

# Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 15, 2025

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gainbridge Fieldhouse

## Michigan Wolverines

## Dusty May

## Tre Donaldson

## Vladislav Goldin

### Postgame Press Conference

Michigan - 81, Maryland - 80

THE MODERATOR: We'll go to Coach May for an opening statement.

DUSTY MAY: As a fan of the sport, what a great game for college basketball and a great game for our league. We have a lot of respect for the Maryland program. Personally I'll be shocked if they're not playing in at least the second weekend. That's how talented they are.

Credit to our guys. We weathered some storms, made some good runs, but made enough plays that we needed to at the end.

**Q. Tre, what's going through your mind on the last play? Was there any chance you were giving that ball up?**

TRE DONALDSON: Yes, the play was either to make a play for myself or make it for my teammates. When I got down there, they took away my teammates, so it was just about me making a play for the team but for me as well.

**Q. All three of you guys last year were a part of different schools in different conferences, and in your first year, you guys are playing for a Big Ten Conference tournament championship tomorrow. What does it mean for all three of you guys to be playing a conference championship tournament in you guys' first year playing for the Wolverines?**

DANNY WOLF: I think when we all got to campus 10 months ago, we knew exactly what we could do and what we could be. Obviously the end of the regular season didn't end how we would have liked it to win that type of



championship. Then Coach May right after the game was like we have a new season coming up.

We have a lot of guys who are coming from winning programs. I know Tre won the SEC Championship last year. Vlad's been to a Final Four. And other guys in the locker room. We know what it takes, and we had guys step up big time tonight. Vlad, Tre, Roddy -- I thought Rubin was phenomenal defensively. You need everyone to win a championship.

We got one more tomorrow to do what we want to do, and we need everyone to step up again.

VLADISLAV GOLDIN: I agree with Danny. We came here to play as good of basketball as we can, and everybody buy into that. So that was just like the work we put before, it just pays off now.

TRE DONALDSON: You asked us through that question, but it takes an entire team and it takes a staff that believes in guys.

When Coach came in recruiting me, he said he wanted to put the right guys together, and I feel like he did a great job of that. As a team, we came together. Like he said, he's a winner, he's a winner, I'm a winner, he's a winner. It's the resume itself can we come together and can we win together?

I feel like we've embodied that as a team and we've just go to continue to play the right way and continue to win.

**Q. Danny and Vlad, I've heard compliments of you guys all year long. A lot of people say you are two of the best big men that talk to each other the whole game. You guys play together very well. Talk a little bit about how you guys do on the court and how you do off the court.**

VLADISLAV GOLDIN: It's probably the most important thing because, if we don't talk, then we don't know what we're going to do. That's something that we put extra focus on, talking to each other, because he sees one thing I see other thing. If we can just like make a whole view



and make a right decision, it's going to pay off.

DANNY WOLF: I think he kind of hit it on the nail, but I said this after our game yesterday, when the guys around us are playing as well as they've played the last two games, it makes us look far better.

I thought Tre did a great job at running our team today. I thought all of the guys just really did really great things out there, and it just makes us look better, makes the game easier for us.

Obviously there's a lot of talk about the two of us, as you said, but we try to not really look at that because it goes so much deeper than just the two of us.

**Q. Take me back to when you were a younger person. What was your first game-winning play as a younger person? Does it measure up to what you just did 30 minutes ago for the Michigan Wolverines?**

TRE DONALDSON: My first game winner, I was in sixth grade, it was my sixth grade summer going into seventh grade. I was playing up with the 17s in Tallahassee back home. We were playing one of the best teams in Tallahassee, and I hit a full court behind the back heave, and we ended up winning it. That was a big win.

Compared to this, this is something a kid dreams of his whole life. I mean, playing Division I basketball at a school like Michigan with the legacy it has and being able to make a shot like that, it's unreal.

All glory goes to God, but it's up there with that one for sure.

**Q. For Tre, obviously they go up, and it feels like within 10 seconds you're already down at the other end scoring. How do you know in that split second exactly what you're going to do and then execute it?**

TRE DONALDSON: As a point guard, it's not necessarily that I know exactly what I'm going to do. Coach just puts me in position to make a read. Me and him have that relationship and that trust for me to make that right decision. He just puts me in that place to make the decision, and I feel like I made the right one tonight.

**Q. Tre, similar to the previous question, you had the game-winning shot, but you also hit a big 3-pointer before that. How do you stay poised in those moments to make the right reads and have faith in yourself to make the right play?**

TRE DONALDSON: Just my confidence. My confidence

is something we've talked about as a team and something my coach has continued to push me and trust me. If I wasn't a good player, I wouldn't be here.

That's something that Coach feels I got away from a little bit, just having confidence. Obviously the screen from Vlad to get me open was great. Just confidence and belief in myself and the trust from my teammates. When I'm open, I feel like the trust and the belief coming from them, it gives me the confidence to knock down big shots like I did today.

**Q. You keep mentioning confidence. How can you keep that going tomorrow and then into March Madness?**

TRE DONALDSON: Just not overthinking it. We can't overthink it. We've got to continue to be the same thing we've been these past two games. I feel like that's what's got us here. That's what got us to this point.

Just not trying to overdo too much. Have confidence when it comes, make the right plays, and if it's not there just continue to grind the game out and find a way to win. I feel like that's the biggest thing.

**Q. Vlad, you entered the second half on like a 6-0 run. You got a key block. What was said at halftime, and what led to that scoring outburst and defensive play as well?**

VLADISLAV GOLDIN: We talk how they making runs, we making runs. We just have to like keep our trust into each other and keep going, keep going because, if they go on a run, we cannot drop our heads.

It was our run, and I feel like we executed pretty well.

**Q. Coach, can you talk a little bit about your team's poise, not so much on that last play, but there were times when Maryland made runs either to jump out a little ahead or cut into your lead? Your guys didn't seem to press or didn't seem to panic. They just kind of had a workmanlike fashion.**

DUSTY MAY: We have a veteran group. Even though they haven't been together a long time, they've been in a lot of meaningful games. Anyone that's followed us closely, we've been in too many of these one or two possession games throughout the season.

A lot like tonight we've found ways to overcome our turnover issues. Some nights it's on the glass, some nights it's banging in shots, some nights it's getting it inside. It's been different every night. Hopefully that bodes well as you continue to play in one-and-done situations, scenarios

where you just have confidence. We don't know what it's going to look like exactly, but we do have a lot of belief that if we just stay the course.

When you're playing a team like Maryland, you've got so many weapons. If you drop your head when they make a big time play, it's going to be a long night. Our message was we have to respond and try to beat them down the floor because we have to respond and expect them to make the plays they made because they're a really good team.

**Q. Can you talk about the job you guys did on the glass in the first half and how good it was to see Roddy hit a shot and have a couple big plays there.**

DUSTY MAY: Just seeing Roddy having fun hooping again is the best part. The shots are going to come. The second in the corner 3 looked good. The play that jumps out -- obviously Tre had those monster plays, and everyone has a hand in that. But the play that really stands out was they had a rebound. It's maybe a minute and a half left. I'm a little bit fuzzy, but they had possession of the ball, and Roddy and one of our other wings went in and ripped it out. It looked like a rugby scrum and came out with the ball.

I thought that was just a play, a pivotal play where you just -- you give your fans belief, your team belief that we're going to make the toughest plays we need to to win, and we did.

I thought our guys sat down and guarded. We fouled down the stretch. We put them at the line too many times, but I thought overall we stayed the course.

Fortunately the last foul -- I don't say fortunately. But it fouled Rubin out, which allowed us to get organized and get past putting them at the line with five or six seconds left.

**Q. (Question about the glass in the first half)**

DUSTY MAY: Impressive. Throughout the game, 47-18. At half we had 50 percent of our misses back. I do think we did a better job in the first half of getting downhill, and we were cutting better off our penetration and driving the closeouts.

The second half we tried to feed it to 5 a little bit too much. Like I said going into the game, they're elite at keeping you from throwing it to the 5. They bait you into the floaters, they bait you into throwing it to 5. I thought we did a better job in the first half of breaking their defense down, which you get more second shots when that's the case.

**Q. Could you just talk to -- you lose to this team a little over a week ago, and obviously yesterday a big bounce back. Can you talk to the rejuvenation of this team in the past week?**

DUSTY MAY: Number one, we have a group that has great character, basketball character and life character. So obviously we were disappointed, but there were some circumstances that we weren't ready for -- the amount of games, the lack of practice. We basically tried to make sure we got to the games, and we weren't as crisp.

So we got knocked down a notch. Then our guys showed up the last week of practice with a reinvigorated mindset. As you guys are asking Tre this or that, all I'm thinking about is Tre is in there every day putting in the work. When you put in the work and believe in yourself and you have teammates and a staff that believes in you, I think good things typically happen more times than not.

It's a group that didn't waver with their conviction to work and stand together because our season is long. I mean, our season is long, and these guys are together a lot. And it's demanding physically and mentally. So for them to have the renewed energy, is, just once again, just shows what type of guys they are.

**Q. You mentioned the previous play was like a rugby scrum. The final play of Tre seemed like something out of a football playbook with him reading the screen from Vlad and getting downhill. How important was it for him to get downhill and put pressure at the rim that they weren't able to stop him, and he was able to get all the way to the rim?**

DUSTY MAY: He had a running start, and Tre was a five star football recruit. He was able to get downhill and use his speed and athleticism, but for him to knife back to his left hand and finish that, credit Maryland. They made him change directions.

Typically in that situation, if you make the guy change direction, you can maybe bring some help and just distort his reads and whatnot, but Tre made a great change of direction move, got past the guy, and had to finish over 6'10" at the rim. Didn't have to get to option 2 or 3. But like I said, just a great play by him. Good heads up by Vlad. Vlad had a clean catch and tossed it right back, so he had a head of steam.

That's really all we were trying to do was put it in Tre's hand with a head of steam, and he had a couple options and made the play.

**Q. You've got the mic there. Talk about these four teams that played here today and how close these games were and how important it is and how strong the Big Ten is.**

DUSTY MAY: I was talking about it with one of the coaches during the first game, and we were watching those two teams play. You forget, I woke up this morning, and I actually forgot who the other game was because you watched so much hoops, and you think for a second, wow, we haven't seen Wisconsin for a long time, but I've watched them on film because of mutual opponents.

The four teams playing here today, Michigan State, obviously, the year they had, the commitment those guys had to each other was impressive. Like I said, this season is long, and for those guys to get through their tough stretch and empower through it and finish the way they did was impressive.

Wisconsin, they've been around all year. Those guys, they've got really good players. Obviously it's a well-coached team. It's a great program and system and culture that they have established over the last 30 years or whatnot. So I couldn't have more respect or admiration for the team we're playing tomorrow. Hopefully we can bring our best effort and it can be another great college basketball game.

But this league's been a blast. Being here, the crowd, the energy, everyone around, the league's been incredible with everything just being laid out. We've had fun. Obviously when you're winning, it's a lot more fun.

It's been a great league season, 20 games. I don't know if any coach -- we might want to shrink that -- I'm joking. 20 games is a lot, but it's great for the sport, great for our guys to play in such meaningful games. We'll reflect on a lot more of that after the season.

**Q. You've been talking a lot recently about needing the offense to be more balanced again. It seems like that's been the case the last two days. What's the potential for this team when they are doing that?**

DUSTY MAY: We have three or four guys usually clicking on each night. We're going to find our stride and have all five to seven to eight really clicking on the same night. When we do that, we'll be incredibly dangerous. Right now we're going to the hot hand.

That was one of the keys, just let's go with what's working. In the first half, this was working. In the second half, this was working because Reese was in foul trouble and whatnot.

Credit our guys, it's not always the case that teams recognize in flow without the coach's joy stick and what's working and going to it and then leveraging that for something else, and our guys did that.

They continued to grow. Their communication, their camaraderie, it gets better and better. This time of year, that bodes well.

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