

2022 NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship

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East Hartford, Connecticut, USA

Rentschler Field

Maryland Terrapins

John Tillman

Anthony DeMaio

Logan McNaney

Media Conference



your goals again. What did you find? Is that what Benson talked about in the time-out, about that pass across the middle?

ANTHONY DEMAIO: I mean, Coach always does a great job preparing us. I think that's just settling down, getting into a rhythm of the game. In the second half we obviously struggled, but just sticking together the whole time. We've got six guys, it can be anyone at any point, and that's just the selflessness of this team, and that's kind of how we got here, and we fell back on that in the first and second quarter, and I think that's what led us.

Q. Anthony, you've kind of been emphasizing it seems every time that we've talked to you after a game, just job is not finished. Now that the job is finished, just how does it feel?

ANTHONY DEMAIO: I mean, it feels great. Obviously being there in 2017 and having that feeling and then just seeing the guys, all 48 guys around me and seeing the smiles on their faces, the coaches, there's so many guys that made so many sacrifices this year and did so many great things for this team, whether they were playing or not, there's so many things behind closed doors that guys are doing, and just to see the smiles on everyone's faces. It's a moment that no one can ever take back from you, and that's what makes me go every day.

Q. Logan, I just have to know, how close were you to shooting that ball?

LOGAN McNANEY: Pretty close. I saw the Cornell goalie, Chayse Ierlan, he was kind of playing a man and a half with the goal, so I tossed it over to Matt Rahill, who scored a goal earlier this season against Virginia. I thought he was going to do the same thing. It worked out in the end.

Q. Logan, how does the dream of winning a National Championship compare to the reality right now?

LOGAN McNANEY: Yeah, growing up, I'm sure I could speak for all the guys on the team, even the coaches --

JOHN TILLMAN: Growing up where?

Maryland 9, Cornell 7

JOHN TILLMAN: I think first thing, I think I'd be remiss not giving a shout-out to Cornell and the Cornell lacrosse program. By far the hardest game we had all year. Just represented their school, the alums so well today. A lot to be proud of. I've been in that locker room. It's really hard. There's a lot of tears.

But man, just nothing but respect for them, that coaching staff, those players. So hard in this moment but so much to be proud of, great tradition, and obviously they just continue to extend that tradition year after year. Bright future for them.

In terms of our guys, having been in that type of locker room and not seeing the success, to see our guys smiling at the end, especially given where we were 365 days ago, just so happy for them. This team, like probably the best word to describe them is selfless, so many guys that were willing to do whatever to kind of get us a chance to get back here with no guarantee, so many guys that have made sacrifices, including these two guys, and I could go down through all 48 guys, and each guy, just rattle off so many things they've done.

Proud of them. Today we expected to be hard, and obviously built a little bit of a cushion and kind of hung on. I'm not sure what would have happened if there was another quarter. But again, just kind of grinded it out, which these guys have done when they needed to, but just proud of them. I love them. Just happy for our state, our school, and our program and our alums.

Q. Anthony, slow offensive start for the team, and then all of a sudden it was boom, boom, boom with



LOGAN McNANEY: Corning, New York, baby.

Growing up, going to some of the Final Four tournaments, watching it on TV, playing at camps, like reenacting, scoring the game winning goal for the National Championship. Turned out I played goalie, but just growing up and seeing all the other teams do what they did and then going out there and doing it ourselves is pretty special to me.

Q. Logan, 19 saves on Saturday, 17 today. What is it about championship weekend that helps you to see the ball so well?

LOGAN McNANEY: Yeah, I think I go into every game with the same mentality. Try not to get too riled up, stay calm. But I knew going into the weekend that it was going to be challenging for the rest of the guys on the team with the heat and everything, the hydration and all that, playing two games in three days. We practiced that throughout the season.

Just knew I had to come in, see ball, save ball.

Q. Throughout the year, especially towards the end of the year, you begin to hear murmurs like could this team be one of the best ever. Now that the journey is over, I'm curious, do you think that this team is one of the best ever?

JOHN TILLMAN: I'm not touching that one. (Laughter.)

ANTHONY DEMAIO: I mean, there's been so many great teams over the years. I think what we did was just focus on getting better day by day, not kind of worried about that, not looking at all the social media stuff, and just focusing on us.

We had this end goal in mind, but it was taking it day by day. Whether people want to say we're the best team ever or not, we're national champions, and that's all that matters.

Q. Logan, when you kind of look at the way Cornell spins the ball around, they're one of the better teams in the country, maybe almost as good as you guys. What did you guys do defensively to kind of stymie them and bottle them up for the first 45 minutes or so?

LOGAN McNANEY: Overcommunication. We knew going into the game we had a solid game plan. We knew their guys were very capable of moving the ball around, dodging our shorties, our long sticks, but we knew that they were going to spin the ball around, cut, move around, kind of

make us turn our heads a little bit, slide. But we had a good game plan going into it.

Q. Can you just talk about the challenge that it was trying to go the entire season undefeated?

ANTHONY DEMAIO: Yeah, I mean, obviously when you lose a game, you have to look back and look at more things, but I think that our coaches and training staff, all the social media people, everyone does a great job of looking back at the game and making adjustments. We didn't play a perfect game the whole season, and at times you would feel like we did lose, and that's what made this team so good is just holding ourselves to higher standards at all times, no matter what the score was, how much we won by. It was always just making the next play. We could always do something better, and that's kind of what this team was.

Q. Anthony, any doubt creep in at the end there, held scoreless for nearly 27 minutes at the end? Seemed like you guys ran out of gas a little bit.

ANTHONY DEMAIO: Personally I did not have any doubt. I know Brett and those D guys, Logan, the backbone of that defense, I knew that they were going to come up with stops. Yeah, we were gassed, but we had so much faith in them. I've seen those guys in the weight room and everything that they've invested, the 5:00 a.m. wake-ups and everything that they do, I knew we were going to dig in and get stops, and we just had to give them a little bit of break on offense, but defense did a great job all day long.

Q. Anthony, you've been here a while. I think you were here for the 2017, and you've been here about half the time Coach Tillman has been here. Can you talk about what Maryland lacrosse has meant to you over the past six years?

ANTHONY DEMAIO: It means the world to me. From Matt Rambo, Colin Heacock, Connor Kelly, all those guys, each year you learn something new and taking those lessons and going on to later in life and using those lessons. I mean, the biggest thing we preach is be the best, and that's just more than on the field.

I mean, Coach Tillman and all the coaches have taught me so many lessons off the field. Probably honestly more lessons off the field and how to hold myself to a higher standard than on the field. Obviously that resembles some things on the field, but this program means the world to me. I love Maryland lacrosse, and that'll never go anywhere.

Q. Coach, I texted you a few times, and it was so



surreal today for me and for Maryland fans, we were here last year, the same day, and it was like a repeat, and it was almost like, if I could be a little divine, you were tested last year; how much did that motivate the team this year, and did you ever feel like this was not redemption but something meant to be?

JOHN TILLMAN: I think the guys, the way things went down last year, man, it was a gut punch. And hats off to Virginia, worthy champion, heck of a game. But just knowing especially last year, every year the kids give so much, but last year with COVID was so hard.

Our kids were testing like eight times a week. They didn't go out. They didn't see their families. Like they didn't see their parents and give them a hug at tailgates. The emotional ending just like all of a sudden getting that gut punch was like triple what it normally would be because on a typical year, on a Saturday, like the kids can go home if they want, see their friends. These guys gave up so much, and to come up short, it was like just such a kick.

You know how hard COVID was for everybody.

You kind of walk away going, all right, no more Nick Grill, no more Jared, and as a coach I always feel like I should have done different things, I didn't do enough for them. When you lose it's always the coach's fault.

But then you didn't know like would Anthony come back, would Bubba come back. So there were just a lot of things you had to think about.

I've been in that locker room on both sides now. It's hard when you lose because the journey is so long, and the kids invest so much, and these guys -- Anthony said it, you could go down through our whole team, there's so many guys that you don't know their names, but our guys love them. Like guys are playing with their opposite hand in the goal, guys are like on the scout team trying to be the other team for the week, and watching film on the other guys and mimicking them. There's so many guys that made sacrifices.

So many people on my staff, my boss is here, so Libby, I have to give her a big shout-out, President Pines and Damon and our staff, they're awesome. They do so much for us behind the scenes. Anthony, our trainer. We didn't know if Roman was going to play today.

You get to the Final Four weekend, and all of a sudden Jack Koras pulls his hamstring and then Roman gets hurt and Brett gets hurt, and in two days, as part of the luck of the draw, we don't really do this very often, we do it for the Final Four, if you lose some guys late you're just not the

same team. Luckily we got those guys there.

I don't know if it would be redemption per se, but I do think when the guys came back, they were laser focused. Obviously would be remiss if I didn't mention some of the guys that did come. Jon Donville, I mean, both of us are Cornell alums, so it was like we're standing there last week in Ohio State and like we're just watching Cornell play, and he's looking at me, he's like, you know they're going to win and we're going to have to play them at some point; you know that's going to happen. I go, well, we don't know if that's going to happen. But he's like, oh, yeah, I can feel it. And he was right. So for Jon, who chose Maryland before I had even contacted him, he's super smart, we have an awesome communications graduate program, and it was exactly what he wanted.

We kind of lucked out there because our university is so great that he chose us for the program more than anything else.

Then obviously Owen Prybylski and Keegan Khan, two like 3.6 students from Villanova that decided to go to the Smith Business School because it's such a good program, to get three key veteran guys, I thought those were huge, because not knowing if Bubba and Anthony would come back, we felt like that would buffer it, and losing Jared. And then for all those guys to come back, we needed all of it today.

I don't know if it's redemption per se. I just saw so many kids happy. I saw our parents happy, our administration, our fans, our school, like all those people happy, and it's worth all the sacrifices that you make just because you love to see the tears -- the tears of joy, not the tears of pain, and the tears of pain are pretty tough.

Q. When will you sit back and evaluate this team's place in history? And if you get back here next year for the Final Four, will you lobby not to play in that second game?

JOHN TILLMAN: I mean, it's like, the people who know me behind the scenes, like I try not to say much in public, so I just keep my mouth shut, but I do ask some of those questions, like are we really going back to the Midwest to play an ACC team? Are we really playing the last game out and we can't get a flight out, because we got back at like 3:00 a.m. on Sunday night, and literally I'm in the front seat next to our bus driver, it's like 1:30, and this light goes off, and it's like, beep, beep, beep, I'm like, oh, my God, there's a problem with the bus, it's 1:30 and we're in the middle of nowhere, and Brian, our bus driver, says, I've got to stop, this thing is red. And I'm like, Oh, my God, we could be here for another four hours, and all anybody

wanted to do was go home.

That started the week, and we knew we had to leave Thursday. So it was a long week.

But I think everything happened so fast right now. It's hard to think about anything other than what's going on now. I didn't sleep a whole lot the last two nights just trying to pore through film and deal with all the stuff. Probably not the clearest of thinking right now, but just more than anything else, just kind of relief, and so happy for our guys.

I'll let the other people kind of think about where we are. All we want to do is be the best version of ourselves. If we were going to do that, let the chips fall where they may. It was enough.

But man, to do it with so many great kids and so many selfless kids and just didn't have to worry about like guys not going to class. Like if there were any issues with that, our leadership took care of it. Not having social problems, guys like having an awesome GPA, like kids at the hotel, like our guys taking the time to take pictures with them, things like that, making a positive impact in our community, to do it and do it the right way to me is everything, because if we're just winning games but we're not doing things right and we're not representing the school the right way, I just don't want to do it.

Luckily these kids did it in all three phases, and again, you've got to go back to Bud Beardmore: Be the best version of yourself.

It's a hard place to be because there is sometimes some tough love. There's a lot of accountability, but that doesn't mean there isn't love, but there's accountability when you don't live up to the standard, but you can still combo that with the love and support, especially when they do it right.

Trying to make these guys the best they can be, sometimes there are tough conversations and you need guys that are willing to have those, but you need to follow up with them and say hey, this is why I'm doing this. It's because I care about you, it's not because I don't care about you.

Q. Your team was well synchronized for the first three quarters and you led by 7-2. Did you prepare anything different for this game, especially defensively, that you neutralized the Cornell offensive attack, including neutralizing their top scorer John Piatelli? Do you have any comment on that?

JOHN TILLMAN: So in terms of the quick turnaround is always tough, right, and again, Mother Nature is

undefeated, so we got back to the hotel room, got things finalized and started burning through film about quarter to 12:00 on Saturday night.

Luckily you can't do a ton. Yesterday we were really lucky, we went up to UConn and practiced inside there and got out of the elements. Jim Moore is a good friend. He's a great guy, so really nice of him to allow us to do that. We didn't go too, too long, so you're trying to -- we decided a lot of times on Saturday we'll give the guys an introduction to the team, but it was so late, we felt like rest and sleep were more important.

Clara Hollander, our director of ops is awesome. She had food for the guys and we got them hydrated and got them back to bed. We were kind of lucky; we scrimmaged Cornell in October up at Delbarton, and the crusty old coach made the guys get in a bus and drive four hours, get out, play, and then drive back. That would be me. (Laughter.)

But we wanted to make it hard, and we had a little bit of a baseline of who they were, and it just worked out that way. We try to scrimmage Cornell just because we know it's always going to be a great scrimmage. They're talented and they're well coached.

We had a little bit more with that baseline, kind of knowing how they play, and to be honest what helped us a little bit more this year is a lot of what they do, Coach Milliman at Johns Hopkins, when he was at Cornell, he brought a lot of that with him. So playing Hopkins twice helped us a little bit.

We knew the personnel from the fall scrimmage, and then playing Princeton on Saturday we were able to analyze that film and then go back to the last couple games.

Jesse Bernhardt does a great job with our defense. Carroll Kennedy does a great job with our face-off guys, so when Luke is winning face-offs and obviously we have a good game plan, we can kind of help our defense.

Unfortunately in that fourth quarter we just kept having silly turnovers, and again, think Cornell deserves a lot of credit for being disruptive. We just weren't as, I guess, good as we had been. I think could have been fatigue, but a lot of it I think you just have to give to Cornell, and we just needed to lean on that defense and Logan and just kind of hang on because everything -- guys were cramping, guys just couldn't run, so we were throwing guys in different spots.

But I give the guys a lot of credit; we talked to them about just grinding and surviving, and to do that in really two games in 36 hours is a pretty tough. But man, we've got a

tough group of guys.

Q. You mentioned the Corning connection; how cool is it to see Logan be motored MVP, a kid from your hometown?

JOHN TILLMAN: Super cool. Obviously Logan could have gone a lot of places, so obviously I was selling a lot of Corning stuff in the process, how close we are, and only five and a half hours. But I don't know, there was something about Logan. Obviously I know his parents.

He's not the biggest goalie, right, a lot of people would say, he's too small. Man, that guy plays a lot bigger than his size. Working with the goalies, I've spent a lot of time with he and Drew and the other guys. Seeing how much he invests, I'm not surprised at how well he plays, and I'm sure he'll give credit to the defense because that's just Logan.

But a small-town kid. I think the first time I showed him around, he was like, Coach, that school is kinda big, and our town is not the biggest town. But when he came back we kind of walked it together and he fell in love with the place, and I think his teammates fell in love with him, as well.

Super cool, very humble guy, very down to earth. Again, his poise, composure and just his upbeat attitude is huge because when things don't go well he just doesn't panic, and that's a credit to he and his parents.

Q. I think it's fair to say that your reputation is that you're a relentless human and you have put that on to your team. Your team is also relentless. I'm curious how long you enjoy this for before you just throw a hat or a polo back on.

JOHN TILLMAN: That's a good question. I don't know. We talked about all year windshield mentality, always looking forward. I think that's one thing that really helped us with this year was people talked about going undefeated. We never once talked about being undefeated. We always talked about -- the goals that most teams have. You want to win your conference. Sure, you're trying to win each game along the way. We just know with the schedule we play there's probably an off-day that's going to happen, but you learn from it, grow from it, figure out what you need to do better.

I don't think any college coach, at least that I know, says, we're going to go undefeated this year. You just try to prepare, but all of a sudden when it keeps happening, I'm not doing what those guys are doing on the phone, but you could hear in the background people talking about that, so you get a little concerned that you have to counter that

narrative of, like let's not get caught up in that, let's continue to be the best version of ourselves, and again, be the best -- having that saying from Bud Beardmore makes it so easy for your team. Each day you've got to be the best person, student and player you can be. You committed to that. If that's too hard for you, we're not the right place. But that started 40 years ago. All we're trying to do is carry it on.

I think for the kids whether we have a great season or not we know they'll be better for life because of what we're trying to do. We can't always see it now, but we're educators more than we are anything else, and you're trying to make sure they're getting ready for as we're all seeing a unpredictable and at times challenging life that doesn't make sense.

But there's a right way to look at it and try to be positive and be optimistic and try to make a positive impact in people's lives, like to me that's what this whole thing is about. But we can still have a lot of fun together, try to win games, do something that people can be proud of, and I think that guys did that this year with the selfless approach.

When I have great kids, it makes me seem a lot smarter than I am, but there's a lot of good coaches out there that would have been really well and probably done just as well as I've done.

Q. You always look back at previous experiences; what did you take away from your championship you won in 2017 that you took into today's game?

JOHN TILLMAN: I think every year you're here, you learn a little bit more. I think the biggest thing you try to do is try to make the most of the limited time you have. So you're doing everything you can with purpose, because it's hard.

Josh Schmidt, our communications guy, probably thinks I'm nuts because I get so focused on I want to win the game, but there are other obligations that we have to do, and I totally get it, but man, each second, each minute is critical. We came down for media day so we're watching film in the car as we go. You're trying to get the kids a treatment, you're trying to get them hydrated, and then you're trying to balance the preparation. You don't want to overload them with film.

So you've got to find that balance of rest, hydration, treatment, but also you've got to give them some prep, but like yesterday was a lot of film, and it was walk-through and things like that. What's that sweet spot, so the kids aren't just like overwhelmed with info so that they can play free and they can play fast.

Q. You always talk about how selfless your guys are. I feel like this game especially was a good example of it. I believe every goal was assisted. You probably wanted maybe a few more goals, but what does that say about your team? Do you think they did a great job distributing the ball?

JOHN TILLMAN: Yeah, this group has been selfless all year. We talked about because they do a great job individually, we wanted to make sure that everybody was involved in the offense, and we're at our best when everybody is moving and cutting and sharing it, and I felt for most of the game, our defensive guys were kind of synchronized the same way.

I think that's kind of fitting. We talk about like the importance of getting here for the Final Four, but it's also Memorial Day, and you think about the freedoms you have, the opportunity to do something like this, yet I think about guys like Billy Looney who I coached who's not with us, but he made sacrifices like that.

I talk to the guys about kids like that that had so much promise and had so much to offer. Obviously he's a guy from our state that I was able to coach. But that's why we wear these shirts, just so that people don't forget -- they don't think we've forgotten them, because we do appreciate all those sacrifices.

To have a group that kind of acts that way, they share the ball, they work hard, they honor everybody else and not focus on themselves, like to me is pretty special, especially on a weekend like this where it is Memorial Day, there are bigger things in play, and there are people doing so many incredible things so that we can do what we love, and we thank them for it.

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