

Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball Tipoff Media Day

Thursday, October 10, 2024

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Clemson Tigers

Coach Brad Brownell

Chase Hunter

Ian Schieffelin

Men's Press Conference



Making sure that the guys that are coming in see that, are witness to it, hear it, and then that the guys that are in the locker room when the coaches aren't and are really leading your program and are making the right voices, I guess, heard. Certainly this year these two guys will be responsible for a lot of that.

THE MODERATOR: We have the Clemson Tigers with us. Questions for Head Coach Brad Brownell, please.

Q. This unique world of the transfer portal and NIL and everything that's going on, for you this season you're bringing in a balance of freshmen as well as portal guys. Just what can you say about how all of that gels with what you do have and the culture that you've already created?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, I think every year is different, first off. Last year we only had one freshman and brought in a couple of transfers. We're going to bring in several freshmen next year as well.

So it's a little bit of what are your needs? This year we had a little bit more turnover, lost some seniors. Had one or two guys leave. So you just have a bigger class.

I think the challenge, as you mentioned, is there's an ownership on the guys that have been in your program to help establish your culture, make sure your locker room is good, make sure the new guys understand how we go about our business, what our habits are, what our beliefs, how we work, how we value each other and respect one another.

I'm blessed that we've had great leaders in our program. We've had a lot of homegrown talent, whether it's Hunter Tyson or PJ Hall, these two guys, Chauncey Wiggins in our program, Dillon Hunter in our program. Guys that have been in our program for multiple years know how we go about our business.

I think there's a real pride in our program for how we play, how we handle ourselves, what our daily habits are, and then how our performance has been, especially recently.

Managing all that is really important as a coach. There's somebody -- I can't remember who it was. It might have been George Raveling that talked about coaches get fired on three things: By coaching, by managing, and leading, and most often it's not the coaching, it's the managing or leading that's the problem.

In this instance your players have to be a big part of the manage and leading. Not just the head coach. I think we've done that at Clemson.

Q. One of the cons for the Clemson team from last year was the struggle to finish games. How do you practice for that or prep for that for the upcoming season?

BRAD BROWNELL: We finished pretty well in the NCAA Tournament. We might not have finished all of them in the regular season.

You know, you've got to practice those kinds of things, which we all do. You have to practice late-game situations. Most games are won with players making plays. You've got to instill confidence in your players to make the necessary plays, whether that's a defensive stop, whether that's a basket at the end, whether it's late-game execution of a set play or a BOB, an ATO, one of those kinds of things.

But more times than not coaches are either giving credit or maybe some blame on some things. A lot of times you just have to do everything you can as a coach to put your players in a position to be successful and instill confidence in them to do that.

You know, when you play in a league as good as this one you're going to be in a lot of close games. At least you



hope to be. Otherwise, it's not going very well.

We understand that. We're practicing those kinds of things even now. We do too many games where those things pop up a lot.

Q. I think last year several times you talked about sort of the challenge you gave to PJ Hall to be the face and leader of this program. Now with Chase and Ian, what have those conversations been like in the offseason? How have they responded to that challenge?

BRAD BROWNELL: I think they understand to some degree right now, but it will be greater sense of urgency as we start playing games. They're certainly lead by example guys in a great way. They work really hard. They're smart. They care about each other. They care about our program. They care about the team. They want to do the right things, and they do the right things.

But we're going to experience adversity on this year's team just like we did last year. You know, we were 4-6 in the ACC at one point and in danger of blowing our season. PJ and some of these guys right here understood we've got to make some changes, and we have to get playing better basketball, so we did. That's player-driven.

Think I when you have player-driven teams your teams are much more successful. The responsibility will come to them of when things aren't going well are they supportive? If there's a lawyer in the locker room, is that guy silenced a little bit? Are we understanding that we're all on the same page, and it takes all of us on the same page to be successful? Some of this is to be determined.

Do I think these guys have the qualities necessary? I do. These are two great young men who are extremely positive examples of our program. I'm proud of them, but there's going to be a lot of challenging days ahead for all of us. I think they'll handle it.

THE MODERATOR: Since you took over in 2010/2011 the Tigers have exceeded the preseason poll projections 11 times in your 14 years. Polls are polls. How do you react to a stat like that?

BRAD BROWNELL: I don't pay much attention really. I guess folks don't think much of us. You know, I think sometimes the real answer is because our media situation is probably a little smaller than some in the league, and people don't know our team as well.

I think we have better players more times than people think, and our players bear that out with the way they play during the regular season.

THE MODERATOR: How about we switch places with Chase. Questions for Chase, please.

Q. The team had obviously an incredible run last season. Despite losing some of those players from that team, you coming back and obviously Ian coming back, what can you do this season to sustain success and build off of last year despite not having some of those guys?

CHASE HUNTER: Yeah, I think it's just playing with that same chip on our shoulder that we did last year. We're bringing back a lot of older guys, a lot of transfer guys that played a lot of basketball and that know how to win.

So I think for us it's just continuing to play with that chip on our shoulder and making sure we go out there and play as hard as we can every game.

Q. So I wanted to know with Joe Girard coming in last year and the relationship you seem to have on the court and maybe if there's something that he was kind of helping you with, maybe off the court when it came to I know you're wanting to continue to improve on your three-point shooting. Then how is that transition with him as a transfer and how do you help bring the younger guys along? Was there anything that you learned from having previous transfers or guys come in helping the younger guys?

CHASE HUNTER: Yeah, Joe was a great player, a great guy, a great dude to play with. I learned a lot from him. But I think going into this year it's just making sure that I keep these guys on the same page as me in the team, making sure that we get those same values that Coach instilled in me and the players that have been here.

So just making sure that we're all on the same page, and we're all going towards the same goal.

Q. What went into your decision to come back? Did you always know you were going to come back, or was that something that you struggled with a little bit?

CHASE HUNTER: I wouldn't say I always knew. I wanted -- my dream is definitely to play in the NBA, so I wanted to try that out. I got some good feedback, had some talks with Coach. We thought the best decision for me was to come back.

I wanted to come back and make more history, make more history for Clemson, do some big things here. So that was a big reason why I wanted to come back.

Q. Just talking back with your run in the tournament, obviously you were one of more consistent players within that field of 64. How did you I guess carry that momentum into the offseason, and what sort of lessons did you learn from being one of those faces within that tournament?

CHASE HUNTER: Yeah, I just learned that I can do it. I learned that when I'm confident and I'm playing aggressively, I can do some big things for this team.

My thing coming into this year was just make sure I'm more consistent, being more of a vocal leader, making sure I help these guys out and know that we can make another run.

THE MODERATOR: You've been around ACC ball long enough, there's always one player every year in which the fans go, He's still there? I think you're that guy this year. Your comfort level with the league, you understand it really well. Your reaction?

CHASE HUNTER: Yeah, I mean, I think everybody runs their own race. Everybody has their own journey. This has been my journey. I'm proud to be in this journey.

I just take it day by day. Yeah, I'm just going to keep running my own race.

THE MODERATOR: Sounds good. Let's switch places with Ian.

Questions for Ian, please.

Q. Just with the way you sort of had the 2023 season one of more proved players within the conference, what when you look back on that year, what do you want to take from that, and where do you want your game to grow in 2024?

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: I think the biggest thing about last season is just not forgetting where I was best at and keeping that while also expanding my game to another level, which one thing I really want to just keep working on is being more of a vocal leader, like Coach Brownell said, and expanding in that area.

And on the court-wise being more confident and consistent and just shooting the ball with more confidence.

Q. You heard your coach talk about -- well, Chase talk about the chip on the shoulder and just what can you say about if you enjoy being the team that has that, but then at the same time is Clemson not becoming a representative of the ACC nationally? So do you

believe there is a chip, but then also at the same time that you are a representative of the conference?

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: I think there kind of always is a chip. You know, like they said about the polls and Coach always outdoes the polls. There's always going to be a chip on your shoulder.

I think Clemson is definitely becoming one of those schools that's becoming better at basketball. I think that's one thing that just coming here I wanted to do and leave the program just better than how I found it.

It's one of the things I think is it's just getting more national attention.

THE MODERATOR: Watching you walk the hallways here at the hotel, sort of quiet, sort of slow, good, even pace. When you get on the floor, it looks like it's totally different Ian Schieffelin. What is it about the light switch of game day that brings you to a different persona, so it seems?

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: Just the want to win. Just doing whatever it takes to win. I'm willing to put my body on the line for my teammates and the guys that care for me and that I go through all the workouts with every single day.

THE MODERATOR: Do you have to win a championship in order to call it a successful season?

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: No. I think that's definitely the goal always. I think just being able to put our guys, me and Chase, just leading these guys and putting them in the best position possible and being able to say that we gave everything.

I think at the end of the day everybody wants to win a championship, and that is the goal, but just saying that we are able to put each other in the right position to achieve that.

THE MODERATOR: We will bit you adieu. Have a great season.

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