

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Saturday, March 11, 2023

Duke Blue Devils

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

Coach Jon Scheyer

Kyle Filipowski

Jeremy Roach

Postgame Press Conference



Duke 59, Virginia 49

JON SCHEYER: One, just want to say, Virginia is a great team. We've had two big-time battles against them this year. Really every time we play them usually it's that way.

Proud for our team. We've just grown and grown throughout the whole season, and what's special for me in this tournament, we played three really good teams but also three different styles. Pitt is a great three-point shooting team, so they spread you and you have to really defend the three. Miami is one of the most athletic teams in our league but also the country. They really pressure the ball.

Obviously Virginia is tough as can be, slower paced, they grind you. And to prepare for them in 24 hours and to defend them the way that we did, it's a credit to these guys and their focus and their fight on the defensive end. So really proud of them.

Obviously these two guys next to me, Jeremy, he had 19 in the second half. He just willed us, he just absolutely willed us. And Flip had a look from the beginning that I thought knocked them back with how he attacked the basket and how he was moving. It was just at a big-time level. Proud of our team. Happy to answer any questions.

Q. Jon, you were kind of on the stage when Kyle came up and gave you a hug, kind of scanning the crowd. You cut down nets before. I'm curious how these moments after the horn and the game is over, what those moments meant for you and what you were thinking about in those moments watching all of this happen with the celebration.

JON SCHEYER: It was a surreal feeling for me because for every one of these guys to be here -- of course it's Duke University and Duke basketball and the history that we have and the platform and all those things are, I would say, a big reason why these guys wanted to come here. But also they believed in us and in me, and obviously I felt that way about each of them.

To share that together, going through this for the first time, and for the regular season to end this way with winning the tournament championship is really special. Along the way -- I'll tell these guys if we can ever get together, but just enjoy the wins along the way. Winning a championship is a special thing, so I want to enjoy this tonight. I want these guys to enjoy it. We'll figure out where we're going tomorrow and worry about that then.

But for tonight, enjoy it, and we have a lot to be proud of.

Lastly, the support that we felt through the whole year, to see all the Duke fans that came out to Greensboro tonight, and not just tonight but the last three days, to support us, it means the world.

For me, it's part of the reason why we can have a program that has a sustained excellence for a long time, because of the support that we have from of course internally, the university and all that, but our fans are incredible. That for me is what I was just soaking in.

Q. Question for the players, especially Jeremy. Virginia is famous for making it really, really difficult to score at the rim. Duke's first three possessions Duke scored at the rim and you had three of those. Was that a way of sending a message to the guys coming at you?

JEREMY ROACH: Really before the game, he said go out and take it, really be aggressive, don't let them get comfortable or anything like that. We wanted to be the aggressors the first four minutes, and I kind of wanted to set the tone for this game, and I think I did.

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Yeah, I mean, we wanted to play the



way we play. I mean, our strength is playing inside-out and attacking on the closeouts, Jeremy and Tyrese did a really good job of that when we got inside and kicked it out. We just wanted to play the way we were and make a statement, of course, as we always do on the inside and on the glass.

Q. Jeremy, last year at this time there was a lot of pressure on you guys for obvious outside reasons. Did you kind of talk about the difference this year's team, maybe a little bit freer, maybe less pressure on you as a 4 seed, and the joy that you guys seem to play with one another?

JEREMY ROACH: I mean, we're really not going to talk about last year. I want to kind of stay in this moment with these guys right here. But I just like the togetherness that we have. We stick together. That's our motto. We hang our hats on that, sticking together. When good teams make runs, we kind of wanted to stick together, and all five guys be a unit. I think we did that tonight.

Q. Coach, just what you can say about the ups and downs of this season, reflecting on that journey, and to be sitting here as champions today.

JON SCHEYER: Well, it's a special feeling. There hasn't been a season that I've been a part of, whether it's as a player or as a coach, that hasn't had those ups and downs. It's a matter of the timing of them and the circumstances.

I think for us, it was hard just to get the continuity. And so not only are each of these guys growing every single day, every single week as players, but then when you don't have -- when you have certain guys out, it's hard to build as a team.

So these guys just stuck with it. Jeremy has grown tremendously this year. Not just the last couple years, but this year he's grown tremendously. Flip in the summer, I was worried about this guy a little bit, man. I just needed him to run up and down a little bit first. But he's come a long way, has he not?

JEREMY ROACH: I told a funny story on the ACC media. But it was like a pickup run, and I remember this like it was yesterday, he hit a turnaround for game, he turned around and looked at me and was like, "I'm like that, I'm like that." I was like, he really might be like that. We're not going to talk about the accolades or anything like that, but best freshman in the country.

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Just seeing the growth individually, that's all because of these guys right here and the rest of them, because I wouldn't be where I am without them, just

with how hard they've been on me. I hated it, but it was for the best.

And just seeing --

JON SCHEYER: It's not going to change, either.

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Don't worry, I'm not planning on it.

But just seeing how much we've come together as a team, where we started. We had almost a brand-new team, and you kind of had to lead the way.

Just everyone in their roles, knowing what the main goal was, we really bought into that. And we did buy the motto, one vision, and we're going to keep doing that. I think that's just what makes us so special is just pushing through the ups and downs.

Q. Jon and Jeremy, there was a play actually in yesterday's game where --

JON SCHEYER: He overruled me. Is that the play --

Q. You wanted a different call, but it seemed like you trusted him to make the right play in that critical situation. Does that speak to how much faith you have in his ability as a leader? And then, players, does that trust kind of go both ways?

JON SCHEYER: 100 percent. He's earned my trust. We've been through a lot of battles together, man, been through a lot of battles. Been through a lot even before he got here. He had an injury in high school. Watching him in AAU, watching him with his high school team, St. Paul VI. I always want these guys to speak up in huddles.

I mentioned this last game, but they have a film session they do on their own right before going on. Jeremy leads it, but you'll hear every single guy speaking up on our team. So when Jeremy feels something on the court, I just want him to say it to me. A couple times I'll say no, but for the most part, it's a yes, because I want him to follow his instincts.

JEREMY ROACH: Yeah, I mean, me and Coach Scheyer has been through a lot. The first guy who's contacted me, we stayed locked in. Obviously I had an ACL injury, but he was the first guy to call, I'm sticking with you, I'm sticking with you. Went through the two years with -- Coach had been through a lot there, but when Coach has this much confidence in you, you play that much better. And I'm so happy to have him in my corner. And shout-out to Coach Scheyer for his first-year ACC championship.

Q. Coach, first ACC title for Duke since 2019. How excited are you guys going back to Durham and sharing this moment with the crazies?

JON SCHEYER: Yeah, it's a big deal. It's a special feeling. I felt like some of them were here tonight. I could be wrong, but it felt like they were here. Every home game this year has been -- the crowd has been incredible.

I mentioned earlier the support that we felt the whole year. Tonight was no exception, and we need it going forward. This thing has got to go on.

This is a special moment for tonight. Great championship to win, and we'll share this with everybody at Duke.

Q. A couple times this year you've spoken about a responsibility you've felt to sustain what Coach has built. How long until you make that phone call? Is that something tonight or in the morning?

JON SCHEYER: I'm not sure yet. You know, the responsibility doesn't end tonight; I know that much. But I will say I'm not sure any of this happens without Coach K's initial vision of wanting -- some coaches can say it, but not everybody means it or believes it, where they want to see the program continue on at such a high level. And he wanted it. The vision from President Price, Nina King, Kevin White, to allow me the opportunity to recruit these guys, and had to re-recruit this guy over here just to make sure. You know, I need you to come back. Obviously this guy in the special class and the transfers that we came in, that could have never happened.

For me, it's about the belief we had in each other, and it started with that moment right there. I know that probably doesn't answer your question, but that's how I feel.

Q. Kyle, Coach talked about the confidence that he has in Jeremy. What about the team's confidence in him? It seems like every night you need a bucket, you look for him. Could you talk about that?

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Yeah, I mean, just Jeremy has pulled through for us so many times throughout the season late in the game. Just seeing how well it's worked, all of us have our full confidence in Jeremy and whatever Coach Scheyer calls, too, for him.

I mean, he's always come up clutch, and there's times where he hasn't, but we've gotten his back. He had a turnover late in the game which gave them a fast break and cut the lead down, but we told him we had his back and we were just telling him to slow down, you'll be good. And eventually he got a few more plays where he made it

up and helped us out.

We all have each other's backs, and it's a great relationship we have with this team.

Q. Until tonight, the only coaches that had ever won this thing in their first year at their school were Vic Bubas and Bill Guthridge. What does it mean to join that group? I know you don't have any control over it, but how much would it mean to be back here again next week?

JON SCHEYER: Well, Greensboro is a special place, period, and we'll go where they send us with a smile on our face ready to compete and go win.

With that said, we'd love to be here. Greensboro is a terrific place, and you can't assume anything is going to happen, but of course this has been a great spot for us.

Proud to join that group, two great coaches, of course, and it's a credit to these guys just sticking with me and sticking with our staff.

Q. I want to go back to something you said a moment ago, and I apologize if you dealt with this already --

JON SCHEYER: All good.

Q. In terms of the plan and the vision, there was something audacious about it to try to do something that nobody has ever been able to do before. It's only year one, but you've reached this milestone. What made you think that you could pull it off, you, Duke, and then you-you, to get to this point?

JON SCHEYER: All I can tell you is ever since I've been young, I'm talking real young, I've believed I was going to succeed. My team was going to win. It didn't always win, but found a way at really every level. Whether it was unrealistic or not, that's how I felt.

For me, when you look at the plan that was in place, when you look at the people who are making those decisions, the support that I felt, that's what gave me the confidence. Then you follow it up with our program has always been about the quality people and players we can bring in. So to follow it up, to bring in these guys where they had the confidence to do that, that's why I have the confidence.

Going into tonight's game, I felt confident having our group on the floor. I feel we're going to win. It doesn't mean we're always going to, but that's the way I've been taught. That's the way I've felt since I've been young.

I think Duke University and the job that it's done up until this point -- we've got a long way to go -- but it's a credit to all the people there, and I mentioned President Price, Nina King and their leadership all the way down to me and to these guys.

Q. Three games, 120 minutes, I think Duke trailed for maybe a minute, minute and a half, never by more than two points. No matter how many times your opponents came at you, this team never relinquished control, was never knocked back, to use the vernacular. Can you address that?

JON SCHEYER: Just kept our foot on the gas and stuck with it. These guys, the way they talk in huddles -- Jeremy played 39 minutes tonight on day 3, and Flip played 34 minutes. Never thought he could do that. If you go back to August. Sorry, I'm taking cheap shots at him. These guys can answer, but it's the mentality shift for me. That's what I'm proud of.

JEREMY ROACH: Coach has really always harped on, even early in the season even when we were at PK 80 and we were going to have win three games in three days for the ACC Tournament. And obviously we didn't finish the way we wanted to at PK 80, but that definitely stuck with us, and we learned from that.

I mean, that's why we had the full energy to play these three games in three days. I'm just so happy for these guys, and we've just got to keep it going and stay locked in.

Q. I don't know how online you guys are and I'm not trying to get you in trouble. I'm curious about motivation. There was a regular season aspect to this because of what happened at Virginia. Obviously you want to win this, but because it was Virginia and what happened there, Kyle, was there any extra to kind of -- like you said, I'm that guy, you had a pretty big night tonight.

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Yeah, obviously I had probably one of my worst games of the year at Virginia. And just personally going into this game, obviously there was a little more of a chip on my shoulder, just being able to show what I'm capable of against this team. But also there was so much more to play more besides that. I was playing for a championship, I was playing with these guys, and that means so much more to me than just something that I'm wanting to prove individually.

But because just winning it, staying together with these guys was really what my main focus was, and I just wanted to do whatever I could, and that's how I played, just to get the win overall.