

# Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 10, 2023

**NC State Wolfpack**

*Greensboro, North Carolina, USA*

**Coach Kevin Keatts  
Terquavion Smith**

Postgame Press Conference



Clemson 80, NC State 54.

KEVIN KEATTS: I thought we played a really good first half. Give Clemson credit; obviously a very good win for those guys. They did a good job. I think one of the big advantages is they put themselves in a situation where they could get a double bye, and you could tell they were the fresher team in the second half.

We didn't -- I thought the game was very physical. I thought they made some tougher plays than we did, and then when you look at the second half, we just didn't have it. We didn't make the shots we normally make. I think we were 0 for 10 from the three-point line.

Give Clemson a lot of credit; I thought their defense was really good, but we wasn't as sharp, as you could tell. Obviously, part of that was obviously playing such a late game, and obviously have to turn around and play against a team who's really fresh.

Give those guys a lot of credit. I thought they did what they were supposed to do. It was a good win for those guys.

**Q. Kevin, you guys played them three times. They won by double digits all three times. What is it in particular about them that makes them a bad matchup for you guys?**

KEVIN KEATTS: Well, I told the team that every team has a couple teams that it's a bad matchup. If we were to play some of the teams on our schedule three times, we would be a bad matchup for people the way we play. I have to give them credit. It's a really physical team, and they do a good job of getting into us on ball screens and being physical as we drive. They make everything tough. They sit in gaps.

I think the two most physical teams in our league would be Clemson and UVA. They make things really tough for you.

I thought we did a good job in the first half, but the second half we just didn't have it to be able to spray the ball and move and cut and everything else, and trying to open up driving lanes, and we normally would make some of those shots.

**Q. You went with zone defense a little bit in the second half. Were you just trying to mix it up?**

KEVIN KEATTS: Yeah, I was trying to find a spark plug. We didn't do a good job. We weren't stopping them, and I wanted to throw something at them, throw a curve ball maybe, give us some kind of spark to get going. And I thought it worked. We went on like a 4-0 run at that point, but we wanted to give them a different look. I thought they felt comfortable. They were running their offense effectively, and we wanted to kind of give them a different look.

**Q. As a player, what is it that makes Clemson so difficult to match up against?**

TERQUAVION SMITH: Like Coach said, they're a real physical team, and they play in the gaps. They make you have to distribute the ball. They don't let you get comfortable. Yeah, they're just physical, just all-around physical team.

**Q. Coming up this Sunday, do you think your team has done enough?**

KEVIN KEATTS: You know, I'm not on the committee, but I will say, man, we've got a pretty doggone good resume. Typically when you look at resumes and the past, one of the things you look at is what's your strength of schedule, and I think we've got a really good strength of schedule. Our non-conference strength of schedule won't hurt us.

We don't have any bad losses. We've got some really good wins. And when you look at us and this league and we're 12-8 and won 23 games overall, I think we've put



ourselves -- if you compare our resume to a lot of teams, we put ourselves in a good situation.

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I do feel favorable for us, absolutely.

**Q. Do you feel like you'll have Greg moving forward, or is that something that you're going to now have to adjust accordingly?**

KEVIN KEATTS: We're hopeful. We don't know. We're going to try to get an MRI in the next day or two just to figure it out. But we're not ruling him out at this point.

**Q. Brad talked a little bit about 2019 and how you both kind of got left out that year with NETs in the 30s. I know you touched on it a little bit, but do you feel like you've both done enough to be in, and do you feel like the ACC is being slept on a little bit as a whole?**

KEVIN KEATTS: Well, you know, I do. I said this to someone this morning. I think this league should get seven to eight teams in this year. I really feel that way.

Sometimes I think folks don't look at the eye test as much, and I'm kind of a body-of-work guy. So when you look at November and December when our league, we might not have performed as well as some people like -- even though I think against the Big Ten we won the challenge maybe 8-6. But when you only talk about us, you look at our body of work, it's been pretty doggone good.

I don't think you should be judged by any one or two games whether you win them big or lose. The great thing about us we've been on the winning end of a lot of those blowouts. I think we've had three or four ourselves where we won. But when you look at our league, I think there's some guys that's capable, and we performed well. I don't think you should ever get in because your league has performed well when you get in there, but we have tough places to play.

I think if you look at some of those teams that are being looked at, if they had to come to some of our venues and play, I think it would be a different story.

**Q. Terquavion, what's sort of your mentality going into how you prepare in the time before Selection Sunday, getting your team, all your guys ready for the tournament?**

TERQUAVION SMITH: Just us coming together as one. We are all we've got. Coach preaches on that a lot, that the people in that locker room, that's all we have. So just coming together, being a team and staying together is a big key.

