

# Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 10, 2023

## Clemson Tigers

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

## Coach Brad Brownell

## Ian Schieffelin

## Hunter Tyson

Postgame Press Conference



Clemson 80, NC State 54

BRAD BROWNELL: Rebounded the ball extremely well, and then the longer the game went, I thought we played with really good poise. We're playing pretty good basketball right now and we have most of the year, and really proud of these guys.

Ian played phenomenally well today. But really we had a lot of guys play well. Our bench was fantastic. Dylan and Ben were exceptional. R.J. was good with his athleticism. That's what you need in a tournament setting. You need more than your starters, and I thought we got that tonight, so I'm really pleased with our group. Excited for tomorrow.

**Q. For both of the players, there's a perception that you guys need to win some games here in Greensboro to shore up your NCAA standing. Is that motivating? Is it distracting? Is it something you don't think about?**

HUNTER TYSON: I'd say it's a bit motivating. But also, we're just trying to take it one game at a time, one day at a time and just go out there and give our best. I think we did that tonight, and I think that's why we were successful, and we're just going to continue to do that and keep our head down, and just go out there and do our job. We'll let everybody else talk about what they think about us, but as long as we're out there doing our job, I think that's all that matters.

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: I think Hunter said it perfect. I think we're just a motivated team right now. I think we see all the stuff, and I think right now we're just worried about the ACC Tournament, and I think we'll just take it one game at

a time.

**Q. Brad, when you had to take PJ out so early in the second half and let him sit that extended period, what was your game plan about how you were going to handle that?**

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, just thankfully Ben is a good player, and he's been getting better and better all season. He brings some athleticism and physicality and toughness, and he's an improving offensive guy. We have a lot of confidence in him.

Obviously disappointed because you don't want the first play of the second half PJ to get his third, but we don't have a problem playing Ben, and Ben is a good defensive player. He's physical, he's tough. I thought he was really good in the game.

We were going to go until he's tired and then put PJ back in and just kind of work them together, and that was kind of our plan the whole night.

You've got to throw some bodies at D.J. Burns. When we played him in Raleigh -- Ian played some five. Some of it was fouls, but you've got to throw bodies -- we didn't want to double much, if any, to give our other guys open shots, so we played him one-on-one, and I thought our guys did a nice job again.

**Q. You don't have Alex, Brevin picks up two quick fouls. How big was Dillon and really a lot of your freshmen that had to play some significant minutes tonight?**

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, he was great. He gave us a shot in the arm, Dillon did, just energy and some toughness, and I thought he really fought over the ball screens and competed. It's kind of fun to watch those guys two, the brothers out there together, too. It's fun. I think they feed off each other.

Dillon has done this in some games this year for us, but he was instrumental in turning the tide for us. I thought a little bit some of our starters were on our heels just a little --



were just a little bit uptight maybe. It's been a long day. These guys -- we've been so ready to play, these 9:30 games are hard. We were leaving at 7:45 and the whole team is on a bus at 7:30. It's like, guys, we're going to get there four minutes into the game. We're going to be sitting in the locker room.

I think we played like that for a little while, and then as we settled down, got more comfortable and confident, played like the team we can be.

**Q. Brad, you've got another late one tomorrow, and Virginia, who you just played, they lost Vander Plas to an injury; he's done for the season. What kind of a curve ball does that throw you because they're dramatically changing their rotation with him out?**

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, but they played us big some, maybe more than some of the other teams the other day, and obviously some of that's because of PJ. They're going to play us bigger than some teams who maybe don't have as formidable a 5 man.

They're better defensively with the bigger guys. Now, those guys don't shoot threes like Vander Plas, who's an excellent player, but they were terrific today. They were smothering. Their guards are very good one-on-one defenders, and obviously their older guys, they play with great poise, they don't beat themselves, they rarely turn it over. They're a top 10, 12, 15 team in the country for a reason, and a lot of those guys have played together for a while now.

**Q. Joiner scored those 10 points in the first seven minutes and didn't score again. Did you guys concentrate more on him after that?**

BRAD BROWNELL: I thought early in the game I didn't think we fought over the ball screens as well as we needed to. You know, I thought that Dillon kind of did for a little while there and got us going, and once we got other guys back in there, they were better, as well.

So it was just, again, a little bit -- I thought we were just for the first couple minutes, we were feeling the game out. That's hard. Sometimes the team that has won or the higher seed who hasn't played, there's a little feeling-out process. You don't even get to shoot unless you come like two days before. Don't care about class, we actually try to care about class at Clemson, so we went to school for a long time and then came.

It's like literally our guys shot for I think about 12 minutes in pregame shooting, and that's about all you get. So it's, for some of these guys, it's a big deal. This is a big event.

This is a full house, big crowd. You're excited. It's natural that you might be just a little in awe instead of like ready to go after it all the way.

I think you kind of get knocked around a little bit, then you get back to competing, and I think that happened to us.

**Q. For both of the players, you did just recently play Virginia. What stands out about that matchup? What's challenging about them?**

HUNTER TYSON: Yeah, obviously they're a great team. They're experienced. Like Coach said, they're great one-on-one defenders. They have a great defense. You've really got to move the ball against them. It's a completely different style game than the game we played tonight. We'll meet, our coaches will give us a great plan like they always do, and we'll get ready to go tomorrow.

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: I back what Hunter says. They're just a more defensive team than NC State is, and I think Coach is going to give us a game plan tonight, and we're just going to follow it the best we can.

**Q. Brad, I know a statement win is kind of a cliché type of term, but Jay Bilas said tonight it shouldn't even be a discussion, that y'all should be in. Do you feel like you proved something tonight?**

BRAD BROWNELL: Yes, yes, 100 percent. 100 percent. Like five Quad 1 wins. Who can you beat and where can you beat them, right? You don't play those games at home. We've got four Quad 1 wins away from home. Yes, we should be in the tournament.

Obviously I think that, and I'm pretty adamant about it. I thought we had to win today for sure to make sure, but to me we should be in.

I guess we've had two or three bad days. We've had some injuries that impacted a couple of those days. If that doesn't matter, whatever, that's fine, but like in '19 I was left out because we were 1-8 or 9 just like North Carolina, and we were left out with a NET of 35. NC State was left out that year with a 33 NET. This year our NET is higher, but we've got five Quad 1 wins.

We should be in the tournament. This team, the way we've played, the margin of victory in most of our games, a lot of these ACC wins, beating these guys the way we did, who's a great team, and they should be in, yes, we should be in the tournament.

**Q. For the players, Ian, I know you were talking about hearing the outside noise and people saying you guys**

**were on the wrong side of the bubble. Were you tired of people questioning your resume and your credentials at this point coming into this game?**

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: I think it's definitely something that bothers you. I think we we've definitely played in enough tough times that we feel like we should be a March Madness team, and I think us saying that just brings more energy, more motivation for our team.

HUNTER TYSON: Yeah, I would agree. Winning 14 games in the league, it's really frustrating to see our league not get the respect that we know it deserves. A lot of great teams in this league, and we did a really good job in league play. Like Coach said, we had a bad day here and there, but overall we've had a great season, and we have a resume to show for it. But we're not done.

**Q. Tomorrow night you're looking for a game in the 50s, low 60s in all likelihood?**

BRAD BROWNELL: Whatever it is. You're not going to speed Virginia up. Tony and their group, they're unbelievably disciplined. They're going to work the ball on offense and grind you, then defensively they're hard to score against, so you're not going to get easy baskets.

It's going to be a grinding game. We know that. The team that executes the best will win.

I have all the respect in the world for those guys. They do a tremendous job every year. But we're obviously looking forward to being in the semifinals.

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