

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 10, 2021
Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

Duke Blue Devils

Matt Hurt

Postgame Press Conference



Duke 70, Louisville 56

Q. Could you discuss a little bit the defense today, the defensive plan, especially in the second half? You held them to only 27 points. They didn't shoot very well. What was kind of the emphasis defensively for you guys in the second half?

MATT HURT: Yeah, just trying to make it tough on their guards. They have two really great guards, so just try to pack it in, try to make them as play makers, try to make them kick out to shooters. And I think we did that well tonight. We have another game tomorrow, so I'm just excited for tomorrow's matchup.

Q. Tell us about your view of what your teammate Mark did tonight with all those points, all those rebounds, all those offensive rebounds that he scored on, your viewpoint of him?

MATT HURT: Yeah, he was big time. 23 and 19, that's not easy, especially against a team like Louisville. I'm proud of him. He's been working his butt off all year long. There were some stretches that he wasn't playing well, wasn't playing, but he just kept working, working with Coach James. I'm so proud of him, our teammates are so proud of him, but he knows tomorrow that it's going to be a big game.

Q. It's hard to win when the other team goes on a 16-0 run, but you guys were able to do it. How did you guys respond to that at halftime after having that big lead and then seeing it kind of get away?

MATT HURT: Yeah, basketball is a game of runs. Like you said, it was like a 16-0 run. We just couldn't let it rattle us. On their fourth time-out it did, but we regrouped at halftime and we just tried to play hard and just tried to execute on offense.

Q. You mentioned how Mark has been getting better and better and better. At what point in the season in his progression did you realize that he was capable of something like this? At what point did it become clear to you in practice or in games that he was a guy that could put up 20 and 19 in an ACC Tournament game?

MATT HURT: Yeah, I think I would say probably the NC State game at NC State. He was going up against a really good other big, and I think it was Bates, and he did a great job on him. All that confidence he'd been doing at practice, and since the NC State game, I've really seen him take off, and I'm just so proud of him.

Q. I'm just wondering in general you guys are obviously trying to make it five wins in five days to win the ACC Tournament. I'm wondering if Coach K has used any examples from 2017, that team that won four games in four days and how he's used that team as an example for you guys?

MATT HURT: No, he hasn't talked about that. Right after the USC game, we met as a team and then we just created a plan how we're going to try to attack this week. First two days have gone well, but starting with tomorrow, it's going to be huge because Florida State is a really good team.

Q. Speaking of Florida State, the last time you guys played was last season, and you had that big offensive rebound at the end of the game to help seal it. FSU is always deep and aggressive. What do you think it's going to take in your third game in three days to win it?

MATT HURT: You know, I think all of us have to get our rest first, but just having the same mindset we've had the last two days and just trying to play tough on defense, trying to execute on offense, get a good night's rest of sleep, and just try to keep being better. Because the season is not over yet, and we're just trying to take it one game at a time.

Q. Do you remember much about that game?



Obviously that was a big game for you personally.

MATT HURT: Yeah, I mean, a little bit. I think the game before that, I really didn't play much. So I think we just have to go in and attack because like I said, they're a great team. It should be a fun game tomorrow.

Q. Since this is the third day you've been back to Greensboro after driving back and forth, is it a little bit more tiring to do that drive back and forth instead of being able to go straight back to your hotel room and get into your own bed?

MATT HURT: No, I wouldn't say it's tiring. I think our medical staff does a great job of right when we get back, we do the COVID test, we get treatment, just try to be extra caution about our bodies. Just coming in tomorrow, I think we've just got to get our rest and just try to keep being better.

Q. There was a time in the second half when Carlik Jones was ready to go off and take over the game and then Duke just shut him down and he didn't score a point in the last 6:15. Can you talk about Duke's ability to control Jones down the stretch?

MATT HURT: Yeah, for sure. We started (indiscernible) on him. Of course, he's a great guard, gets in the paint, can shoot it. I think just trying to key on him and Johnson especially, trying to keep them in front and make them kick. I think we did a great job of it, and again, we have a really good team.

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