five players, you're added seven more from the portal, and you've added freshman Gabby White.

You finished last season winning five of your last seven. Knowing what you have coming back, how do you build off that in the ACC?

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Well, our returners are hungry. That's the first step in everything. I think it was good. We added seven from the portal, and then we had one incoming freshman and so many different personalities, but everybody meshed together.

I think it started with the returners setting the stage, defending the culture. These are the expectations, standards. Everybody that came, they came to win. They want to compete. They want to be a part of this culture. They want to leave a legacy. It was kind of like a seamless merge.

THE MODERATOR: Paris, your coach just mentioned culture. What is the culture of Virginia?

PARIS CLARK: Our coach is great. We've been working on it since we all stepped -- since we all got on campus, since the new people got here. We do each other's hair. We cook for each other. I.

So think it's great. It's definitely an important piece for being able to win.

THE MODERATOR: Paris, did she do your hair? Because he saw her point.

KYMORA JOHNSON: No, another teammate did. Tabby. Shout-out, Tabby.

THE MODERATOR: Paris, I know you battled injury last year. What did you learn sitting on the sideline that's going to help you this season?

PARIS CLARK: Yeah, I mean, I think it just gave me a different perspective on the game. Just being able to face adversity and be able to put one foot in front of the other. I think going into this year it will just help me take it one day at a time and just knowing how to respond to adversity.

THE MODERATOR: Kymora, you led the ACC in assists last season, and at the same time you averaged almost 20 points a game. It's remarkable. Do you prefer the dish or the bucket?

KYMORA JOHNSON: I prefer the dish personally. Hopefully it's finished with a bucket and then it's a double-whammy, but, yeah, definitely the dish.

THE MODERATOR: After so much success last year, what's the next step for you? What was the focus for you this offseason?

KYMORA JOHNSON: Yeah, I think for me the focus was just being that leader that my team needs. Whether that's off the court, on the court, but specifically on the court when we hit adversity, when we hit those times, we're down 10, 15 points, how do we come together to turn that around?

THE MODERATOR: Coach Mox, your team has improved both in the regular season win total as well as ACC win total each of your three years. What has been the key to this program's just consistent growth?

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Yeah, I mean, it's been a steady climb. I think it's time to break through kind of, and our biggest goal right now is just dancing in March. That's what we're going to do.



I mean, the key to the growth, when I got here, we had to completely rebuild the program. We were dead last in the ACC, and it just started out with culture. That's why we say, "culture wins."

To me that's the key. Also, the grind. We talk about grind now, shine later, because it's about the work that we put in to help us reach our ultimate goal.

We're going to be dancing. We want to be dancing this year, but that's not the focus. The focus is winning the day, right? What goes into winning that day so that we can put days together, stack days, win games, stack winning games, and then pursue championships and make a run in the NCAA Tournament.

It's kind of the whole process of that, but it's all built on our work. We got players that really commit to that. We got players that compete every day in practice, and outside of practice are grinding.

THE MODERATOR: Kymora, I know that I'm old, but in my day the greatest point guard was Dawn Staley, and now you did something last season that put you in the record books alongside Coach Staley. What was that? What does it mean to you to be in the record books with her?

KYMORA JOHNSON: Yeah, it means everything. I grew up knowing Dawn Staley and who she --

THE MODERATOR: What was the record?

KYMORA JOHNSON: A triple double.

THE MODERATOR: In case people have not been living in the ACC.

KYMORA JOHNSON: It was just amazing. I wouldn't be able to do it without my teammates, assists, them finishing my assists, things like that. It's really a blessing, and I wouldn't want to be any other place, so...

THE MODERATOR: So now we're looking for another one this year, right?

KYMORA JOHNSON: Hopefully so.

THE MODERATOR: Paris, eight new players have joined this team. Who has impressed you the most, and who do you think is just ready to shoot out there and make their name known in the ACC?

PARIS CLARK: Yeah, I think our freshman, Gabby White. She's been amazing just stepping into that freshman point

guard role and just not even feeding into being a freshman and just using her voice and being confident.

THE MODERATOR: Coach Mox, in the ACC there's some great coaches. What makes this group of coaches just so special and unique?

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: We do. We have some elite coaches. I think we have coaches that are great people, student-athlete driven first, and then also, they do a good job of preparing their teams from a scouting report standpoint.

When you play against any team in the ACC, they're prepared. They know your personnel. They know your plays. They're yelling them out as we do as well. I just think our coaches do a good job of preparing their teams.

THE MODERATOR: A lot of coaches I've talked to today especially, we've talked about this expanded ACC schedule. Only one team you play twice. Can you talk about to the fans out there just how different it was to have 16 different preps this season. It's a toll both on the staff and players.

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Yeah, it's different. It's completely different. Then if you go somewhere and win on the road -- I mean, if you win, it's like, okay, great, you won. If you lost, you don't get to play them again and get that back. That was a different feeling I think for all coaches.

You know, it's a whole -- the ACC has completely changed. This will be our first time going out to Cal and Stanford because last year they came to us, so that's going to be different in the middle of school and all that and kind of taking a week to go out there.

I just think it's changed, but I think it adds more parity too, because you're playing everybody once, except for your rival. I don't mind it at all.

THE MODERATOR: In some ways it probably prepares you for March.

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Yeah. Yep.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies, she brought up the trip to the West. Excited?

PARIS CLARK: Yeah.

KYMORA JOHNSON: Definitely.

THE MODERATOR: When Coach Mox said earlier it's



time to bust through, what does that mean to each one of you, and what do you know you have to do to make sure this team takes that next step?

PARIS CLARK: Yeah, I think just for me personally just bringing people along with me, really stepping into that leadership role and just putting our heads down and working each and every day and bringing the best we can.

KYMORA JOHNSON: Yeah, I think I touched on it earlier. Just being that leader that the team needs. I know it's not going to be easy, but we're willing to take the risks that are needed to get there, and I'm really excited to do so.

THE MODERATOR: Coach Mox, I've asked a couple of coaches this, and it's tough. Please think this one through. Which ACC coach gives out the best Halloween candy, do you think?

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: Halloween candy? What? I'm going to go with Coach Jack, because I don't even know why. I'm just going with Coach Jack.

THE MODERATOR: You're the second person to say Coach Jack, so she better be bringing it this year.

All right, ladies, this question is for all of you, and it's going to be a one-word answer. When I say "ACC women's basketball," what one word comes to mind? Kymora, we'll start with you.

KYMORA JOHNSON: I would say toughness.

PARIS CLARK: Greatness.

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: You took mine. Competitiveness.

**Q. Coach, to get those two or three more wins you need to make the NAAs this year, where does the improvement have to come from?**

AMAKA AGUGUA-HAMILTON: I think it's a group effort. It's going to be collective. I think we're better than we were in the past. We have more talent than we did in the past. I think we finally got all the pieces in the positions we need, so when defenses game plan against us and they want to takeaway one thing, we have, you know, equal opportunity for other people to step up. I think that's going to help us.

Defensively we're even better. Long, athletic, rebound with purpose, things like that. It's going to be a collective effort. I think there's going to be more than two or three wins, to be honest. I think this group is capable of a lot.

Right now we're just focused on putting it all together, focused on building the system, focused on building everybody's confidence and getting them adjusted to their roles. This is a completely different team than last year, so I'm excited about it.

**Q. To the players, how is that gelling process going with so many newcomers added to the returning players?**

KYMORA JOHNSON: Yeah, it's going well. I mean, I think it was probably the easiest transition that I've had since I've been at Virginia. We all got along really well, because we all had that same common goal of wanting to win, and we knew what it takes. We do know what it takes, so yeah.

PARIS CLARK: Yeah. I mean, to feed off of that, pretty much the same thing. It's just been super easy. We all want to win. We all have are super bought into our roles on the team.

I think when everybody has the same goal, it kind of just comes naturally, and we just have the same interests.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you, ladies. Good luck this season.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports