Syracuse Men's Basketball Narrowly Escapes Wake Forest in 81-76 Victory
By Aubrie Tolliver

SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- It started with John Gillon in the paint. But, surrounded by a sea of Demon Deacons, he wisely found Tyler Lydon behind the arc. The ball went from the hands of Lydon to Tyus Battle then, finally, to Andrew White, who finished the play with a drained three.

That critical shot put the Syracuse up 71-68 over Wake Forest in the battle in the Dome — the fourteenth lead change of the night. And, with 1:23 left in the game, it was also the final one.

From there, the Syracuse men's basketball team clutched tightly to their hard-earned lead, even after it dwindled down to just a one-point advantage with nine seconds on the clock.

Ultimately, after the final buzzer sounded and 40 minutes of ACC basketball were over, the Orange came out on top by a final score of 81-76. Lydon, Battle and White played every one of those 40 minutes.

Fittingly, White earned his thousandth-career point in the midst of the commotion that was the second half. That point was one of the 27 he would go on to score—a game-leading and season-best performance for the 23-year-old.

Syracuse would earn its largest lead of the night at the 4:25 mark in the second half—six points (32-29). That was before White's three-pointer that gave his team the final lead.

Wake Forest held the advantage over Syracuse for over 55 percent of the game. Each offense was given equally 70 possessions.

The Orange committed its season-high 25 personal fouls and Lake Forest took advantage by landing 17 of their 23 free throws (73.3 percent). But, SU also had no trouble getting to the line. They were given 30 free tosses from 19 Demon fouls. They made 22. White was a perfect 10-10.

Lydon would be a crucial factor on both sides of the ball, contributing 15 points, five assists and grabbing nine rebounds. Gillon led in the assist category with six.

Rookie Taurean Thompson continued to prove himself a court full of veterans. He was 7-10 from the field with 18 points, the second-most for the Orange.

Up next, the Orange will hope to improve upon their .500 record in ACC play (4-4) against No. 6 Florida State. They are scheduled to take on the Seminoles Saturday afternoon in the Carrier Dome. Tipoff is scheduled for noon eastern.

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