

Virginia Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes

Virginia 76, William & Mary 40

Dec. 22, 2020

Head Coach Tony Bennett

Thoughts on performance after long layoff:

"I think our guys came out focused and ready and looked fairly sharp. They're probably going to say 'See coach, practice is overrated, we can rest for 10 days and go in those stretches,' but no, they came out ready, knocked some shots and I thought we played fairly alert defensively. The issue we had a couple times was not possessing defensive rebounds. I think that was big and we gave up second chance points, statistically I don't know how many, but we got good shots and did what we were supposed to do. I talked to them about our two pillars I said, 'Will you be humble and will you be passionate today. Will you play with humility and knowing who you are and approach this the right way and then with great passion, on every possession, the best you can muster up.' So that was kind of the mindset."

Looking forward to Gonzaga game:

"Everybody stayed healthy. Papi [Francisco Caffaro] got a kind of a kink in his neck and got locked up but I don't know when you play a team as talented and as explosive as Gonzaga, I don't know what prepares you for that. I know how good they are and I know what we'll have to do at a very high level to be in a game like that and make it competitive and hopefully be successful. So, I understand that and it'll be a different kind of game the way they'll get down the floor, again we gave up if this is right, our stats sheet, it says 14 offensive rebounds, that won't fly. But, there's going to be some areas that will test you but it was a good step, and now we prepare for, I think they're still the number one team in the country."

On improvements before facing Gonzaga:

"I think you're going to have to be better in every area, not saying we were poor, but that's just the reality of that. You know I look at that 14 offensive rebounds, you have to have a level of urgency like you haven't had this year in terms of being back in set and then getting the shooters and everything; it really is that. You've got to take care of the ball but you don't back down. You run your stuff hard, you go against them. I've been fortunate enough as a coach at Washington State to play against the good Gonzaga teams. We had great battles, and they've done a really great job with having threats offensively, they've always been good all over the court. Inside, outside, quickness and so again it test what you do. You always try to have a program or a team that prepares to play against the best, and we will have to be you at our best with not a ton of prep or a lot of games, but again, grateful for this opportunity."

On Trey Murphy:

"I thought he was locked in and he slid well today, bothered some shots, snatched some rebounds. You know he can stretch the defense with his shooting, and he's a multiple position player, can guard different positions and even offensively can do stuff. I thought he looked sharp and was ready to play and had the kind of energy and focus, if you if you want to use that word, that we need from him always."

On Tomas Woldetensae's development since joining UVA:

"Tom's gotten better. He's a great team player and he's got very good feel, that's his strength. And just his experienced, we've sort of rotated starting lineups, but he got us off, I think he banged a shot and did some things... I think his maturity, his feel offensively, and just knowing where to be are important for us, whether he's starting or coming off the bench and I like Tom's attitude and his again feel and it just works. He's hard on himself because I know he feels like 'Well I haven't been shooting it the way I want,' but he just understands

what it takes and even when he's not playing it's great to hear him behind the bench and I just like his maturity level, very mature for, obviously all the things he's experienced."

Redshirt Freshman Forward Kadin Shedrick

On difficulty preparing after 10 days off and just three days of practice:

"Three days ago, we all came in prepared knowing we had a big game ahead of us against William & Mary. We had to focus, lock in, and really hone in on what we had to do to win this game. And so now we're going to look forward to Gonzaga, and you know keep building off of this. It was difficult at first to come in after 10 days, but it was a lot easier than I thought it would be. It felt like we hadn't missed that much."

On reaction to the Gonzaga game being scheduled:

"It was nice to hear that we were going to play Gonzaga because we lost our games against Michigan State, Florida and Villanova. I think it'd be cool to get a marquee game in before the conference play starts. We're all really looking forward to it. We all really excited here we're going to play Gonzaga. We're excited for the challenge."

On chance to watch Gonzaga play this year:

"I watched them play some against West Virginia, some against Iowa – I could not watch the whole game, I watch some of it. They're a very good team, a very talented team. They are deserving of that number-one ranking and we're excited for the challenge. They shot, very good against Iowa so we're going to have to really make sure we lock in on that and their bigs are also very good. They're really complete team and it will be a good challenge for us."

On virtual coaching while not practicing and how did that get you ready:

"We had a Zoom call probably every night during quarantine and we watched some film. We would talk about what was going on, what the plan was. They even allowed us to come in, like one at a time, and we would have our own half court, just be isolated on that half court. Nobody else was around us and get some shots up so we wouldn't be terribly rusty. It was good, even though we were in quarantine, to have our own isolation half court and that was good for us. I think we made the most of the situation. We did the best we could with what we had."

On what 10-days off was like for you trying to find your rhythm:

"It wasn't as bad as I thought it was going to be actually. We got a good amount of conditioning in while we were in quarantine, so I was able to stay in good shape. Actually, we got back from for the first practice and somehow I felt like I was in better shape than I was before the quarantine, so that was good. It felt good to go there today. I don't really remember the last time we played, so it really felt good to be out."

Junior Guard Trey Murphy III

On how defense progressed:

"It's going really well, During quarantine we're conditioning, and we're playing a lot of defense as well. When we came back, we were in a defensive mindset and we're all just ready to, like, buy in on it. I feel like the main thing was just really being focused on our passion. You have a lot of passion while you're playing. And you have to find a way. So we just had to make sure to break that barrier."

On frustration having the high-profile games postponed or cancelled and what thoughts on playing Gonzaga:

"It was frustrating. At the time, my initial reaction was 'Yes I'm a little mad about it,' but it's something I can't control. Things that you can't control, you can have like a negative reaction to it. I just had to move on because

I just know we're going to get our opportunity, and I'm looking forward to that on Saturday. It is a really big game, and me and my teammates are very excited to play Gonzaga."

On what it's been like having to quarantine and now getting back to playing:

"I think that quarantine really, there is a little bit of hunger in us and we're also just like so eager to play. And then we came back on Saturday like it was really clicking, like it was crazy that we were out for 10 days. In that first practice back it was one of our better practices. I think we really just missed each other a lot and we're all just happy to play with each other again. We were really excited to play again. And that's what this team is built on, just playing with each other and playing a lot of chemistry."

On if easier than expected to get back into the swing of things:

"We were in pretty good shape throughout quarantine because we're doing different conditioning things. I know our coaches aren't going to put us in a bad position and like try to kill us on the first day back. I think that was a little bit of help as well. It showed today. I thought we were looking a lot fresher than most teams coming out of a quarantine. I just really put that up to the coaches I was there, just them being really smart."

On shutting down William & Mary's Luke Loewe:

"Really just being in the gaps as well as, you make them shoot contested shots. I mean it was a team effort. It wasn't just one guy on him. We're all in the gaps, making sure we focus on him and not let him get hot because if he gets hot and gets going, then they're a tough team to solve because of their spacing and their ability to shoot the ball."