



2017 Southern Conference Basketball Championship

presented by General Shale



No. 7 Samford 67, No. 2 Furman 63
March 4, 2017

Samford Bulldogs

Coach Scott Padgett

Opening statement

"We have been a team all year long. And since I have been here, we have been a pressing team. But just watching the game film against [Furman] in the two games we played against them, I knew there was no way we could press them. They get too many points off our press because they execute. For our guys to go through a walk-through and lock into the half court so well, because our half-court defense has not been our number one strength, makes me so proud of them. [Furman] is very tough to play against, and they have been every year, especially this year. For us to lock in, and hold [Furman] to 30 percent, I just can't say enough. We are a very good offensive team, and if we are locked in like this defensively, then I think we can be tough to beat."

On the final minute of the game

"As a player, I was never nervous at any time because I was out there playing and I helped decide the outcome. As a coach, it's hard for me at times to just let go and trust that they have it. We are getting better at [finishing the game]."

On winning the close game

"I feel like we have taken some steps this year. Last year, we were in 10 games like this and lost probably nine. This year, we have been in 10 games like this and lost probably four. We've come along, but we have not won them all. But because you are 4-6 and you have done it, you do have some confidence in this game that you can win a tough, close one."

Samford sophomore center Wyatt Walker

On preparing for the game

"In walk-throughs the last few days and today, everyone's attention to detail and everyone was focusing on little things. We have had a lot of close games this year that we've lost by a few points, and we have played in numerous overtime games, so it really is little things. We have always been there all year, and tonight, I think just a little bit more talk on defense, finding a body every time a rebound goes up, a little bit more of being there a step sooner on a help-side close-out, and just those little things that helped us get the edge."

On winning the close game

"We have more confidence in ourselves and confidence in each other. One thing [Coach Padgett] has been preaching is the next play, playing forward, and moving on from what just happened in the past. We always say, 'one more,' whether it be one more stop, one more pass to the open guy, or one more rebound on the defensive end. I think that helped us get the win."

Furman Paladins

Coach Niko Medved

Opening statement

"After such a great regular season, that's the last way you want to end. It's a tough night. As a coach, you got both sides. You win big games, but you have to take the good with the bad. There's nothing I can really say to make us feel better. We got beat tonight. We got off to a slow start. We dug ourselves a hole, but like my team always does, they fought like crazy. They came back and took the lead in the second half. I think we were down by about twelve late, but this team never quits. They came back and we had our chances there down the stretch, but it was an off shooting night for us. Sometimes that's just the way it goes. We just weren't able to survive. Obviously, we're crushed. That doesn't take away anything I feel about this team and the season that we've had."

On preparing for next year...

"I don't think it's a take away from this game, but from the whole season. This is one game we didn't play well, but most the season we did play well. I think you learn from the good and the bad. You build on what you did well and learn from what you didn't. That's what this team will do. We've turned it upward every year. This guy right here (Kris Acox), has been a monster. He's been here four years and seen the complete turnaround of this program. It's going to keep going from here. We've got a strong team coming back."

Furman senior forward Kris Acox

Did the last two losses play into the loss today?

"I don't think so. Like coach (Niko Medved) said, we just had a rough night. We usually shoot pretty good from the 3. We just had to give Samford their credit, they played a good game. I don't feel like our previous games had much to do with tonight's game."

Furman junior guard Devin Sibley

On playing Samford tonight versus the regular season

"We scouted them and knew what we were up against. I didn't see much difference other than what coach (Niko Medved) said. It just wasn't our night as far as shooting."