

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 11, 2021
Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

Virginia Cavaliers

Sam Hauser

Postgame Press Conference



Virginia 72, Syracuse 69

Q. Sam, how would you kind of characterize your first ACC Tournament game, particularly that ending?

SAM HAUSER: That's what March is. I think once you hit March in tournament time, you never know what can happen. That was one of these games where both teams, we're playing for a lot. And Reece made a huge shot at the end and Syracuse played well all game. They gave us trouble. Glad to come out on top and we'll refocus for tomorrow.

Q. I wanted to ask you, you've talked about moving on from losses before. What are the challenges of moving on from an emotional win? How quickly do you put that in the past and look forward to tomorrow?

SAM HAUSER: Well, in this tournament setting, you've got to move on pretty quickly because we've got a game tomorrow against either Georgia Tech or Miami, I think. Two good teams. Obviously enjoy this win for sure where we advance, but definitely got to refocus and get ready for tomorrow.

Q. I don't know if you were aware of what happened with Duke where they had to withdraw because someone tested positive. But in saying that, how proud are you of not just yourself but your team in general to play in a game like this, dealing with these type of situations with the pandemic and being able to focus, having to get tested before and after the game, and still focus and come up with a big win tonight?

SAM HAUSER: Yeah, I mean, this whole year has been a little different for everyone with the testing protocols, socially distancing, wearing masks, making sure you're not seeing people outside of your bubble really. Very proud of the guys. We were very disciplined throughout the year

and continue to be, especially this time of the year where if you get a COVID bug like that, it could end your season.

It sucks for Duke. You never wish that upon anyone. We're just going to continue to take the right protocols, and we should be all right.

Q. In the first meeting you hit seven three-pointers personally against them. What did they do defensively on the perimeter today especially early?

SAM HAUSER: I think they were focused more on the arc -- I think they tried to run us off the three-point line a little bit. I think they did a good job of it. But we stayed with it, shots started falling towards the end of the game. That's why you stick with it, you stay resilient, and we made enough shots tonight to end up on top.

Q. Over the last minute, Syracuse really got back into it with the press and on that last inbound, you took probably as close to five seconds as possible. What was going on?

SAM HAUSER: They were really active. Seemed like they were taking away everyone. They made a nice double cut to get open right at the last second. Thankfully he got open. They're good. Last time we played them they gave us troubles at home, as well. I think they knew that, and that's why they stuck with it. They got a couple turnovers off of us tonight, but we've just got to be more sure with the ball. That's about it.

Q. In the last possession, can you walk us through what you all were trying to do there? Reece seems to be the most unlikely three-point hero there.

SAM HAUSER: Yeah, I think we were just trying to get as good a look as possible, and Reece got a really, really good look. And we're going to tell anyone on our team to shoot that if they're open, especially given the circumstances. I think they were trying to key on Trey. And I think that opened up the middle for Lee to get in there and make the right play, and he showed his poise by being able to kick it out, right into the shot pocket for Reece

to make a rhythm three, and couldn't have come at a better time.

Q. Talking about Reece, he went 0 for 5 before that, a lot of teams have dared him to shoot this season. What was it like to see one get like that go down for him?

SAM HAUSER: Yeah, I think it could be a confidence booster for him. I mean, we all have confidence in him every time he's open we're telling him to shoot. If they're not going in, we're still going to tell him to shoot if he's open because we have that much confidence in him. If he keeps shooting they're eventually going to fall. He stuck with it. He knew he had to shoot it. He was open. He shot it in rhythm. He's one of those kids that just keeps coming back. If he gets knocked down he keeps getting up. Great player, happy for Reece and happy we're moving on.

Q. What did Tony tell you guys in the locker room after the game?

SAM HAUSER: He's happy we got the win. Obviously we've got to clean up our rebounding and some transition defense, little things like that. We'll watch the film tonight, we'll learn from it and move on because we've got a game tomorrow.

Q. Did you know it was going in? And if someone is struggling in a slump, you literally don't have to thinking about shooting, can that help in that type of situation?

SAM HAUSER: I was kind of on the top of the key so I didn't have a really good angle of it but it looked good after his hand, and I'm always hopeful so I put my arms in the air and it went in. To your point, I think it definitely could be part of -- he had to shoot it. He didn't have time to think about it, and I think for shooters sometimes that's even better, when you just shoot it and aren't thinking about it.

I think that one falling, hopefully it gives him confidence in these next hopefully couple games here. Happy for Reece.

Q. What's it been like for your family to juggle both you being here while Joey is out in Indy? I know your mom said that your mom and dad are over in Indy and your grandparents are here in Greensboro. What's it been like to have that family juggling going on this week?

SAM HAUSER: Yeah, they weren't even sure which tournament they were going to go to, if they were going to split up and one go to one and one go to the other. They're

in Indy right now. My grandparents actually made it here. Hopefully both of our teams keep winning, so I don't know what they're going to do if that happens, but they love to travel, they love having us both in different settings so they can see a lot of new places and new faces and stuff like that.

I know they're happy for us no matter what, and love them to death.

Q. I know you talked before the tournament about wanting to come to this program to be a part of moments like this. When Reece's shot goes through the basket, describe what happened to you after that. I know you guys all ran to the corner, but your emotions, your feelings, your experience there.

SAM HAUSER: I mean, whenever someone hits a game winner you just go crazy. You don't really know what you're doing. You can't really control your excitement. We kind of dog piled on Reece a little bit, and rightfully so. Happy for him, and yeah, time to move on to the next game, though.

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