

Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball Tipoff Media Day

Monday, October 5, 2026

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

NC State Wolfpack

Coach Wes Moore

Zoe Brooks

Khamil Pierre

Women's Press Conference



Then from the transfer portal we use it more to fill needs, and we feel like we are able to do that and address some areas that we needed to maybe fill some holes. So it's a good mix.

We've got six returners and then three freshmen and three transfers. So I like the mix of our team.

THE MODERATOR: Zoe, unfortunately the last time we saw you you were leaving the court with injury. How are you health-wise, and how did you spend your offseason?

ZOE BROOKS: I'm doing much better now. I spent my offseason doing a lot of rehab. About five days a week pretty much all summer. I was just working on getting healthy.

But I'm back on the court now.

THE MODERATOR: Khamil, you achieved First Team All-ACC last season, the first all-conference honor of your career. What was it about Coach Moore's system and this program that helped you to elevate your play?

KHAMIL PIERRE: Honestly, I think they just pushed me to be a better player. The expectation is always super high for me, and at the same time, I think it was just kind of expected that I came out here and I performed.

Q. This is for all three of you. Just what has this offseason been like after the way last season finished for you in trying to work towards continuing to get better and working towards deeper runs in the NCAA Tournament as well?

WES MOORE: You know, last year we finished fourth out of 18 teams in this unbelievable conference. You know, again, in a lot of eyes you would say fourth out of 18, really strong programs is a heck of a year, and I can see that somewhat.

But over the last six years, I think we've won five ACC championships, between the tournament and the regular season. We've gone to an Elite Eight one year. We have

THE MODERATOR: We welcome NC State head coach Wes Moore, senior Zoe Brooks, and senior Khamil Pierre. Thank you for joining us.

WES MOORE: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: NC State is coming off -- you're coming off your 10th NCAA trip. Return six, three of which were starters. Last year you led a team with no seniors. How far ahead are you right now, because you had experience coming back?

WES MOORE: Well, no doubt it's a luxury having these two returning. I'm always appreciative. Zoe has been with us now fourth year, and Khamil is returning also. These are two great players that we can lean on and that can provide leadership for our new players.

I feel like we have a great chemistry right now, and I think these two are a big part of it by showing great leadership for us.

THE MODERATOR: You brought in three transfers and the No. 25 ranked recruiting class, consisting of three freshmen. Can you discuss the impact that you expect from these newcomers this season?

WES MOORE: Yeah, I think, first of all, I still enjoy recruiting high school kids and having freshmen in our program. I think it's good for everyone. They bring kind of youthfulness and excitement, and they need mentoring. They need teaching.

I think when you have players like Zoe and Khamil, they provide that. It helps them. When you are having to teach others, it also kind of reiterates with you what you need to do. So we're excited about the freshmen we have.



gone to a Final Four one year. So our expectations are really high.

I think probably you put more pressure on yourself than outside people do. We've got a very supportive administration. We've got great fans. But last year wasn't what we want to be, so we're hoping that this year, again, through different areas that we maybe can address and get better at that we can take it a little bit further.

THE MODERATOR: Zoe?

ZOE BROOKS: He hit it on the spot.

KHAMIL PIERRE: I would say the same thing, kind of like Coach said. As a team we definitely talked about making sure that we understood last season wasn't what we wanted, and coming back this year and making sure we change, work harder, and understand the importance of it being a lot of our last year.

Q. This question is for all three of you. In terms of last year not being what you wanted it to be, the three-point shooting percentage was a major part in that. To Khamil's credit, there's a direct correlation between the team's higher three-point field goal percentage and her ability to score underneath. So how do you feel like you've done in addressing that potential outside scoring threat and opening up the floor for Zoe to do what she does driving and for Khamil to do what she does underneath?

WES MOORE: Yeah, I do think it's going to have to be by committee. I think in Zoe's case, she is so good at getting downhill. She's so strong and can score in traffic and against contact.

But you did see teams maybe sometimes trying to take that away and focusing on that so much that she did have open looks.

So I think Zoe has worked really hard this summer on improving her three-point shot. I think you're going to see the results of that.

Khamil, not only for our team, because we are smaller this year, we are going to have to spread the court out and create opportunities for driving. You want to make sure that everybody on the court is capable of knocking down the three. I think Khamil, too, has worked really hard. I think our coaches have worked hard with Khamil.

We want her especially too, is someday looking at playing at the next level, she's going to need that in her toolbox, so to speak. So I think it's important, but it's going to be our

whole team.

I think Ky'She Lunan last year probably she is so good as pushing tempo and attacking. She's worked hard at it. Adelaide Jernigan was a freshman a year ago and can provide some three-point punch. Maddie Cox, another player that's been with us for four years.

Again, I appreciate her loyalty to our program. She's capable of knocking down the three as well.

I think it's going to be a committee. We also added Desiree Wooten, a power forward transfer, shot 35% from three a year ago. I think she can provide that as well.

It's going to have to be a team effort, but I do expect to see that number go up.

ZOE BROOKS: I agree with what he said. I think it's going to take a team effort, everybody to kind of hit threes here and there, but not just, like, one or two people. It will be a team effort.

KHAMIL PIERRE: I'm going to be shooting two a game. I'm going to make -- y'all don't have to worry about me, yeah (laughing).

Q. Can you speak to the Triangle Rivalries? I know it's intense, but can you specifically speak to the benefits for the ACC and for your program?

WES MOORE: I do think it's great for women's basketball. I think it's great for our fans and our area. It's kind of cool.

I tell recruits, you know, because of the -- I mean, let's face it, all three teams were pretty good last year. So, you know, when these young ladies go out to eat or go to Target or whatever, you know, it's going to be people coming up, can I get your autograph, can we take a selfie? They get to be rock stars.

ZOE BROOKS: This guy eats free everywhere he goes, and we're the rock stars?

WES MOORE: Thanks to y'all. I appreciate y'all getting those deals for me. Thank you. I'm riding y'all's coattails.

But, yeah, it makes it fun. Like I said, we've been blessed. We've had a lot of success, and I think now we see the blue schools are also excelling some. It provides a lot of interest in the area and a lot of excitement about women's basketball, so that's good.

Q. This question is for the players. How do you approach stepping into those mentorship roles while

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maintaining peak performance on the court?

KHAMIL PIERRE: I think just understanding, like, we used to be freshmen too. We've been through different struggles. We've been in the game for a long time, so just being able to put ourselves in other people's shoes and understanding that we can help them get better pouring into them, making sure they're confident and just being the best player they can be.

ZOE BROOKS: Yeah, I think just being a positive voice for them, you know, when they might have a day when they're struggling or still trying to learn the plays. Just being like a senior captain, like both of us, and just helping them out.

Like Khamil said, we were freshmen once, and we needed that guidance as well.

Q. Tomorrow is National Coaches Day. Can you talk about your supporting coaching staff and what they mean to the program.

ZOE BROOKS: Aw, they mean a lot. They put a lot of time into us watching film and trying to help us grow and get better. They're tough on us, but I know it's for the best.

KHAMIL PIERRE: Yeah, I would say the same thing. Obviously they're going to be our coaches, but they put in a lot of work with us on and off the court. And I mean, they got a lot of stuff they got to do with their job. I'm so excited to celebrate with them tomorrow. We have practice.

WES MOORE: I want to know why is it just a day? Why isn't a week or a month? We need to get on that.

THE MODERATOR: I'll remind you, you're riding their coattails.

WES MOORE: All right, next question (laughing).

THE MODERATOR: Zoe, going into your fourth season at NC State, you're second in triple doubles, 10th in assists, 12th in free throws made, 27th in points in a career. You've accomplished so much in a Wolfpack uniform. How has NC State made you a better player, but also person off the court, because you're rare in this day and age of four years?

ZOE BROOKS: They hold me accountable for a lot off the court. Just making sure I do what I got to do, go to class, get my work done, stuff like that.

On the court, they're pretty honest with me, what I need to work on, what I need to get better at, if I could have did something different than they saw on the court. I feel like

that helps me grow like you said, on and off the court.

THE MODERATOR: Khamil, after one season you were tied for first in the NC State record books with almost 12 a game. Take us through what makes you so successful on the glass.

KHAMIL PIERRE: I think it's just the want. I want to definitely be a really good rebounder, but also, I feel like last year I was pretty happy with myself. I averaged I think it was 12 rebounds a game. That's not good enough. He thinks I should, you know -- if I do this better and this, then I should get at least, what did you say, 14?

WES MOORE: 15.

KHAMIL PIERRE: 15 a game.

THE MODERATOR: Way to hold her accountable.

KHAMIL PIERRE: Yeah.

Q. Coach, very accomplished, very successful. I'm curious about your interests in coaching women versus guys, because clearly you could have been successful with guys as well.

WES MOORE: Well, if you want me to be honest, initially it was when I came out of school I had two job opportunities. One of them was coaching high school boys and I would have had to teach science, like, five times a day. The only reason I was certified in science was because as a PE major, we had to take 12 hours of science. I would have had to study more than the kids, and I was sick of studying. Y'all didn't hear that, okay?

And then my other job offer was a Division III women's basketball job, and I thought, hmm, I would rather go out recruiting and stuff like that than teach science. Although we're thankful for science teachers, but I just wasn't ready for that.

I kind of fell into it, and then I just loved it. I mean, they were coachable. They weren't all about me, me, me. They made it fun to come to practice every day, and I've just been very blessed.

It's amazing, and, you know, again, I thank God that things worked out the way they did.

Q. Coach, you are heading into a schedule with nonconference opponents, LSU, Kentucky, Ole Miss, some challenges. What went into designing such a demanding slate early on for you guys, and how are you preparing and looking forward to those

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nonconference opponents as you even this early on are looking towards March?

WES MOORE: Yeah, I feel like we've got great players, and they want to play in big games. I think we need -- this conference, the ACC, is so unbelievably strong. Nine teams in the NCAA Tournament a year ago. Five in the Sweet 16. We have to prepare for that.

TV exposure. Over half of our games are on national TV. So when you play people like that, you are going to be in those situations.

Now, my assistant, Nikki West, who has been with me over 20 years, she says insanity. She wants to cuss me every day for doing that schedule. But like I said, I just think it's what makes you better.

You're going to get exposed. You're going to find out what you need to work on. We've got one of them right here in Charlotte the first weekend of the season. We get to play here in the Spectrum, which is where the conference tournament is going to be, so I think that's an added plus.

Ally is unbelievable to women's sports, and the event here is first-class. It's the closest thing to a Final Four experience that I think you can give your players, so thanks to the Charlotte Sports Foundation and Ally. Games like that, you know, are just -- in a lot of ways they're preparing your team for what lies ahead.

THE MODERATOR: Khamil, and you Zoe each scored 20 or more points last season. What is it about her game that helps you elevate your game?

KHAMIL PIERRE: I think honestly just seeing Zoe push the ball and being super competitive, it makes me want to pick it up and just be a better player for her. Because, you know, if she's going really hard, it makes me want to go really hard.

THE MODERATOR: Zoe, Coach Moore is one of more expressive coaches in our game. Give me your --

WES MOORE: What was that word?

THE MODERATOR: Expressive. That was the kindest way I could describe it, Wes.

WES MOORE: All right.

THE MODERATOR: Give me Coach Moore's go-to saying and then your best impersonation of that.

ZOE BROOKS: That's hard. Khamil, please help.

WES MOORE: Let her help. She's dying to do it.

KHAMIL PIERRE: Khamil, you just aren't going hard enough. You got to go harder.

ZOE BROOKS: It's not going to work. It's not going to work.

KHAMIL PIERRE: I'm telling y'all (laughing).

WES MOORE: That's good.

ZOE BROOKS: The hair was good.

WES MOORE: That's good. We are practicing tomorrow (laughing).

THE MODERATOR: To wrap up, I'm going to ask each of you to give me a one-word description of NC State women's basketball this season. Khamil, we'll start with you.

KHAMIL PIERRE: I'd say blessed.

ZOE BROOKS: Fast.

WES MOORE: Energy.

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