

# Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday March 14, 2019

## Tony Bennett Kyle Guy Jack Salt Virginia

Virginia 76, NC State - 56

### Q. Jack, what do you attribute your offensive contributions and three three-point plays?

JACK SALT: My teammates finding me wide open, they were extending on help and they were being guarded by my man so they were just finding me and I was getting easy looks at the rim.

### Q. Tony, when you told us you were holding Jack out trying to get his back healthy, did you know he would be full go for this tournament?

TONY BENNETT: We believed that, it's just a matter of can we get it to where he feels as good as he can, and I thought these two guys were terrific today. I even joked with the guys, I think I'm going to do a haka in the locker room the way Jack played. But it looked like he was moving well and defending well and we needed his physicality, and like he said, he caught, he finished that one play in the second half where he hustled and made the up and under was good. I've probably been holding him back from scoring, and he's showing it now as we're getting into the postseason.

### Q. On the same track, has Jack shown that ability to score, and obviously your offense, you've got established scorers, but he certainly had a big day today when you needed him to.

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, he's a relentless worker, and Jack understands who he is. He finishes when stuff is there. He gets offensive rebounds, and how he scored was he just took what the game gave him unless there was a shot clock situation. He's one of the best givers I've ever coached. He's just a giver, and he gave today, and obviously he gave us production on the offensive end, which was good scoring-wise.

### Q. Kyle, first game of the postseason under your belt; if you could just describe your mindset and the team's mindset as you embark on the postseason now.



KYLE GUY: Yeah, just trying to have a laser focus and prepare for each game like it could be our last, and I think that's an important step that we've taken as a team. We're always happy when Jack can put up 18 points. So just really happy with the team and even though we were down at half, how we fought back and won.

### Q. Tony, what was the tone at halftime?

TONY BENNETT: Well, we thought we were getting some good shots offensively in the first half. We had a couple careless turnovers and a shot-clock violation. We said, continue to tighten up the defense but take the shots when they're there, and just run your offense hard, and we're in -- this is tournament basketball. These are possession by possession games, and there's a physicality that's there, so we just kept plugging.

JACK SALT: Yeah, I mean, we were getting good looks and we weren't hustling on the offensive boards. Coach Tony said we only had one offensive rebound, so we had to pick that up. I tried to do a little bit of that, and the other guys rallied and did a really good job.

### Q. Kyle, what do you think made it such a rough shooting night for the rest of your teammates, and did you feel any pressure because that kind of continued through the game to keep taking and hitting your shots?

KYLE GUY: Well, you know, shots are going to come and go, defense is always there, so I definitely felt, not pleasure, but that I needed to be a little more aggressive when Ty's shot is not falling, but again, he runs the show and had 10 assists, so even though he didn't shoot well, he did fine. Again, 18 points for Jack, we'll take that any day.

### Q. Two-part question: Tony, what was the impact of the two three-point plays by Jack and four-point play by Kyle, and Jack, when was the last time you had an offensive game like this?

TONY BENNETT: The impact was big. You know, there's momentum. We needed those. And it was, again, a possession by possession game the way it was going, so I don't remember what those plays either got us in the lead or put us up by, but those are just those X factor plays, again, an offensive rebound or an and-one or a four-point play, so I think they were

important.

JACK SALT: I guess last year in the ACC Tournament against Clemson was probably close to this, but I've not had a game like this at Virginia, so it was pretty awesome to get that and for the guys to find me down low.

**Q. Kyle, considering the extended scoring drought that you guys had in the first half, did you feel pretty good about going into the locker room only down two? And what changed defensively in the second half to really kind of get them off of their game?**

KYLE GUY: Yeah, we're a team, I think I've been saying this phrase a lot, calm is contagious, and it starts with Coach Bennett and ripples all the way down to our first years. When we have experience, we can stay calm in these situations. We never really worry. We know what we need to take care of, and in the second half it was just buckling down on defense and making open shots.

**Q. Coach, NC State is this team that you guys went to overtime with earlier in the season. Today they put up a fight in that first half, and a lot of people were saying the game two days ago was a play-in game for them. Could you talk a little bit about the fight with them and their credentials for the tournament?**

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, I think they're very quick and they really pressure the ball, and what Markell did yesterday to come back and make the plays he did was -- it was noticeable.

They hurt us on the glass there, and they pressured us into some turnovers, and we didn't play our best in certain stretches. Again, I thought we were steadier in this game.

This league is good. They're talented. They're athletic. They pretty much play four guards all the time, whether it's Dorn at the 4 or whoever else they put in. Again, I think they're a heck of a team. Coach Keatts does a great job, and I'm not on the selection committee, but I believe the way this league is and how they played, I would hope that they're in, but I'm the wrong guy to ask.

**Q. Kyle, we saw you in the first half take the ball in the middle of the court, pass on what looked like an open shot, read the defense and drive inside. Do you think that ability to dissect defense is where your game has grown the most this season?**

KYLE GUY: Yeah, absolutely. We had a meeting, a coaches' player meeting after every year and talk about what we need to work on and stuff, and creating my

own shot and creating for others was on that list. I always knew I could do it, it was just getting the confidence and putting it to work like I did today.

**Q. Jack, in the second half you had a dunk and then they called a technical foul for hanging on the rim. You looked like you had a look of disbelief on that call. Give us your impressions of that play?**

JACK SALT: Yeah, I haven't jumped from that far and dunked in a while, and so I had to hold onto the rim or else I would have fell on my head, so I was pretty surprised on that one.

**Q. Tony, I apologize for asking a big picture question, but at the Final Four last year when you got your Coach of the Year Award, you said, you mentioned the text from Ty Jerome about how UMBC was part of y'all's story now, and that what was going to be the determining factor on how you went forward was how you got better day by day. You're 29-2, so I'm guessing you've managed to achieve that. Would you agree with that?**

TONY BENNETT: Yes. (Laughter).

No, I think -- yeah, I think we've grown from that experience. We've owned it. We've talked about it. We had a great year last year and a hard loss. But it's time to press on, and there's not any more to say about that, and I'll get asked and we'll answer the question, but it's time to press on and be as focused as we can and just get good, but certainly grow from all your experiences.

**Q. Jack, on the technical, even if you hadn't needed to hang on the rim, at that point would you have possibly considered getting a technical anyway for the career high? And also, I know New Zealand is bigger than they make it look on Flight of the Conchords, but you're in North Carolina, do you know Michael Campbell at all?**

JACK SALT: I don't know who Michael Campbell is.

**Q. The golfer?**

JACK SALT: Now that you say that, I recognize the name. I don't really want to get texts to give an advantage to the other team, so I won't do that.

**Q. Tony, the double bye obviously is a good thing and getting the rest, but do you think any of the issues in the first half were rust-related from time off?**

TONY BENNETT: I think NC State played well. We talked about before the game when you play a team that has a game under their belt, you've got to be really ready. I'm not sure. I know we challenged our guys to be as ready as we can with that in your first game, but NC State did a good job, and again, we did some good

things, it's just didn't make some shots with these guys kind of kept us in there until we got our footing, so to speak.

**Q. Kyle, forgive me one last question about UMBC. You're playing on the same floor. Did anybody say anything about that before the game amongst the players?**

KYLE GUY: No, I think me and Jack had an advantage coming back here for media day -- and you guys don't have to apologize for asking those questions, I'm happy to answer them. Feels good to be back right here in this press conference room where we were last time, and just like Coach said, ready to press on and move on from it, learn from it.

**Q. Tony, everybody knows Kyle can shoot, but how does it change how teams have to defend you when he's also slashing to the rim and fighting for rebounds?**

TONY BENNETT: Yeah, Kyle is a complete, he's so efficient. You look at that stat line, but he's deceptive with that as far as getting in there, and I thought he made some terrific passes to guys, and he's unselfish, so yes, that's a triple threat. Those kinds of things make a guy, if you just say, run him off the line, run him off the line, you can't do that. So I think that makes him and us more efficient and effective offensively.