

# VIRGINIA TECH

## MEN'S BASKETBALL

### Postgame Media Conference vs. Duke Quotes

Jan. 12, 2021

#### Virginia Tech Head Coach Mike Young Q&A Highlights

##### ***On maturity shown in second half:***

"I saw a level of poise. I didn't want to call a timeout there when Duke took off on us in the second half. Part of that was by design. I wanted to see us figure it out and fight through it. I didn't want to burn a timeout there. I thought our shot selection was good. I thought Duke made some difficult shots. We didn't have our best start, but I knew we would figure it out. I was pleased with their patience, their poise, and togetherness. They continued to share and I do think that is the mark of a team that's been there, and done it, [and] knows what it takes to get out games like that with a win."

##### ***On Aluma's performance in the second half:***

"Norm [Wood], just like we all do, I just covet a player that you can throw the ball to in the post and expect something positive to happen. You're going to double it or stick it back on the perimeter. He's going to get fouled. I thought he was fouled there a couple times in the second half and it just wasn't called. Just enormous. He started to tighten up a little bit and Duke locked in a bit more defensively and on the perimeter with Cone and others. TO be able to put that thing down there with that big rascal and let him do his thing is a real luxury. I've had some great ones. I mean, I've had some great ones that we could do that with and Keve Aluma certainly presented himself very well through eleven or twelve games, whatever we've played. He's a whale of a ball player."

##### ***On Hunter Cattoor's ability to draw charges:***

"We track that. That's a big statistic for us. We've got a board that we take a picture of — a still shot — after each game. I think Cattoor is at nine now, we've got somebody at six. Alleyna has zero and I point that out to him after each game. Cone has zero and I point that out. His teammates point that out. That's a big part of what we do. Cattoor — that was not a strong suit of his a year ago. He had a hard time keeping the ball in front of him. An offseason, a different offseason, with the virus and not being here [from] March to July, he worked his fanny off and when he got back here with David Jackson. I've said it multiple times, he's a very conscientious and a verys serious basketball player. You don't have to tell him, "Hey, listen, buddy. You can't guard anybody out there." He understands that. He recognizes that. He has worked very hard and diligently to improve that part [of his game]. He is a good athlete [and] he's made vast improvements in that area."

***On what having three Top-25 wins says about the team:***

“I’ve got a pretty good team, Mark [Berman]. Let’s not beat around the bush. We’ve got a pretty good team. I think we’ve got a chance to be really good. We’re not really good right now. I don’t think it’s anything more complicated than that. As Mike Barber asked, I look down this roster [and] Aluma, Mutts, Bede are playing good basketball for us. It’s like Alleyna, Cone, or Cattoor — somebody is going to have a 17, 18, 19-point game and really make it hard for you. There are going to be several nights when two of them ring the bell like that, so that would be my response.”

***On success on offense in the first half:***

“I thought the ball really moved, Mark [Berman]. It didn’t stick. We had a nice level of inside-outside. Cone got two big threes down. We got a couple second shots and I thought we moved really well in transition. Shot selection was good. Duke basketball has hung their hat on that defensive end for quite some time and that was certainly a pleasure to watch.”

**Duke Head Coach Mike Krzyzewski Q&A Highlights**

***Opening statements:***

“I’m surprised, they [Hokies] are really good. Mike’s [Young] team knows who they are, their substitution patterns were great. They aren’t the only team ahead of us in that regard, where we are still finding out about our team. He [Mike Young] knows who his team is, in the first half they really hit us hard. They played great defence, really strong, physical, and tough. It knocked us back, we have not played in an ACC game like that. At halftime, we reacted great, I thought we played very well in the second half. More than that, we competed, we played really outstanding defence. They had 28 points in the second half, we had opportunities. We were in a position where our guys came back to put us in a position to win and we could not knock down a shot. We had some good looks where we could one possession game pressure on them [Hokies]. We learned a lot tonight on how hard an ACC top level game is. You have to be in the game for 40 minutes and that is a learning experience, we really haven’t been in a game like that in conference. They [Hokies] are good and congratulations to them, the kid Radford [Tyrece Radford] was the best player on the court. He had a double-double, his intensity and how hard he plays really helps their team immensely. They have other great players, but tonight, he was their key guy.”

***On defensive adjustments after halftime:***

“Well just understanding the music of the game, and acknowledging the game that you are in. It took us a half to get to the level that we should of played at, our kids ultimately rose to that level. You don’t get rewarded the win when you play a really good team and don’t stay in the game for 40 minutes. It wasn’t like we weren’t ready for this level of play, our kids came ready and had good attitudes. We responded and did a good job in the second half.”

***On Jalen Johnson getting minutes tonight***

“I wish we had amazing plans, we are trying to learn. You try different things out, that’s what we are still trying to do. Mike [Young] can have more plans, his team is mature and they understand their roles and

we are still trying to figure that out. We knew that Jalen [Johnson] could play, although he has only practiced once. I put him in early to see where that would go, he's not yet ready, for tonight's game at least. Hopefully, in a week he will be ready for our next game, his shift had little effect on the game I think."

## **Virginia Tech Player Q&A Highlights**

### **TYRECE RADFORD**

#### ***Your first double-double of the season, What was working for you tonight:***

"I can just say my energy was different, I just left everything on the court tonight. I kept my team motivated, kept pushing and telling them to play to win and don't play to lose."

#### ***What helped you guys put this game away down the stretch:***

"Basically just telling the team we have to go. Don't worry about the run that they went or worry about the score. They can come back at any moment, so just keep going and don't take your foot off the gas."

#### ***What helped you guys click on offense in the first half:***

"Our aggressiveness, we pass and move trying to get Duke moving and not standing still. With that being done, we were able to convert."

#### ***What does your impressive record say about the team this year:***

"We have the potential to make a run for it. We just have to stay level-headed and not get a big head. We just need to stay humble."

### **KEVE ALUMA**

#### ***When Duke was on their stretch and you put up 7 straight points for the Hokies, did you feel that the team needed a little lift:***

"I just had a few opportunities and I was able to capitalize on those. My teammates trust me to make the right play."

#### ***Do you think the talent gap isn't that big between Duke and Virginia Tech:***

"They have a good team and we have a good team. We just have to go out there and fight."

#### ***How good is this year's team that you are on now:***

"We're definitely a good team. We still have a lot of improvement that we can do, I think we have a good team, and we just need to keep balling together."

#### ***Why has this team been so good this year:***

"I just think we've balled in and we have a great coaching staff and they make it easier for us to go out there and follow the scouting report."

***What made the offense on fire in the 1st half:***

“I just think our movement and being confident.”