

2023 NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship

Saturday, May 27, 2023

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Lincoln Financial Field

Notre Dame Fighting Irish

Coach Kevin Corrigan

Eric Dobson

Brian Tevlin

Media Conference



We were playing a little different than we usually are just because of people taking a different load for different reasons, but I just think that we did a really good job of playing through different challenges, and we just trusted each other. That was the biggest thing. If a guy is open, put the ball in his stick and let him make a play.

I don't totally know what year you're referring to, but maybe if you give me a couple details.

Q. The last three time-outs that you called, two in regulation, one in overtime, you needed a combined 34 seconds to score out of them. What was working right for you guys to be able to find those opportunities that quickly and that efficiently?

BRIAN TEVLIN: Yeah I would say our guys going hard. We preach dodging to the cage. You don't create offense if you're dodging looking to pass; you create offense if you're dodging for your own and then making a read off of that. That's something we preach every day.

We've got a lot of trust in our guys. We've got a lot of trust in a lot of different guys. I think we had a couple different iterations of six people out there at different points, critical points in the game, so just going out there and dodging for your own and then making the read after that.

ERIC DOBSON: Yeah, just to go off that, I don't think one time we went out there on any of those three times we knew exactly who was going to dodge. It's just all a read and it's all matchup based, and I think we made the most out of it.

Q. You're three minutes away from -- down two goals with three minutes to go, down under a minute with the goal. What are you thinking or do you even have a chance to process any of that?

ERIC DOBSON: That's kind of why you play, right? You don't play for blowouts, you play to play in big games.

I don't think we lost faith for a second. Yeah, I think we just had trust in ourselves, trust in our defense especially. Our

Notre Dame 13, Virginia 12

KEVIN CORRIGAN: Thrilled and proud of our guys. Couldn't be more happy. Can't wait for Monday.

Q. Brian, can you take us through the game winner? What did you guys draw up, and obviously pretty quick out of the time-out so I imagine you got what you were looking for?

BRIAN TEVLIN: Yeah, first of all, just really appreciate the trust that my coaches have in me to put the ball in my stick at the end of the game. Coming across the middle, was obviously dodging to the cage, just looking to get there if I can, but if I didn't, which I don't think I did at first, send the ball over to Dobby, set a pick for him, have him sweep across the top, and that's something that we typically like, and we trust him there. But as I was coming across the top, they shut him off, did a little hesitation, bounced out, and then saw an open lane down to the goal, took it. Felt him around my neck, thought I was going to have at least a flag at the end there and figured no better time to shoot it then because if it goes in, it goes in. If not, our man up is on the field, and trust those guys a lot.

Q. Eric, can you describe the way that the second half unfolded, and do you have any memories of the 2014 National Championship game or the 2015 semifinals Notre Dame played?

ERIC DOBSON: So the second half, first question, honestly, it's kind of a dream still. I think I'm going to watch it and figure out a lot of things that I didn't know actually happened. But in all honesty, we were just clicking. That happens in sports. They call it often a "flow state." I think that's just what we were.



face-up guys were huge for us getting us the ball back, and yeah, I think it was a lot of trust all over the field.

Q. Could you take us through those last two minutes and how you were able to tie the game up, and secondly, your initial thoughts about facing Duke for the National Championship?

BRIAN TEVLIN: Yeah, I think the last two minutes really proud of our guys for how calm we were and how much belief we had in ourselves. Obviously not an easy situation to be in, but like Dobson said, those are the situations you want to be in as a player. You dream about that. You don't dream about counting down three, two, one, and hitting one to go up 12; you dream about three, two, one, and hitting one to send your team to the National Championship.

I think that we have a lot of guys on this team who have dreamt that and who have thought about that and who have thought about it all year. It's just something that we continue to focus and continue to do our stuff and trust our system because it works, and it's worked all year, and we have a ton of faith in it and a ton of faith in our coaches to put us in the best situation.

As for Monday, we're just excited for it. Excited to have another practice tomorrow, excited to have another game. It's a long season, and another opportunity to play with your brothers is obviously all you could ask for.

Q. Eric, can you describe Jake's finishing ability and especially the twister to send it to overtime?

ERIC DOBSON: Yeah, I originally saw him catch that ball and thought he was going to step in and shoot it, and then he pulled that out, and it surprises me every time even though he does that kind of stuff every day. It's stuff I couldn't dream of doing.

But yeah, he's just a different type of player. He's a guy that has some of the nicest, craziest hands I've ever seen, and he trusts himself, just like I was saying earlier, just having trust.

Q. Eric, you guys were down 11-9, took a time-out, and coming out of the time-out you took the ball up top and dodged and made a beautiful pass to Chris Kavanagh right in front of the crease for a very fast goal. Was that a play designed during the time-out or was that something that you guys -- you saw him get wide open as you were about to shoot?

ERIC DOBSON: I think it's something we've done before, not a lot. But yeah, that was a draw it up on the white

board and let's go play.

Q. You outscored them final three minutes in the overtime. Did you see their defense wearing down at all, and two, in that tight a spot do you feel a little extra energy or adrenaline?

BRIAN TEVLIN: I mean, first and foremost, they're a great defense. I don't think we necessarily saw them wearing down. We had known where their opportunities were coming throughout much of the game.

I think we were getting a lot of great looks throughout the game. From my understanding, I think we out-shot them maybe by five or more.

So we were getting our looks and we just knew trusting them and they'll fall, and then obviously just going out there and executing.

I think like Eric said, I think we relied heavily on our wings and our face-off guys who did an unbelievable job against a guy who has proven himself year in and year out and has had a great career at UVA. So for them to come up big and get us the ball back, then you're giving it to the hands of the Kavanaghs and Dobson and Jake Taylor, and things are going to happen.

Q. Kevin, may I ask the message in the time-out with like 2:52 left and you're down two? What was the message to the team?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: We weren't talking about big schemes and goal differentials or anything else. We were talking about making the next play. So the message was we're going to run this action. If we don't get anything out of it, we are going to flow into this offense, and if we don't get anything out of that, we're going to 10-man ride and try to get the ball back. We completely focused on the moment in the game and what came next.

Q. After last season and the snub and everything, what does it mean to have this group back to the national title game now?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: Listen, anytime you get to this point in the season, it's special, and so I don't look at it in the context of last year right now. What I do look at is the context of from when this team became a team in the fall until now, and I've never enjoyed coaching a group of guys more because of their focus, their commitment to what we're doing. Their all-in attitude, their love for each other, how hard -- you saw it at the end, they weren't bickering and you could come over there with two minutes left and everything else. It was just total focus on what do we do

now, what's the next play. That makes for an awfully great experience as a coach.

Q. Two-part question. What are your initial thoughts about facing Duke for the National Championship, and secondly, with the way the Penn State-Duke game ended, would you be in favor of instant replay on a questionable call like how that game ended?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: Two-part questions are tough for me at this moment. I couldn't be more thrilled to play Duke. Listen, we have a great league. We play these big games, these big match-ups year after year against these teams, so it's thrilling to have a chance to play Duke again, and couldn't be more excited about that.

As for the NCAA, there's a time and place for that. I don't think I need to make any comments on that right now. Thank you.

Q. With respect to Eric's performance, did it bring back any memories of Sergio Perkovic?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I mean, he's similar, right, in that sense that he's just something to be dealt with. Even when they were mixing up short stick on him, long stick on him, short stick quick slide, whatever, and so you can see that he's already had an effect because they're scheming against him, right, and that opens up -- if he isn't in the position because of what they're doing to make plays, it opens up other things.

I think one thing about Eric, and it's funny, we told him this this weekend, we said, you're underrated as a passer. You might be overrated as a shooter a little bit, but you're underrated as a passer, and I think he proved that at the end with that feed.

Q. There were a number of bounces that didn't go your way. It seemed like the first three quarters, most with the rebound goal that came off Napolitano. Did it seem like from the sideline that things weren't going your way at first?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: If you sat with us and watched film over the last week, you would have seen us show about 10 goals or 12 goals exactly like those ones that they scored against us in the last two games. It's not at that point an accident. They're really good at -- call it what you will, trash, spontaneous plays that -- they make plays out of that stuff all the time. It's not an accident.

We were very focused on that and still gave up more of those than we'd be comfortable with. But it's so hard in those moments because a lot of times what happens is a

guy is doing exactly what he's supposed to be doing as part of our team defense, right, collapsing to a spot so that if the ball comes -- and then the ball gets ricocheted and goes that way and there's this guy standing there and it looks like, well, why isn't he there. Because he was doing his job, and it just got unlucky and the ball got to them.

But they are spectacularly good at making plays out of those things, and thankfully we -- it enabled us -- we were able to stop enough of them. But give them all the credit for those plays. Like I say, they're lucky maybe. If it happens that many times, probably not luck.

Q. In the first half by my count you used 23 of your 32 and also like the cold water compresses. Was there a real sense that you wanted to use your depth and get this game to the fourth quarter and stay fresh?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I mean, listen, we have an unbelievable support staff. Our trainer I think is as good as anybody in the business. We have people that are working behind the scenes, and so that's what they do. They're there -- do we know it's going to go to overtime and it's going to matter and we're going to end up playing 27, 28 guys? No, but we're preparing for it from the first minute of the game because those people are dead-on professionals who do a great job, and we're really fortunate to have that kind of support in our program.

Q. How would you evaluate the defensive effort from your guys on Conner Shellenberger and what did he do that made him effective today?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I feel like in the last two games we've played them in the six on six really well, but again, those spontaneous disruptive plays where we do everything right, double team a guy, the ball -- our guys are collapsing to get it, and it shoots right past two of them to their guy standing there. What are you going to do? But we can't do more than that in terms of defending the known of what they were doing. I thought we were really good at that.

Q. You won the face-off battle 16-12, including six of the last nine face-offs of the game. Going against an established guy like Lasalla, did you do anything different this week to approach the face-offs today? Also what does that success, especially late in the game, mean to you?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I'll answer the second part first. It means everything. It's possessions. In a game where you're down especially, possession is everything.

We worked really, really hard at it. Our face-off guys have been working really hard at it, but any team in the country

will tell you that they work really hard at it. Our guys just made plays when they needed to make plays today. Couldn't be more proud of Colin Hagstrom and Will Lynch. They both did a great job, and our wing guys who just battled.

Q. You said they played pretty much the same. What was the difference in how they played since they've beaten you twice, and from your Duke game earlier, what can you take from that?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: You know, I don't know. Honestly, I'll tell you, their goalie played really well today. I thought even when we're down two in the fourth quarter, I'm thinking, man, I'll take our chances over their chances in a lot of cases, and I'll take the things that we created over what they created in a lot of cases, but none of that matters. That's irrelevant. It's how many times it tickles the back of the net there that matters.

Their guy was terrific.

But our guy is as good as anybody out there, and he proves it over and over again.

Him cleaning up some of our messes, our guys finishing some at the end, I mean, we went a long time without scoring -- did we score on three of the last four shots we had maybe, I think, so that's -- if that happens earlier in the game, it's fine with me, too.

Duke, we played them earlier in the year. They're an outstanding team, and obviously they had the same battle that we had today. I think it's going to be a great matchup of two teams that know each other well. This will be the sixth time we've played them in the last three years, I think, so we're pretty familiar with Duke, as are they with us.

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