

# Atlantic Coast Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 6, 2026

Duluth, Georgia, USA

Gas South Arena

## Virginia Tech Hokies

## Megan Duffy

## Carleigh Wenzel

### Postgame Press Conference



our battles with getting out in transition and executing, it looked pretty good. But again, the defensive stops weren't there for us through the majority of the game.

**Q. It seemed that there were a few times in the second half you guys would get down to 10 or 12 points but then you wouldn't be able to cut into it further. What was hindering you from being able to cut into North Carolina's lead?**

MEGAN DUFFY: Yeah, I thought the score was a little bit blown out in the last few minutes. And we had it at 13, we had it at 10, we had it at 9, and started playing some good basketball. Then gosh, they got an and-1, they hit a timely three, they went downhill. I felt like we were making a couple adjustments and couldn't quite get the stop. I thought our team was extremely engaged with trying to get that 13 down to single digits and make a last push.

I don't know if their first day playing versus our second, who knows. But they had the advantage with their attack mode, and was able to blow it out with just some incredible plays on the offensive end by them.

North Carolina 85, Virginia Tech 68

MEGAN DUFFY: Just congratulations to North Carolina. I thought they played a tremendous game. For quarters 2 through 4, they were relentless from their paint scorers to hitting timely threes. You watch the body of work they've done in the league and gotten better as the season has gone on. They've done a great job.

A little bit disappointed with our overall performance today, but a lot of positive comments in the locker room. Even though we're disappointed about our season and how we're going to move forward in the NCAA Tournament, just really proud of our team led by Carleigh here.

**Q. Megan, you held them to 11 points in the first quarter. What made their offense so tough to contain the rest of the game?**

MEGAN DUFFY: Yeah, our goal today was to get off to a better start than yesterday. I thought we settled in. I thought we had a mindset to play free, and we were trying to empty the tank. So first quarter was okay, and then just defensively in that second quarter, we had some foul trouble. We had to go to our bench.

The first time we played them, our bench was tremendous with pushing our lead, and it just wasn't quite the case because of how much foul trouble we had. I thought we were a step slow with just some of our decision making on the defensive end. Then I thought we just started rushing and pressing a little bit on our offense and taking some quick shots.

Really offensively in that second half, it got a little bit better, I thought. When we were under control and really picking

**Q. Carleigh, you guys were better offensively in the second half, but what made it so hard to string positions together? Did they defend you guys any differently in this game than they did a couple weeks ago?**

CARLEIGH WENZEL: Yeah, I don't think it was any different. The physicality felt the same, things like that. It's just plays we needed to make on our end. We got the shots we wanted, they just kind of didn't fall. We tried to stay together in the time-outs, tried to stick with it, tried to keep getting downhill, take your shots and take them confidently, and it just wasn't falling as much as we wanted it to.

**Q. Carleigh, you guys were 2 of 18 from three. Was their defense doing things to make you guys have tough looks tonight?**

CARLEIGH WENZEL: Yeah, I don't think so. I know me



specifically, they felt good outside of that one on the left wing in the first half. I think we were just tentative. I don't think that they were really pushing up as much on the three-point line. I felt like they were there.

Again, it just wasn't falling. I know I can't speak for everybody, but I know me specifically, they felt good, but they just weren't going in.

**Q. Carleigh, you guys will be back in the NCAA Tournament for the first time in two years. As somebody who's been through all the ups and downs with Coach Duffy, what does it mean to get this program back to the NCAA Tournament?**

CARLEIGH WENZEL: Yeah, absolutely. Like I said yesterday, I think Coach Duffy plays with a chip on her shoulder. That's how she came in, that's how she coaches. She wants the game played the right way. She wants you to run through a wall for your teammates. She wants you to be your best, whether that's by rebounding, picking up defensively whether that's you making shots.

So I think that she's kind of poured into us all year. I think we've grown tremendously over the year. Everybody has stepped up at timely moments, and I think that leads into when decisions are made and who gets in, who doesn't. I think everybody has a chance to come in and it be their night on our team, so hopefully that will go into these next couple weeks.

**Q. After coming to close to making the NAAs last year and not getting to, what's it going to mean to you to see Tech's name on the TV screen this time around?**

CARLEIGH WENZEL: It means everything. We worked for it since the summer. It's in the back of our minds. I know me and Carys, Mac, the ones that were here before, you know what it takes. You know what it is. So last year just falling short by like one or two games, that sucks. That hurts.

So coming in this year with a completely different mindset. Coach Duffy hasn't changed in any way. It's just us picking us up, her knowing how to push us, how to get into us to get the best of us, and that's what she's done this year.

**Q. When Kilah got into foul trouble early on, Aniya Trent came in played 16 minutes and scored six points. How important is it going into the tournament to have her getting these extra minutes?**

MEGAN DUFFY: Aniya has been great for a freshman being thrown into the fire and even in this tournament. She's been poised all season long just trying to learn and

being a sponge. She's going against some of the top post players in the league. When Kilah went out, we're confident in Aniya that she can come in and give us great minutes. I thought the cool part about the second half is she was a little more aggressive.

We got some attacks downhill, shared the ball better, she finished for us. I thought she got a couple tough calls defensively. I thought she was bodying up and being physical and it didn't go her way. She's been really good for us all season long, just understands the game.

We keep trying to gas her up, keep her confident because it's hard her first year. And her teammates have done a good job of staying positive with her and believing in her minutes when she's on the floor.

**Q. Megan, you mentioned there was some positive comments in the locker room. What was your message after this? Obviously disappointed but a lot of basketball left to play for you guys.**

MEGAN DUFFY: Sure, we talked about we're going to be pretty disappointed about this one, and we are. But I just told the team we've got a little bit of time now to wait and see what we'll be doing. We remembered the feeling last year of being the last team out. One of the things that I got a little feedback from the committee was you've got to win towards the end of the season. You've got to win a few more games from last year. We finished -- take out today's game -- 12 of our last 15. We've had some awesome road wins, especially our Quad 1 road wins.

To watch this team grow from, as Carleigh mentioned, the summer through the fall, we had a few new pieces, few new freshmen. And even I look at Carleigh, Mackie, Carys and Samyha, they were ready for the spotlight last year. But sometimes you have to go through it to really understand what it takes and how committed and poised and just gritty you have to be.

It's been so special for me as their coach to watch them just make huge strides. I look at Carleigh, despite the pressure of being one of the go-to scorers, she comes in and she works, she smiles, she tells a joke. She's coachable, she's ready to take whatever challenge we have for her, and that feeds off into Carys and Mackie and Samyha and the rest of our team.

This team deserves to be in the NCAA Tournament. For us to finish tied for fifth with Notre Dame and being in position to do some damage in the tournament, we're super excited. I hope there's a bunch of ACC teams in. I think one of the things with our conference is earlier in the year we were all trying to figure it out and maybe had some

losses. But as the season went on, you could just see the star power rise and you could see the role players in our league continue to rise.

To have eight to nine teams, maybe a tenth team that are so well-coached and they're filling in these amazing roles, I think they can all do some damage in the tournament. We're going to be excited to take a couple days off now and then reload and rejuvenate.

Our mindset has been get better and not go on a pitch about the NCAA Tournament, stay humble, stay in that gym, and we'll be ready wherever we're sent.

**Q. Carleigh, you had 26 points tonight, did go down with a hard fall. How important is this little break before the big tournament to stay healthy but stay aggressive and hot from the floor?**

CARLEIGH WENZEL: Absolutely, taking some time to rehab my body, get good feel into my body, just to reset myself. But stay in the gym, stay in the coach's office looking at film, what can we do better, what didn't work tonight, things like that. But yeah, I'll just completely rehab and be ready to go in a couple weeks.

**Q. Megan, what do you look to or point at to make you think, okay, I've got a team that can do some damage in the NCAAs?**

MEGAN DUFFY: I just know the women in my locker room. I'm just incredibly proud of their resolve and their resilience. We have raised the standard here from year one to year two. That's hard to keep up with a little bit, right, Car? But I think when you look at the body of work and the way our players are attacking it, they're doing it the right way. They're grinding. They're there for each other. We're a very positive team even through some tough moments like today.

I think when you get to the tournament, have been there a few times, seedings at some point don't matter. You've got one chance; that's the joy of March Madness. I think we're going to come in with a great mindset about ourselves, and I'm just so looking forward to seeing these guys in action doing it.

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