

2022 NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship

Saturday, May 28, 2022

East Hartford, Connecticut, USA

Rentschler Field

Princeton Tigers

Matt Madalon

George Baughan

Erik Peters

Media Conference



the world in each other and just the next play, and I think that kind of mentality let us get back in the game and keep going.

Q. For both players, just talk about this ride to the Final Four and what things will stand out when you look back on the spring?

GEORGE BAUGHAN: I think one of the biggest things for us was those two games we lost to Harvard and Cornell. We came back, and we called it upgrade season. The coaches did a great job of getting us prepared. Coming back and just playing with a newfound intensity and physicality and just trusting that even though we lost those two games you're going to come back and make a run. That's something I look back on and just something really special.

ERIK PETERS: Yeah, there's a lot of little moments, between little things our strength coach did the day before to get us fired up or an injured guy putting up posters in every person's locker before our first game. Things like that I'll look back to, will never forget. Just the support staff, the guys from the last guy on the depth chart to the first one were so bought in. It was incredible.

Q. Did the delay of the game do anything for your preparation, take anything away or add any anxiety to what happened today?

ERIK PETERS: No. I mean, I think again, it was just kind of another roll-with-the-punches kind of thing. After going through a pandemic, you kind of expect anything can happen, and that's something I think kind of toughened our crew up and made us more ready to face any adversity, big or small.

Q. When they got the three-minute non-releasable, you get the one quick goal and weren't able to get anything more. Was that a pivotal moment for you guys where you weren't able to tack on at that stage?

MATT MADALON: I think obviously very fortunate they ended up calling that three-minute and locking it in, kind of gave us an opportunity to claw back in it. Field was kind of

Maryland 13, Princeton 8

MATT MADALON: Credit to an outstanding Maryland team. Capitalized on every mistake we made. Heck of a team. Very well coached. But very, very proud of obviously these two men sitting next to me, our senior class group that brought us back to this weekend. Very proud for our program.

Obviously didn't work out the way we wanted, but very happy to be here.

Q. George, so much of the momentum you guys had created in 2020 could have been stunted by the pandemic. So many guys took the year off and then came back. Do you feel like you have put Princeton lacrosse sort of back on that national stage now?

GEORGE BAUGHAN: Yeah, I'd like to think so. Just so proud of these guys. We fought through all the adversity with the pandemic, and it's just a credit to our staff. All of our upperclassmen, everyone staying together finding a way to get it done. When we came back in September we just committed to it, believed in each other. We were unranked. To come out and finish at the Final Four I'd say is a success.

Q. The way the first quarter unfolded, you guys have dealt with them before. What was different this time, kind of them pouncing quick, and how did you feel like you were able to recover and stay in it for quite a while longer?

ERIK PETERS: I think like you mentioned, we've kind of been there before, been through a lot of up and downs, been all over the place this season. We had all the trust in



tilted at that point towards the Terps' way. So we were able to punch one in, get a little momentum, a little slow out of the start and then we ended up taking it into the third quarter to avoid the face-off battle, start with possessions, see if we'd get something going. Defense did a great job, changed the shutoff, floating shut, so very well-coached team.

Q. You guys were real slow to slide today. Was that the goal, to try and take away the ball movement and just force the Terps to beat you guys one-on-one?

MATT MADALON: You know, I do think so. I think we try to be multiple in our defensive packages. We did start a little slow. It is an outstanding ball movement team. I don't know if they're the No. 1 assist team in the country, but if not, they're up there.

Definitely one of their strengths. Trying to limit their strengths all day, so yeah, you're spot on. We were a little slow to slide early, a little sloppy in some of our defensive decisions early on. They really make you pay for your mistakes.

Q. Coming off the pandemic year and then really not having a season like that, did you feel like you were almost starting over in a way?

MATT MADALON: Yeah, we kind of thought we had it all figured out. We sat there as fans for a year, and I don't know if it's -- it's always challenging when you're watching lacrosse to just be a fan in my seat. I think we're always trying to study the game. I think as coaches we took an opportunity to figure it all out. We thought we had it figured out. Kind of rolled into the fall, played some fall scrimmages, realized we did not have it figured out. We were still kind of moving our pieces around. Even early in the spring moving pieces around.

I don't think we had a consistent lineup defensively all year. I think we really did move guys in and out. We had injuries here or there. Credit to our guys, our coaches preparing our depth guys. They did a really nice job.

Q. Obviously this one stings, but you have a ton to be proud of this season. Just building off of this, how hopeful are you for the future of Princeton lacrosse and just getting back to championship weekend, what did this whole experience mean to your team?

MATT MADALON: Very hopeful. I was fortunate enough, again, and this has nothing to do with me, I don't want to make it about me, but fortunate enough to have this experience as a player and saw just how it impacted when that next team returned, the expectations, the standards,

the ability to understand how to truly practice and really not -- you can't really waste days, can't really make those mistakes.

Hopefully it does. Hopefully the toughness and the leadership of this senior class that carried us for this opportunity to this weekend will really have a lasting impact on the program, and I think it will. I think it does burn for those young guys, all those young guys walking off the field throwing the coaches' pounce, like, hey, Coach, we'll get you back; we'll be back here.

So I think it's just that experience has got to pay dividends moving forward.

Q. What was the experience like for you as a coach? You talked about the memories you had as a player, but what was it like from this perspective?

MATT MADALON: It was wonderful. To the guys to the left and right of me, Coach Jim Mitchell, Coach Jeremy Hirsch, our director of operations Drew Cottrell, strength coach Mark Ellisman, our equipment guy Derek, our trainer George O'Neil, it's an incredible crew. For everyone to have this experience, I think it'll continue to drive us forward, just trying to earn this opportunity for our guys again.

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