

March 13, 2015



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AN INTERVIEW WITH:

SOUTH CAROLINA

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started with an opening statement from coach and then take questions for the student-athletes.

COACH MARTIN: Yeah, credit Georgia. They attacked us on the inside and were real physical. They made things real hard for us. Defensively I thought they were phenomenal. They're one of the better defensive teams in the country for a reason.

But real proud of our guys. Real proud of our guys. Our guys grew up a lot this year. And they grew up a lot this week. Our fight was great and it was just crazy. It comes down to Neme making that three at the shot-clock buzzer sideways, and J.J. Frazier making another crazy three at the shot-clock buzzer to basically create the separation of the game.

But real proud of our guys.

THE MODERATOR: Take questions for the student-athletes, please.

Q. Duane, you scored 20, you pretty much couldn't miss in the second half there. Just what were they doing to kind of limit you guys' looks throughout the game?

DUANE NOTICE: They just are a good defensive team. I think that they did a good job of not allowing us to kind of run our continuity in terms of offense. We just tried to stay the course and fight back and try to execute as much as possible, but they did a good job on defense against us tonight.

Q. For Ty and Duane, the whistles really started to blow in the second half there.

How much did that affect what you guys were trying to do, especially with Sin having to sit down and then Michael having to sit.

DUANE NOTICE: It's always tough when you have guys that have to sit out due to foul trouble. I think that the guys tried to come off the bench and we try to persevere. They tried to do the best they could and help us fight back, so that we could be in a position that was as best that we could play so that the starters can get back in the game.

And the whistles are all a part of the basketball game. So not really concerned about that. We just got to -- it just means that we were all being more physical.

TYRONE JOHNSON: I just think that they had did a good job and we tried to fight hard and comeback. But they had two possessions down the stretch where they hit some tough shots and that was the way they stole the game from us.

Q. For both of you, the last month's been really tough with the injuries and suspension, but you guys still won six out of 10. Won two here. Talk about how much this month meant to you guys and how you didn't hang your heads.

TYRONE JOHNSON: Just seeing our growth in like the guys just not giving up and keep fighting and just every day coming in and just willing to work. So just seeing our growth and just seeing our fight continue to fight and just came up short today.

DUANE NOTICE: We tried to focus on things that we can control. Injuries are not something that we can control or foresee in the future.

So like Ty said, just trying to come in every day and work hard and put ourself in the best position to win.

Q. For both of you guys, moving forward, do you think that you guys should get

a shot at another tournament, a post-season tournament, NIT or one of the others?

DUANE NOTICE: We don't know for sure what the future holds, but as a team, I know personally myself and as a team, we want to play. We want to continue to play. We don't want this to be our last game. So we're hungry to play in the post-season.

TYRONE JOHNSON: Same thing that Duane said.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll excuse you to the locker room and take questions for coach.

Q. Obviously you guys have played them twice before. Were they a little extra physical maybe than they were the first time you guys faced them?

COACH MARTIN: We just didn't have the energy and the fight that we need for us to be good to start the game. Just didn't have it. Their centers scored 17 points in the first half and every basket they took was at the rim. We provided no resistance whatsoever.

I told them at halftime, We're lucky we're only down seven. And I said, It's real simple, you guys have answered the bell every single time this year, you guys want to go home, because you're too tired, let me know. If you're going to fight, and get back in this, then let's do this.

And they answered my question by the way we played in the second half. We played a pretty clean game. Obviously didn't shoot it well in the first half, but played a pretty clean game. And then we had some bad turnovers and missed free throws coming down the stretch.

Any time you're in a one-possession game and you have a empty possession, it really hurts.

Q. Ty only played five minutes in the second half. What was the reason for that?

COACH MARTIN: Ty just didn't have much in the tank today. He tried. He just didn't have much in the tank. He went that first half and played well and didn't make shots, but I thought he tried. But he just never had that next step. That tank was a little on empty for him. Then Marcus played well, so, we went with Marcus.

Q. Like with the guys this last month, it's been kind of rough with the injuries and everything else, but how proud are you of this team for continuing to finish strong for the second straight year?



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COACH MARTIN: Actually the past three and a half to four weeks have been fun. They have been great. It was the month before that one that wasn't fun.

We went through a stretch where we had seven guys in practice and we have had 10 up until the day before we traveled here. Then Reggie goes down with a concussion.

But at least we were able to practice with 10 for two weeks before we came on this trip. And the guys have been great. They have answered the bell every day. We have had some quality wins.

I mean, for to us come out here today and play a Georgia team that obviously wasn't happy with the fact that we had beaten them twice during the season. And not just that, but they're a real good basketball team. It's not like they're just another team, they're real good.

For us to put up the fight that we did on the third consecutive night of playing, especially after last night's game. Last night's game, Ole Miss is a real physical, athletic team. That was a real taxing game for us. And they're a pressing team and give Duane credit. He gets himself in unbelievable shape and he was able to sustain that. But everyone else was a step slow today.

Q. You think you guys deserve another game in some tournament?

COACH MARTIN: I hope so. They want to play. I'm not a very good plumber or gardener or any of that stuff. I like coaching basketball. I like running practice and I really, really enjoy coaching these guys. So if we're fortunate enough to play again, that's something that it's out of our control. You got to get invited to some of these things. So, we'll see what happens.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you.

COACH MARTIN: Thank you.

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