

2022 DIV II NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship

Sunday, May 29, 2022

East Hartford, Connecticut, USA

Rentschler Field

Mercy College Mavericks

Jordan Levine

Brady Kearnan

Jack Kipnes

Media Conference



kind of just -- I don't know, took the wind out of our sails a lot.

Q. Echoing what Jordan just said, this team, for both Jack and Brady, what made this team special and what are you going to reflect on from the season as time passes on?

JACK KIPNES: What made the team special was the guys in the locker room. It's just from the fall until now, that group has been together every single day, it's battled every single day, and it's a group of guys who the majority that was here last year when we had COVID cut our legs from under us, so understood what that moment was and had that appreciation what it was to step on the field every day. These are guys that spend every moment together, do everything together and truly have a deep love for one another. You could tell throughout that game with all the ebbs and flows, they went on their runs, we went on our ours, the unit stuck together and we stayed as a group, and that just comes from a love between teammates and this group has an incredible bond that regardless of that result, this team will always be connected to each other.

BRADY KEARNAN: Yeah, I don't really have words for it because once you're on a college lacrosse team, stuff like that, you start assuming a family and you start falling in love with the guys you're playing with.

I mean, I don't really know what to say. Just I think for me personally, just going to miss a lot of my friends. Yeah, it's just a good group.

Q. Coach, that second quarter they went on a 6-0 run. Just what changed?

JORDAN LEVINE: Man, 1-1, we come out, win the face-off with possession, and then there's some -- they caused some transfers. They turned us over, and they're great in transition and they made plays. 2-1, and then we got an untimely foul. They're a great team, so they capitalized on some of our mistakes, on our turnover and our penalty and before you know it, it's up 3-1.

We struggled to get in a rhythm at the face-off X in the

Tampa 11, Mercy 7

JORDAN LEVINE: Proud of their effort. Obviously we're disappointed with the result, but I don't know how you can't look back and just be proud of their effort all season. Close games fighting, and I told the guys in the locker room, more important than anything, it's kind of our mantra, is you do two things well, you work hard and you do the right thing always. And I think that's the true measure of a man and a team, and I think these guys really are great examples of what you want in a student-athlete and a person. They're just good people and they work hard, and I'm sad the way -- I'm sad about the result, but I'm really happy and proud of how they represent our team and our program and getting to our first ever National Championship.

There's a lot these guys should be proud of. It's tough in the moment right now, but there's no way to deny that. I'm proud to be their coach.

Q. Brady, you had a slick fake there and then cross crease pass to cut the deficit to three in that third quarter. How much of a blow was that two-minute non-releasable to your comeback efforts?

BRADY KEARNAN: I think it was kind of tough because you start feeling it and you start feeling like it's possible, and you look up at the clock and it's three goals, like okay, well, this is it. Like we just score the next goal then it's pretty easy to get two more on a run. When that two-minute non-releasable happened it kind of took the wind out of our sails and we kept climbing uphill, kept climbing uphill, and this game just felt like the hill kept getting bigger and bigger and every little step we took, we would look up and it would get longer and longer, and it

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second quarter. I thought their offense got really comfortable where I think I called a time-out at one point and we hadn't had a possession yet.

They were dominating possessions, capitalizing on our mistakes, and obviously a great team is going to do that, and I think that was the difference in that second quarter.

Q. Coach, Brady mentioned it. Having said that, second quarter there was a fight back from your team. How proud are you of the way your team responded, and what ultimately do you think kind of prevented you guys from getting to that point where you were able to get it really close?

JORDAN LEVINE: Yeah, I'm proud. I mean, obviously Tampa is a great team. I think -- I don't remember the score exactly, but they won their Final Four game -- you know better than me, they were up 17-2 after the third quarter. That speaks to the type of team they are.

I think -- I've said this a couple times, and I don't mean it as like a slight to our guys or anything like that, we don't just go out there and out-talent teams. If you look at our scores, we play a lot of close games. I don't know anything else to attribute it to other than, yeah, we have talent, but we've got guys that just don't quit, and they're relentless and complete defensively on the ride, offensively just coming at you in waves.

I think that was on display today. We held the Tampa team to 11 goals, and they are great defensively. I think they had three first-team All-Americans on defense, and we had our struggles, especially when we weren't winning draws in that second quarter, but I thought PJ Argiros did a great job in that third quarter getting us possessions and helping us close that gap.

But some of the mistakes that we made and just their ability really created and made it tough for us. But yeah, like to your point, I'm proud because I know the type of character that we have in our locker room and down 7-1 I knew that it wasn't going to be a runaway 17-2 type of score and I knew our guys would have resiliency and fight back and make it a game, and they did.

Q. What are you personally going to take from this season, being the first time in the National Championship game? What are you going to reflect on for yourself as you go forward and look at the season?

JORDAN LEVINE: It was a great atmosphere playing here today. I mean, you don't play in an atmosphere like this often, and the crowd noise and echoing calls. That's something if we are fortunate enough to get back here, we

work on that with the crowd noise a little bit.

I don't know, it was so great to see -- even right behind our bench, so I've been here since our first year of the program existed in 2010, and we had so many of our alumni from that first team, and I don't know -- looking back then if they ever thought this was a possibility, and they were just blue-collar, hardworking guys, and that really built the foundation and enabled us to take the steps that we've taken.

I don't know, as a coach, it's just a great feeling to be able to share those moments, and we had some great moments along the way. Honestly, when you get into the Playoffs, I guess the biggest thing I'll take away, you need that grit and that resiliency and then the guys' ability to make plays under pressure. If you look at through all of our playoff games against Seton Hall and Le Moyne, those could have went either way. You appreciate the opportunities that you get in getting here because you don't know how often they'll come. But I think it's just looking back and feeling disappointed in the moment.

But really proud of what these guys accomplished because I don't think there was many people that thought that mercy college is going to be playing for a National Championship, and they proved people wrong, and they fought until the end. Just a big sense of pride.

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