



Duke Postgame Quotes

Duke vs. Virginia



January 27, 2018 // Cameron Indoor Stadium // Durham, N.C.

Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski

Opening Statement:

"That was an amazingly hard-fought game. Congratulations to Virginia. They made a couple really big plays down the stretch, and we didn't make them. We missed free throws and had a turnover. I thought the game was a tale of two halves. The first half, our guys have not been in a game like that, and it looked that way in the first half. They made us not play well. The level of intensity and the high level of defense and offense that they play, I thought knocked us back. In the second half, I thought we played really well and we fought. Again, all of this stuff is a big learning experience for these guys. In saying that, then we had a position to win. As all these close games are, there's a (Ty) Jerome three, a missed free throw, or a turnover; somebody makes a play and the other guys don't make a play. Basically, they played really well. They're a terrific team, and I thought we played well enough to win in that second half. We put ourselves in a position to win, but we couldn't close it out. They don't want to lose. You're playing one of the best teams in the country, so you have to be able to do it at that level and that's what we have to keep learning, and we are learning, we're getting better, but we didn't have enough to win the game today."

On message to team following this game:

"It's January 27th. We're a hell of a lot better than we were on December 27th, and the league is going to make us even better, as long as we stay healthy, so on February 27th, we hope to be even better. We were a really good basketball team in the second half, we were a young team in the first half. The best teacher is experience. That's what we have to get in a short period of time and with a young team that's what you have to do. This is a high-level game, this is a really high-level game. For us to be a part of that and have an opportunity to win, that serves us well. Obviously if you win, it serves you better. You move on."

On second half substitutions and fatigue:

"We didn't lose because we were tired. I thought we got worn out playing defense in the first half and it affected us offensively. Going to the zone and the three-quarter court press was one, we can play it well, obviously we did play it well, but it also doesn't wear you out. Part of them being good is they wear you out when you're on defense in man-to-man because you have to keep running after them. Their offense beat our defense, but they also wore us down, so our offense wasn't as poised in the first half. I think we're in good shape. There were so many timeouts and stop-actions during the second half that I'm sure that fatigue wasn't a factor."

On the turnover at the end of the game:

"Obviously, you don't want to make it at that time, unless it's completely clear. It's a mistake of commission, not omission, so that's good. You're down by two and you've got the ball, so it's got to be completed or you run half-court offense, and it wasn't. It was a big play, but that didn't lose the game for us. We missed some free throws and then they got a couple big offensive rebounds and then Jerome hit a really big shot for them, which he has. Look, they're really good. You do a little bit wrong and they can punish you for it, and they did."

On response to Virginia's offensive rebounds:

"We're comfortable rebounding in man or zone. They spread you out a little bit more and we had more offensive rebounds than they did. They had a couple in a critical time. Offensive rebounding did not lose the game. Their play lost the game for us, but also 16 turnovers. We had 16 turnovers and we were 5-11 from free throws, but we missed a few one-and-ones. We've been turning the ball over too much, and you have to knock free throws down. Again, I'm not blaming anybody, that's part of us learning. It's pretty obvious, really, hit a few free throws and don't turn it over a couple times and you win. The world doesn't have to change completely here. We're on the right track. We just played a hell of a game. We're very, very disappointed about losing because we felt that we had an opportunity to win. But you congratulate Virginia because they're really good and they made those plays, so let's shake hands and let's move on and that's the way it goes and that's the way we're going to run the railroad here."

On reasons for lack of substitutions throughout the game today:

"Part of it is injuries. Alex (O'Connell) has had the flu for three days. He warmed up and whatever, but he didn't have it. Javin (DeLaurier), with the hamstring, and then just in warmups he was saying, "Man, my hamstring is tight." Marques (Bolden) is close, but not there. If we want to win something really big, your best players have to play a lot of minutes. I think that's what the regular season is about, and hopefully we're in it in March. I think we learned a lot. Some of the rebounding, the plays, were relentless for us. They were unbelievable. So, my guys played their hearts out. I feel bad for them, but that's the way it is. We have to put this behind us and get ready for Notre Dame. It was a very physical game. I'm not saying dirty or anything like that, it was just hard-fought. We have to recover, not just emotionally, but physically, before Monday night."