

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

North Carolina Tar Heels

Leaky Black

Postgame Press Conference



North Carolina 81, Virginia Tech 73

Q. In the second half, the team seemed to crash the boards a little bit more, 13 offensive rebounds, and the team shot over 40 percent from the three-point line, and you had your share of open threes tonight. Did the offensive rebounding edge give you guys better opportunities and better shot selection, especially from beyond the arc?

LEAKY BLACK: Definitely. You know, we have some horses down low, Armando, Walker, G, Day'Ron. Any time those guys can get an offensive rebound and they're going right back up, it's hard to defend that, you know, as soon as they get it off the board. We'll take that any time, honestly.

Q. You probably heard Roy talking about the extra effort. He said extra effort to get off the box-outs, extra effort to get to the boards. Just with the physicality Virginia Tech plays with, did you guys show something about your toughness tonight that maybe you haven't shown this season?

LEAKY BLACK: Yeah, I think so. They hit us in the mouth pretty hard in the first half, and it was just win or go home, know what I mean? They emphasized that in the locker room, and I feel like we stepped up pretty big. Armando getting down low and getting the easy baskets inside, offensive rebounding, that gave us a big lift, and it just went from there.

Q. You and RJ had pretty big second halves. What is RJ like? We have seen him grow as a player in the last couple weeks, coming off that big dunk yesterday and some huge shots today.

LEAKY BLACK: Yeah, it's crazy. I feel like I've watched him grow up almost. So it's like at the beginning of the

year, him and Caleb would get down on themselves for mental stuff and little turnovers and stuff like that. I feel like it's lately as soon as he turns the ball over, he's like, next play. He's still got that in the back of his mind, but he's like, next play. You see the maturity growing inside of him, so we're proud of him.

Q. I want to go back to the physicality you were talking about. Given how physical you know Florida State to be, how confident are you going to be that you're going to be able to bring that as a team for the third game in three days?

LEAKY BLACK: I feel like it's a challenge, but I feel like we're up for it. We practice every day, and honestly, I feel like half the time our practices have been harder than our games. You really just feel battle-tested. I feel like we've got the ball rolling right now, and I don't think we're going to stop.

Q. You had the three-pointer last night against Notre Dame that got waved off and it kind of struggled from there. How good was it to finally see those shots go down today?

LEAKY BLACK: Man, it felt great. It felt like I ain't hit a shot in a couple games. Putting the work in every day, it's bound to show up eventually. So it's just one of them things, just stay humble, just stay in the gym, just keep working, control what you can control. And today getting the extra shots up helped, so that's what it was.

Q. Just to speak on the depth of this team and if you feel like at this point in the season North Carolina is playing their best basketball from your point of view.

LEAKY BLACK: I feel like the chemistry is there and I feel like that's all it was at the beginning of the year, the whole COVID and that whole nonsense. It's been hard to really get the ball rolling. And I feel like these last few weeks, honestly, the chemistry is as -- we can just feel it like the last time we played Florida State, big games like that. You can just see the potential, and I feel like we're all starting to believe -- we all believed in what Coach said, but it's

starting to believe that we really do believe in what he said.

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