

Atlantic Coast Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 8, 2024

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

Miami Hurricanes

Coach Katie Meier

Jasmyne Roberts

Ja'Leah Williams

Postgame Press Conference

Virginia Tech 55, Miami 47

KATIE MEIER: Congratulations to Virginia Tech. They've been going through a lot. They just have super, super great staff, super amazing young people in their program that you know they were going to come together and play hard. They'll make the adjustments they need to make. There's a lot of talent on that roster. There's a lot.

They're very hard to guard. I think Strack stepping up and going 5 for 11 really lifted them a lot, and I thought we had Georgia -- you can't play better defense than we did on Georgia Amore. I know she got some points with the free throw at the end, but when I thought she had 27 I was absolutely shocked, because I really felt like we were playing here really, really well.

That's how she can transcend the sport a little bit. She made some special plays in big moments for them.

Obviously we need to shoot the three ball better. I think that really hurt us. Their defense must cause some doubt. They must cause some hesitation. They have great size and great length. I'm 6'2" standing on the sideline thinking, shoot it.

But I don't know if it feels that way for my 5'7s and my 5'8s, and that's a credit to them for knowing their talent, their personnel and putting the right defensive scheme together.

But I've got to tell you, I'm so proud of my team. Holy moly. You saw grit, effort, hustle, resilience, toughness.

We did not have an offensive hangover, and we really should have. The offense was rough, and we were



struggling, and there have been times earlier in the season where we would bring that to the defensive possession. But we didn't tonight. We really changed a lot in the last, I guess, two, three weeks here as a team. We've really grown up. We've really gotten it.

You never know when a lightbulb is going to go off on a team. We know our identity right now. We can take a team that is very, very good that was in the Final Four last year and have a chance in the fourth quarter to beat them, with grit, even if we're not hitting.

I think we're a very dangerous team, and I don't think anyone is going to want to play us in the NCAA Tournament, but there's no doubt we played our way in.

Q. For the players, Coach Meier touched on it, but two days in a row when your three ball isn't falling, is it nice when you can win one game and stay in it with another team that went to the Final Four last year?

JASMYNE ROBERTS: Yeah, I mean, obviously yeah, the three ball is not falling, but it's nice to know even when something is not working for us or we're not scoring as well, we have defense that's able to still keep us in the game and we're able to score in multiple other ways.

Yesterday it wasn't falling great, but we were still able to beat UNC. Then tonight, it was just ours wasn't and theirs was and they were able to make big plays.

We're still confident in our defense and our shooting ability. We're going to go back and work on it and just get ready for the next stop.

Q. Coach, you had a big win yesterday over UNC and a close one against Virginia Tech today. What do you want to take going into the NCAA Tournament and learn from out of the ACC Tournament?

KATIE MEIER: Yeah, it's my job to make sure that my players are comfortable with the shots they're getting. That's my job. I take a lot of pride in that.

I didn't get them there today. For whatever reason. Like I



said, I'm going to watch it from a little bit their perspective. It doesn't matter, Coach, players, where they are, and where they were today, they weren't comfortable.

But I told them in the locker room before the game, I said, you know what, those of you that are struggling with your confidence right now, it's not on you, it's on the fact that we're in the nation's best conference, we have the nation's best coaches, and we have some of the best defensive teams in the country that are taking things away from you.

You've got to go to your competitive positive memories that you've had. But in the game you can't say I'm off today. You say, tip your hat, Virginia Tech. You're taking this away from me, but I am going to make an adjustment and now we're going to move forward and be positive with it.

That's where I think we stayed very faithful because we don't -- no one on my team is that bad of a shooter. We're going to take it and own it or are we going to say congratulations, Virginia Tech. You made us uncomfortable. And then I got to do a better job of getting my players comfortable, which you know I'm going to. There's no question about that.

Q. I wanted to ask you, the difference between the first half and the second half with Georgia Amoore, the first one she went 1 for 5 and had four points, and then she ended up doing what she did in the second half. Was it something that they did? Did she just get hot? What did you see differently from the first half to the second half from her?

JASMYNE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think Amoore is an incredible player. In the first half we contained her. We had about four different people guarding her. Even I stepped up and guarded her and did a great job.

I think in the second half, honestly, we still did our same game plan. Nothing changed what we were doing. I think she just got a lot more confident and the shots started falling for her, honestly.

We did the same type of defense the entire game, gapped up on her, took away her vision, and a couple of times she was able to get past and do what Amoore does. She can get a bucket. There was nothing different that we did.

Coach said she was surprised she had 20-something points because it literally felt like we were playing such amazing defense on her, and then boom, she still hit crazy shots --

KATIE MEIER: 27 points and she only had one three. That's incredible. She had to really earn it. 10 from the

line, though, so we're talking about 17 really. We gave her about eight points at the end there. But still, incredible.

Plus only one assist from her. Come on. But she checked down. She adjusted.

JASMYNE ROBERTS: Yeah, she adjusted for sure.

Q. Ja'Leah, you had 12 rebounds. You're not the tallest person on the court. Can you talk about just your determination to get rebounds and just in general what Katie was saying before that this team in the last few weeks really has stepped it up, and she said the lightbulb went off. From a player's standpoint, what do you think has happened in the last two weeks to this team? It's a really important time now for the lightbulb to be going on. What do you see the last two weeks from this team? And also if you could talk about your tenacious rebounding.

JA'LEAH WILLIAMS: I think from this team, we just got more connected. We was more so focused on a goal. Like Coach Katie came in the locker room and she just seen all of us was on one page, like she seen our faces was more focused and more determined to get this win, and I think it all started in practice.

We were more focused. We were talking, like even the leaders that don't lead, sometimes they were talking. Everybody was communicating.

We just stepped it up a little bit.

Then with my rebounds, honestly, I didn't realize I had 12. But I think it was just about doing the next toughest thing. A lot of my lay-ups wasn't falling, so we always owe are determined to do the next toughest thing, so I just started doing something else to help my team, maybe get a rebound and get a second chance point or whether it was get a rebound and pass it, dish it.

Yeah, 12 rebounds, way to go me.

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