

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Saturday March 16, 2019

Roy Williams Cam Johnson North Carolina

Duke - 74, North Carolina - 73

ROY WILLIAMS: Well if you didn't care who won the game it was an exciting game, but I don't know that either team played exceptionally well. They were really hard to cover. The guy that's been hurt came back and put on his superman jersey again and was incredible. It's such a blend of strength and power and quickness that we couldn't stop him getting the basketball inside and going to the basket. At the end when they were going to the free-throw line we called a timeout with 12 seconds. They didn't have any timeouts left at that time so we said if he makes both of them we'll run a play for three. If he doesn't make both of them we need to attack the basket and they just did a great job defensively and we didn't have a chance to attack the basket. But 4-27 will usually get you beat if you shoot that from three-point line. We rushed them a little bit and I think you got to give their defense credit there.

It's hard right now because our kids really fought like crazy, but they won and that's the bottom line today.

Q. Can you go through the sequences both on the one where you missed the three and then on that last play what you saw and how that all unfolded.

CAM JOHNSON: On the play that I missed the three it was a call, I trying to get Coby back door, they covered it pretty well. I ended up got the space I wanted and when the shot left my hand I could have swore it went down. It felt great coming off the hand. I could have bet a thousand dollars right there that that shot was falling but it just didn't. Sometimes that happens, sometimes that's the difference between winning and losing. Coby's next play looked like it had a chance when it left his hand. Nass had a chance on the tip and just it's crazy, just a couple little plays that don't go your way. And we tip a ball a couple plays before and it winds up in the other teams hands for a layup. I thought our guys fought hard today, obviously we could have played a lot better and we'll kind of use this as fuel for what's next.

ROY WILLIAMS: The play he's talking about when two



guys fought for it and it bounced on the floor and their guy picks it up and lays it up. And I would think that was going to be the only time down the stretch that we had the ball and the lead at the same time, but it bounced their way.

Q. Are you a little relieved that this is finally cover that you can finally focus on the next thing and the hype around Carolina-Duke is just done.

CAM JOHNSON: No, never. There's no relief when you lose a game. And this was one that we wanted to win, this is one that we thought we should win, this is one we could have won. So there's no relief there, there's no relief this is over. This game is important to us and it will hurt for a little bit, but we just got to refocus and then move on and get ready for what's next.

Q. You guys got to hear a lot about Zion not playing in the first two games. What did you make of the impact that he had and how much did that alter the matchup between what you had seen in those first two matchups versus today?

CAM JOHNSON: He definitely adds a different dimension to their team. He's a really good athlete and he does a lot of things that they don't have without him, so it kind of changes the way they play offensively, definitely. And it changes the way they attack. But besides that they ran the same kind of sets and we kind of got the same kind of shots we wanted the first two games. So he's a great player and he definitely adds something to their team, but that wasn't really the focus for us this game. The focus for us was coming in and doing what we wanted to do and doing what we know how to do.

Q. Cam, you guys had a great start were up 13 then Zion hit a couple of shots. They put Goldwire in the game, and seemed to get energized defensively. Did you, could you tell a difference in the amount of pressure they were applying defensively at that point in the game after he hit those shots and Goldwire came in?

CAM JOHNSON: They did ramp up the pressure a little bit as the first half wound on, but we practice that stuff. We practice that. We could have handled it a little bit better and obviously hindsight being 20/20 there's since things that we would have changed, there's things that we would have done differently. We would

have played late clock offense a little bit better. But we went out there and we were fighting the whole time. I don't really think there was many points in the game where we let up and stopped fighting and we knew that's what it was going to be, a fight and unfortunately we came out on the wrong end.

Q. You've seen every other team ranked in the AP top-5. Is it your belief that the ACC should get three No. 1 seeds?

ROY WILLIAMS: I really never get into that kind of thing, I really don't. I can't tell you right now more than one location for the first rounds next week. I really just try to coach my team today to play the best that we possibly could today. Zion did have a big influence on the game, but the injuries are part of the game as well. I can go back and many times tell you that we have had injuries that really hurt us and Zion being hurt really hurt Duke, but it was still Duke-North Carolina. He made some big time plays down the stretch that they didn't have the last couple games. One year we didn't have Ty Lawson in our game against Duke. It's gotten a lot of attention because he's, he's very gregarious. I mean he is an animal out there and in a good way. But still, the bottom line is that you play and try to do the best you can today. I have no idea, I don't even know what the hell NET means. Okay. So let's be honest, I'm trying to coach my team. And what I will tell you is that, I don't know how many, but we have been to several Final Fours, several. We have never won a tournament championship but one time. So our season's not over. We just got to regroup and play better and understand that we didn't play well enough to win today. That's the bottom line, we didn't play well enough to win and congratulate them and move on.

Q. They attacked almost exclusively through Zion in that last several minutes, without Garrison in there you know what they're going to do, what could you, what were you trying to get on defense for him?

ROY WILLIAMS: Well the next best defense for us is if you don't have Garrison, who is a really good good defender, is your best athlete and that was bringing Nassir in the game. He's too quick for Huff, too quick for Sterling, but that's part of the game. You've got to adjust to other people and their strengths and our weakness and our weakness, I mean our strengths and their weaknesses. But he's a big time player. I mean, I think I saw him play more than anybody else in the country the last two and a half years. And so I was glad to see that he wasn't playing those two other times, I had seen him play enough. I knew what he was. But again it was Duke that beat North Carolina today. I mean I don't even remember who it was that picked that ball up off the floor and laid it up. Who was that?

Q. Goldwire.

ROY WILLIAMS: Goldwire? That's a pretty big play. All right. That's a pretty big play right there. But I think other than that, every point down the stretch, I think Zion scored everyone of them down the stretch.

Q. You often talk about the little things that Garrison Brook does, you had gotten I think six points in a row and taken the lead and then he real quickly got his third and fourth fouls. After that I noticed it could have been coincidence, but I noticed a lot of threes go up, even though you were 4-27. Does your offense function differently when he's not out there setting screens?

ROY WILLIAMS: A little bit, probably, but not too much. We shot bad shots in the first half, my God, we thought it was a three second shot clock. I mean, if you go 4-27 guys you deserve to be beat. I mean, come on, let's be honest about the whole thing. Our great teams or this team when they have played their best games has either been one of two things, we really shot the ball well or we had good balance. At Duke we played them and yes it was without Zion, Luke Maye spins around to lay the ball up, and I think that was when it was we either one down or one up and Zion blocked the shot. But you still got to play. We had 62 points against them in their building in the paint. Today they outscored us in the paint 50-38. You live by the jump shot, you die by the jump shot. But their defense forced us to be impatient with the ball. You should never just rely on jump shots. I never seen a team that relies on jump shots to win everything. Never. Maybe Villanova last year but they scored inside as well.

Q. With six minutes left in the first half after you had the lead and you lost it, was it your bad shot selection or their defense or combination?

ROY WILLIAMS: A little bit of both. They got up into B-Rob one time, they dropped the ball out of bounds, they got up into Cam and they got two turnovers, Goldwire was important too. I told them that as we went through the line shaking hands, he was important to their team. I don't want to talk for Mike's team, but I would think he would probably think the same thing. But when they're pressuring you, you got, you have to attack and we didn't attack. We took the easy way out and took quick jump shots and we didn't shoot the ball worth a darn and if you don't -- our team, if we don't shoot it well, it makes it really difficult for us.