

NCAA Men's Frozen Four: Minnesota State vs Denver

Friday, April 8, 2022

Boston, Massachusetts, USA

TD Garden

Denver Pioneers

David Carle

Cameron Wright

Brett Stapley

Bobby Brink

Finals Media Conference



CAMERON WRIGHT: Went to dinner a couple times. Went to lunch the other day.

THE MODERATOR: Any suggestions?

BRETT STAPLEY: Zuma Sushi is really good (smiling).

Q. For any of the players, you had a long time to prepare for yesterday's game. Now you only have, what, 36 hours to prep for a team that plays a pretty different game from your last opponent. How do you snap in, dial in, prepare for a new opponent in such a short period of time?

CAMERON WRIGHT: Yeah, I think one thing that helps is our regional. They play so much similar to Lowell and Duluth. That's a good starting point for us.

I think just playing our game. We've kind of been successful quite a bit this year. So just continue to do that and hope we can get the job done.

Q. Cam, how would you describe Carter Mazur on and off the ice?

CAMERON WRIGHT: He's a good dude. He's a really good guy off the ice. He works hard on the ice. He's a hell of a player. He is fun to play with a lot. Excited to see his future, play one more game with thi, then I can't wait to watch him.

THE MODERATOR: Brett, you must have something to add with that smile?

BRETT STAPLEY: I was just looking at him outside of the room (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: Maybe he wants to come in and defend himself (laughter).

Q. David, can you talk about how this team has adjusted to the different styles you've had to play from day one basically, how proud you are they've adjusted that way?

THE MODERATOR: Who would like to begin the proceedings here?

Q. Brett, this is what you've been working for all year. What is the attitude now? You're going to be going against a pretty darn good goalie.

BRETT STAPLEY: Yeah, he's been amazing for us. Super proud of this group. We're really looking forward to Saturday night.

Q. The goalie you're facing?

BRETT STAPLEY: Yeah, he's a terrific goalie. They're going to have to get to the net hard and penetrate inside the dots.

Q. Cam, you and I have talked about raising the big trophy. One game away. Your thoughts right now?

CAMERON WRIGHT: Yeah, just looking forward to tomorrow night, coming out hard, playing the right way. Yeah, like you said, one game left, and hopefully we can get it done.

Q. For any of the players, have you done any exploring around Boston? How have you spent your free time?

BOBBY BRINK: We haven't really had a lot of free time. I haven't seen a thing besides on the bus (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Nothing else, guys? Haven't been on the T?



DAVID CARLE: Yeah, I think they've shown the ability to do that obviously to a really high level. Cam kind of hit the nail on the head, too: we have our own way of playing the game. I think it's adaptable to any style we go against. We're comfortable in a lot of different types of games.

That's a credit to the players and their ability to stick to our game plans and stick to our structure and be able to execute in different ways based on what the game's calling.

Q. Bobby, can you walk us through the pass you made yesterday. You obviously had a tough game yesterday. How do you get over the emotional high of that and stay grounded?

BOBBY BRINK: Yeah, I just got a puck with some time. I just saw Sav kind of working his way from the weak side of the ice to the front of the net. Had to hold the puck for a bit to let him get there. Got him the puck, he made a great finish.

I think it's not too hard to rebound. We're used to it. We've played in a lot of tough, big games this year. I think right after the game you just mentally shift to the next one, focus right on Minnesota State because that is the biggest game of the year.

Q. Bob, you have a pretty big game tomorrow. A little work thing today. Where is your mind at, how do you deal with all that?

BOBBY BRINK: My mind is on the game tomorrow. That's why we're here. We're here to win a national championship. It's such a special thing. Every one of us want to make a mark on this program. We have such high standards here at Denver. To do that you have to win the national championship. That's what we're focused on.

Q. David, when we look at the defense of this team, Mike Hastings said his biggest concern is your transition. What is it about your transition game that makes you successful?

DAVID CARLE: I think it's predictable and fast. Our D don't hang on to the puck too long. I think our forwards like to get the puck quicker so they can have the puck, have the ability to do what they do, attacking off the rush or getting pucks in behind defensive opponents.

It allows our team to play fast and make our opponents uncomfortable.

Q. David, what elements has Carter Mazur brought to

the team this year?

DAVID CARLE: Given he's standing back there listening (smiling). No, he's added a lot. We're really fortunate to get him. He's added a ton of value on and off the ice. Plays the game the right way. He gets to dirty areas, finishing checks, but has a skill set to him that he can make plays, score goals, set teammates up. Does a lot of little things right.

Their line has been exceptional all year. Him, Rizzo and the guy next to me have really been together from day one, have found chemistry. I think Cam has done a great job taking the two freshmen under his wing. They've maybe made him a little younger as well.

They found great chemistry from day one. It's been a really fun group to watch them grow and develop. I think they're playing their best hockey as a line at the most important time of the year.

Q. Saturday is going to be a long day when you're on the road, have a late game. When you're playing a championship game, might be a little bit more. How do you bridge that? What do you do to try to keep things as normal and kill time till you get on the ice?

DAVID CARLE: First thing's first. The NCAA and the building are letting us push our pregame skates back. The time between the pregame skate and the game is a little bit more regular for both teams, so that is really helpful. I think it allows the guys to stick to their routines.

It's the last game of the year. I don't really worry about that too much. The guys are going to be excited and ready to go. They've worked so hard for each other all year to get to this moment. I know they're going to be fired up come Saturday night.

THE MODERATOR: We're definitely going to play at 8. Guys, if you could pick, what would be your optimal start time?

BOBBY BRINK: I'm not really sure. Probably 7.

BRETT STAPLEY: Yeah, 7 p.m.

THE MODERATOR: Cam, are you 7, too?

CAMERON WRIGHT: Sure, I'll go 7 (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: David?

DAVID CARLE: I'll go with our players (smiling).



Q. You mentioned going out to eat. Denver is a long way from an ocean. Do you come out here and get lobster rolls, any of the good New England seafood? Does the pregame routine change at all because you're in Boston?

CAMERON WRIGHT: Yeah, for sure. We had some fish the last few days. Like Stapes said, we had sushi the other day. Definitely enjoying the seafood. Denver has some good seafood, too, surprisingly.

THE MODERATOR: Where at?

DAVID CARLE: Sushi Den. One of the best sushi places in the country. Paul Kariya says so. He's from BC.

Q. David, the transfer market, the way transfers have impacted the game, been more so than ever this year. Can you expand upon how you believe it's impacted your program?

DAVID CARLE: Yeah, I mean, it's obviously a real changing landscape in college hockey. I think hopefully in the long-term it's put in place for the betterment of the players. I think that's really important.

Obviously the rule comes in at the same year the extra COVID year comes in. I think that's obviously very much warranted for all the players, an exciting opportunity for them because they're the ones who really lived through the strains and struggles of COVID during what is supposed to be the best four years of their lives.

I'm really happy the NCAA did that for all student-athletes.

Obviously Cam has impacted our program in a big-time way. I've spoken a lot about it, how he's implemented himself, jumping two feet in, to what we have going on there. It's been honest and transparent from our first recruiting call with him. Give him all the credit in the world. It's not easy for him to come into a new environment, system, adjust to new linemates, teammates, new style of play.

I think he's done a great job. I think our team has accepted him very early on as well, made the transition really smooth. You're seeing the benefits of all of that on the ice with what he's doing, what the line is doing.

THE MODERATOR: Cam?

CAMERON WRIGHT: I would agree with D.C. When NCAA gave us that extra year of eligibility, I think it was a no-brainer when you talked to D.C. and the coaching staff to come, obviously to be able to play in games like this, to

be able to play for the national championship.

Like D.C. said, the teammates and coaching staff have from day one given me an opportunity and accepted me. I'm very grateful for that. It's definitely something that I recommend to guys if they have the opportunity to do it. Obviously, like I said, we're playing for a national championship here. It worked out well for me.

Q. Cam, how is it different from being a freshman at Bowling Green? For coach, how is it different integrating those guys?

CAMERON WRIGHT: I think it's different but it's similar, right? Along with the freshmen, you're a new guy on the block. It's just kind of coming in, letting the leaders lead, learning from them how this program runs.

I did have some experience coming in, so I think they appreciated that as well. Just stepping in two feet, kind of going with the flow, knowing that they recruited me here to come for a reason. That was kind of my thought, just keep going.

Q. David, on that topic, what are the challenges for a coach in the transfer era to assemble a roster and keep it together for more than a year?

DAVID CARLE: I don't know. We're kind of getting off topic. I'd rather just focus on the game and the Frozen Four here if that's okay.

Q. David, can you give me your scouting report on Minnesota State? You talked about what your team does in transition well. They seem to do pretty well stopping on the defensive end.

DAVID CARLE: Yeah, I mean, they're in this game for a reason, too. There's not a lot of weaknesses just like there wasn't in Minnesota or Michigan, really a lot of the tournament teams. We played three really good teams thus far. This will be the fourth one.

I agree with Cam, I think there's some similarities with the level that they defend at with Lowell and Duluth. We've had success against those teams doing things a certain way. I think that's a great experience that we have coming into the game tomorrow night.

Coach Hastings and their staff and players, they've obviously built something really special that we respect and are excited for the challenge to play them for a banner and a big trophy come tomorrow night.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

