

**2009 General Shale Brick
Atlantic Sun Basketball Championships**

Belmont vs. Mercer, 03/05/09, First Round Tournament

BELMONT BRUINS

Head Coach Rick Byrd

Opening statement...

It's a miraculous win for us really. It was a game that got away from us both in terms in, I thought the last 10 or 12 minutes that out scrapped us, got higher quality shots than we did, and the ones we did get, we were not making any of them. There was a terrible run of missing good threes and even missing some little chippys inside and missing 2 free throws at one time and it just felt like it wasn't going to be our day. They (Mercer) were getting harder to guard, they are hard to guard anyway and on top of that I make a bad decision about calling time out on the last possession and it turns out to be a win so I can't explain. I really think in many ways Mercer deserved to win the game. They are a good basketball team and they are hard to guard, Florence is great player. And Emerson is a great player. But bottom line as we said in the locker room, we could have won by 50 and they wouldn't put any extra points on the board tomorrow night, just gotta advance. And just gotta make the play. Andy will probably take credit for it, throwing that ball up there some how so that Mick would get it, but Wick made an incredible play and we play tomorrow night.

Player: Andy Wicke

On ...if he was trying to get fouled taking one of the last shots:

I don't know if I was trying to draw the foul, I just knew in a situation like that everyone is scrambling back and it's a chance to catch guys out of position and get as close to the basket as you can. And really, I'm not the best finisher in the world but I know a lot of our guys are down there scrapping up those rebounds and that's the time your guys are going to try their hardest to get one and I knew when I threw the shot up, whither or not it was good or not, we had a good chance of getting another one in.

On ... how frustrating the last 10 minutes were

Pretty frustrating, especially when it looks like we were saying. Coach told us in the last time out, you guys are all great shooters so just go out there and hit your shots and we got the looks and just couldn't get the ball in so that was frustrating but we didn't give up so we still had a chance

On.. if they would somehow find a way to get it done

That's always the case I feel like we the coaching staff we have and the type of players on our team. I never doubt the situation we're in or if we have the ability to come out on top. I'd like to say there is something special about this team and what we have at Belmont. We've persevered through some tough situations. This league is so good this year and there's so many talented players that anything can happen on any given day so we're definitely not relying on that sense but I feel like we can win if we play our best.

Player Mick Hegdepeth

On ...any mental clock in your head saying 'I got to get it (the ball) up there?'

Score it as fast as I can before the clock runs out, that's about it. Actually I lost sight of Andy. He put the ball up and I was at the right place at the right time

Player Alex Renfroe

On... if they are almost destined to keep the run going with wins in the tournament

I would love for that to be the case but anything can happen, day in and day out and you know really coming into the game, anything can happen. Coming from 18 down to win or blowing a half time lead of 20, anything can happen. You just gotta go out there and play the game

On... did experience come through this game?

I wouldn't say that. A lot of times our experience hasn't come through for us. Games at the beginning of the year that we should have won we didn't. our experience should have helped us out but it kinda fell for us. When it's over it doesn't matter.

MERCER BEARS

Head Coach Bob Hoffman

Opening statement...

I'm just really disappointed for our guys. They've shown great character all season and not many teams can come back 3 different times like they did today. I'm just proud of the things they've been able to accomplish. They've accomplished a lot. I would have like for them to have felt the thrill of winning that game. I thought they played their hardest the last 4-5 minutes. If iwould have done something different I would have called time out after Flo scored, it was a great shot. Maybe put a big man in. But as it turned out Wicke had the ball instead of Renfroe. I would have love to won. We're a great team, great program. They (Belmont) have a quality coach that I have known for along time.

On ... defending Belmont

Mark's one of our best on ball defenders, and the ball could have bounced any way. The ball bounced for us sometimes this year and sometimes not. But it's just one of those things, if we had gotten that ball somehow, it would have been nice.

More on defense:

We played with a sense of urgency.

Player James Florence

On ... how confident he was after he made that shot that put Mercer up with 8 sec. to go that you guys had won?

Nothing had a chance to actually go through my head. Just get back on defense. Mark made a great block, there's not much you can do about a 6'10" guy standing behind the backboard. It was a great game, it's a shame, somebody had to lose.

On... defense and keeping Belmont from scoring a field goal for 10 minutes:

It was just will.