

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 13, 2025
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA
Spectrum Center

Stanford Cardinal
Kyle Smith
Maxime Raynaud
Oziah Sellers

Postgame Press Conference

Louisville 75, Stanford 73

KYLE SMITH: That was obviously a heartbreaking loss for us. But when you give your best, you can never be that disappointed. I felt like our guys really did give their best. Not everyone played their best, but to be on a back-to-back night against a ranked team that beat us five days earlier and for us to go up 15, and we had a lot of momentum and we're playing well and knew good teams with those guards are going to make a run, and we withheld it.

They took the lead, we came back, tied it up and actually got the stop to give ourselves a chance. We're probably going to overtime, but obviously, they made a heck of a play there at the end. I was trying to get a time-out, but it was probably too late.

Good win for them.

Q. Coach mentioned how not competitive this game, this matchup was five days ago. What changed today? What did you guys do better to make this such a tight game?

MAXIME RAYNAUD: Took care of the ball better, made shots, shot 30 percent from the field last time. This time we didn't. Also, when you're in a tournament where it's either you win or you go home, there's a little bit more to it, and on top of that, I believe our win from yesterday gave us some kind of good mojo.

Yeah, I think that's what was the major difference. Yeah.

OZIAH SELLERS: I feel the same way. Obviously, in



this situation, like Max said, it's win or go home. I feel like we all tried to give it our all. That last loss hurt us bad, so we tried to get them back today. We fell short, but it's all right. Keep going.

Q. You guys go down eight points after Maxime fouls out in the closing minutes and then tie it up. Can you talk about the resolve to get it back even.

MAXIME RAYNAUD: We go up 15 when I'm off the court at first, and then we go down eight when I fouled out, so I think they did an amazing job in the first part of this thing.

Obviously, we all learn from that, not foul out. That last screen is ridiculous. I shouldn't have done that.

But on top of that, we did go down, but I think that showed a ton of resilience from the guys, two plus one at the end. I believe Benny made a shot. Everybody made shots.

Yeah, it's a game of runs. We're up 15, they came back, we came back. That's what it is. That's what basketball is.

We're always trying to get as many kills as possible. A kill is three stops in a row. And I believe we did that at the very end, as part of the last possession. But it's part of the game, as well.

Q. This was your first year in the ACC; what did you learn your first year playing in this conference?

OZIAH SELLERS: For myself, I learned a lot. I mean, I could go on and on about things that I learned. Obviously, people try to say that we've got it hard, kind of dealing with the travel and stuff like that.

But we didn't really let that faze us, and we didn't even focus on the negative things or the negative things people said about us and stuff like that. We just tried to stay together. Before the season, nobody really believed in us and stuff like that. So we just tried to play with a chip on our shoulder every night.

Yeah, I learned a lot, and I'm proud of what we got done.



MAXIME RAYNAUD: Yeah, double down on what he says. Maturing, everybody, keeping the outside noise outside, learning how to take better care of your body when you have those long travels.

But Coach always said that's what we signed up for. We're happy to play in one of the best conferences in the country. Grateful to spend more and more time with the guys, even if that means we have longer plane rides.

We're in an amazing position. We're athletes, literally getting paid to do what we love. There is no reason for us to complain. And on top of that, these kind of games against top ranked teams in the country definitely teach us how to be better basketball players, better teammates and better competitors.

Q. For both the players, just tell me what you saw on that final shot when Chucky got the steal. Obviously, Maxime, you're looking from the bench, and Oziyah, from the court. What did you guys see on that play?

OZIYAH SELLERS: For myself, I was guarding the top of the key the first initial shot. So I was just thinking not to foul and get a high hand and a great contest.

Then I just seen, obviously, Chucky get the rebound and shoot that shot. Yeah, that's what I seen.

Q. This is the end of the road for you guys here in Charlotte, but you might have the opportunity to play more basketball in the tournament. What would that mean for you guys to continue your season?

MAXIME RAYNAUD: Once again, I think Oziyah is going to be a little bit different, but for me, it's just continue this legacy I've had for four years at Stanford. It's our first 20 season win since I've been here, trying and extend it a little bit, and set the foundation for what is to come for all the juniors, sophomores and freshmen. Obviously, for Coach Smith, for the entire staff, for the university as a whole.

And once again, we're competitors. We love what we do. If we can play as much basketball as you can with your boys and go on the road or do it at home, it's always a blessing. I hope we all can embrace it the right way.

OZIYAH SELLERS: Yeah, for myself, I feel the same way. No matter how many games or what tournament we're playing in next, if we've got another game, we're going to come back and give it our all. No matter where we're playing, we're going to do the same thing we do every night, come out and compete.

Q. What did you see on that final shot? You

mentioned you were trying to call a time-out. Did you think you guys had it possessed long enough for that?

KYLE SMITH: I just saw what was -- I thought Chisom a big time play will. Or they got both hands on a rebound. I could see there was traffic, and I was just thinking, stop the play. There was time, and I think Chisom was trying to -- I haven't seen it yet. I have no idea. But a guy made a shot. Pretty impressive.

Q. Coach, your defensive effort, particularly in the first half, you held them for a long stretch without points, number of steals. Can you talk about the activity they came out with today?

KYLE SMITH: It was great. I thought, like I said, we did a good job, back up on my Bay Area guy, actually we did compete pretty well last time, five days ago. They were a lot better than us. But we actually did some things that we pulled out of this game that gave us a little confidence this game. We were bad offensively, really bad at their place, and that had a lot to do with them. But our defense, we had them discombobulated a little bit, but they were relentless and it was hard to stay there with them.

But we turned them over some. We had them mixed up a little bit, and eventually they just started driving us one-on-one a little in the middle of the floor and we couldn't quite sustain it.

Q. It was your first year at Stanford, Stanford's first year in the ACC. What were your thoughts on your first year at both?

KYLE SMITH: I love it. It's a basketball-first conference. Can I say that? I know football is a big deal. But just the atmospheres, even how much people care about the ACC Tournament, this being the original. Just an honor to be associated with it, and some of the venues we played in.

It's been -- I told our guys, we get to do this. It's awesome. We get to be a part of this. I also described them as astronauts. We're kind of the first ones out here, journeying into space and figuring this thing out, and I'm sure there will be things that we'll take away that -- practices we'll do better.

Everyone makes a big deal about how our record in the eastern time zone. We played well tonight. I don't think it's as big a deal as they make it out to be. It's pretty fun.

Q. You heard Maxime mention the run your team went on when he was on the bench initially. How big a factor was the foul trouble that he got in, the third one early?

KYLE SMITH: It was big. It was big. Then he was playing a little tentatively there. In like a big play, he drove baseline twice. I thought once he got fouled, but no call and they turned and converted and the other time he tried to shoot a floater because they were trying to take a charge. I said, that's okay.

If you leave your feet, it's a harder -- our guys still haven't adjusted. It's hard to take a charge if you're making a hard because you've got to have your feet planted before the upward motion, or something like that. I'm not a good official. Actually, I think I'm a good official. They just changed that rule. I'm not certain about it.

But I wanted him to play fearlessly in that situation. But credit -- like I said, for Oziyah, Ryan, Aidan, who I thought played really well in a big-time game, hopefully, all those guys are back. I feel good about the experience they've had, and for them to play in that, hopefully that's something they grow with, and hopefully we get to play more after this.

Q. Could you speak to what makes Chucky Hepburn and Terrence Edwards such a dangerous duo in the backcourt?

KYLE SMITH: Well, we call it six cool tool players. They can dribble, pass, drive, shoot, defend, rebound. Did they rebound? Not really. Five and a half.

They're really well-rounded players, three-level scorers. They can really shoot it, and they can really bounce it. They can pass it. I think they both will be playing long after Louisville. Good players.

Q. You talked about how much you've enjoyed the ACC. Do you get a sense what your fans' love of embracing the brand is? You guys came east to play some of the biggest names in the ACC. They'll be coming your way next year. Is there an excitement level for that?

KYLE SMITH: I think so. I felt we had good turnouts like the first weekend we had students in, Virginia and Virginia Tech, and I thought those were good crowds, too, so I think there is a level of excitement.

To find high major basketball on the West Coast, you have to live in LA or the Pacific Northwest, Eugene or Seattle. I think there will be, and obviously, those teams coming out -- I'm 55, but I've got a chance -- our practice, we didn't play well at Duke, but we had Coach K at our practice, so I might have been a little distracted. That was a pretty big-time deal.

Q. Coach, Sellers went 4 for 6 from beyond the arc. How did you like his ability to shoot from three-point range throughout the tournament?

KYLE SMITH: I can't remember what he did last night, but I love any time he gets an open look. He's got the greenest of green lights. His last one he hit, it was a no-no. He puts his time into his craft. He's getting better. It was a good opportunity for him -- it's a guy I've known since eighth grade. He's a Bay Area kid, competed again him at SC where he was a fourth or fifth perimeter guy, and I kind of believed that he had something to prosper.

And to see him go from a guy that played maybe 12, 13 minutes a game in the Pac-12, to be able to play 30-plus minutes and a guy we count on every night, he's worked hard to put himself in position and really took advantage of it, and we couldn't be more happy to have him at Stanford.

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