

# Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

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

## Virginia Tech Hokies

## Justyn Mutts

Postgame Press Conference



North Carolina 81, Virginia Tech 73

**Q. I'm curious, sitting court side, that looked like an incredibly physical game. What was it like to play in the paint during this one?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: Pretty sure I'd say it was one of our more physical games of the year. But coming into the game, we knew what it was going to be, especially after seeing what happened yesterday. They're crashing every time. They've got a couple five-star big men down there, and they're able to just bring those guys in at any point in time, so you've got to stay ready. It was a different kind of game, but I think we had the pieces to handle it, we just weren't able to get it done today.

**Q. When you say you weren't able to get it done, do you think you matched their aggressiveness, their physicality, and television? Just a question of them being bigger or what was it that didn't work on that end?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: I thought for about 30 minutes of the game we were able to -- 30 to 35 minutes of the game, we were able to match their aggressiveness. But towards the end, I think fatigue might have set in a little bit at some point. But I'd love to see them again at some point. That was a good game.

**Q. What do you do to get your body back after kind of a beating like that? Are you an ice bath -- what are you going to do next?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: Well, I'm definitely going to go get a couple ice bags on my body. See, the ice bath is just a little bit too cold for me. I don't like sitting in there. But yeah, that would probably be what's best.

**Q. What can you say about y'all's play underneath the**

**basket tonight? It felt like the rebounds, especially offensively, just weren't coming the way you guys wanted them to. Speak to that and the adjustments you need to make heading into the tournament?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: I thought we did a pretty good job for a good portion of the game, cracking down. The guards were able to come down and grab some boards, as well. I think just moving forward, we've got to be able to do that for a full 40 minutes. We can't do it for just 30 minutes, 35 minutes. We've got to get a box-out and sustain those box-outs for an entire game.

I'm mainly speaking for myself. I know down the stretch I gave up a few really big offensive rebounds and those are really costly. So just being able to get in and watch film, you'll be see those mistakes and be able to correct them especially going into March Madness.

**Q. What is the emotional toll of -- you talked a little bit about the physical fatigue, but when you work so hard to get a miss from them and they get the rebound, is there some sort of snowball effect there emotionally, just damn, we did what we were supposed to do and we still didn't get it?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: Yeah, it's a little bit draining. You play defense for 20, 25 seconds and they get an offensive rebound and back to a full -- back to another 20 seconds back on the shot clock. But you can't be too upset for too long. You've got to be able to move on quickly because they're coming right back at you.

A lot of times those bigs once they get to that board, they're not really looking to pass it up, they're looking to go right back up. So you can't really drag yourself too much back. You've got to be right back into the play.

**Q. The two biggest teams in this league are Florida State and UNC and you didn't get a chance to play either of them. Now that you've played one of them, do you think that could help you going forward just having seen something like that?**



JUSTYN MUTTS: Absolutely because we don't really know who we're going to be playing once we get to the big tournament. We have no idea. Just being able to have the experience of playing against a really good team like that that's really well-coached, as well, with great players, that gives us a lot of experience heading into this tournament. So we're all excited, but as of right now, we're all pretty upset about the loss. But we'll bounce back.

**Q. Keve did not have a great game tonight. How nice is that to think that if he didn't have a great game tonight that he might have a great game the next night?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: Keve is a really good player, and just because the ball wasn't going in the basket doesn't mean he wasn't having a great game. He was doing a lot of things on the defensive end, controlling his guy, boxing out, getting rebounds. Just because the ball wasn't going in, I wouldn't say that's anything like having a bad game at all. Going into the tournament, we're able to connect on all cylinders. I think we're pretty unstoppable, so I'm excited.

**Q. How much does what he's done all year kind of bolster your hopes for what you guys can do going forward?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: I mean, I see these guys in practice every day. I know what everybody on this team is capable of and I know what this team is capable of when we really are clicking. And I feel like we've been able to show people what we're able to do. Moving forward, I'm just excited to see how we can really continue to gel together and really get some wins.

**Q. You mentioned fatigue. How do you see that fatigue taking its toll in the second half? Was it on the boards or playing defense or both?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: Honestly, I would say it was a little bit of both. You know, you're just trying to play team defense, which can get kind of tiring because you're jumping from spot to spot, trying to jump from help spot to guarding your man. And at the same time, they've got some really huge bigs so you're trying to front those guys but then also not give up a lob over. So there's a lot of different stuff that goes into it, and over time they're able to sub in so many guys, it just kind of wears you down.

**Q. Obviously you guys have gone 11 straight days without playing a game. How much did that affect you being tired? Was conditioning -- Coach Young mentioned conditioning was a problem that he was worried about. Were you guys kind of thinking in practice, geez, we lost our legs here, and we're not in**

**good condition and it's going to be a problem in the second half? Did you see that pause and the layoff there taking its toll on the second half with conditioning?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: Not at all. I think we were able to stay in good shape throughout the break. We were practicing every day and doing conditioning every day in the weight room, as well. I feel like everybody had their legs out there. I don't know, just -- I don't really know what happened.

**Q. What was the fatigue due to then?**

JUSTYN MUTTS: Really just shifting, moving spots. That could be due to different things, but I can't speak for everybody else.

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