

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Four

Monday, March 17, 2025

Dayton, Ohio, USA

UD Arena

**Saint Francis U Red Flash**

**Coach Rob Krimmel**

**Juan Cranford, Jr.**

**Valentino Pinedo**

**Riley Parker**

Media Conference



THE MODERATOR: Riley, talk about your excitement on reaching the NCAA Tournament.

RILEY PARKER: Yeah, super excited. This is our first time as a program in 34 years. Just super grateful and ready to get the show on the road tomorrow.

**Q. Juan, your excitement at being home.**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: Man, always good to be home. I'm very excited for me and my team. We're excited to be here.

**Q. Valentino, your excitement at the big dance.**

VALENTINO PINEDO: We worked so hard for this, and it's just a blessing to be able to be here.

**Q. Juan, you addressed it already, but what has been the key to you being successful here as a freshman right out of high school?**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: You know, just taking it one day at a time, one step at a time. Having trust in my teammates and my coaches to get me in this division right now and staying with the process and trusting in my brothers.

**Q. Currently you guys played your first seasonal game at the University of Dayton. How is that going to be different from playing a different type of opponent but the same arena?**

RILEY PARKER: Yeah, we're obviously very excited we've already played here before, so we already know what the

gym feels like and the environment in the gym. The first game we played here didn't turn out our way, so we're just trying to come back here and make it right.

JUAN CRANFORD JR: I mean, I'm going to piggyback off what Riley said. We're grateful to be here. We've played here already so the gym is not new to us, the floor, nothing is new to us. We've been here before, and we've just got to take care of business.

VALENTINO PINEDO: Following up on what they said, we've been here before, so just take our time this time and get the job done.

**Q. Did you play in this arena as a high school player at all, and how did you do or what do you remember about this place, and did you come here for games?**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: I didn't come to any college games, no, but I did play here my junior year in the district championships, and we lost to Fairfield.

But it was a good time. It's always a good time to be here. It's a great feeling, great gym, great environment. It was great.

**Q. Juan, what led you to end up at Saint Francis, and how is it to have a couple other guys from southwest Ohio that are there on the team, too?**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: It started off with the coaching staff, just them believing in me, trusting in me and trusting in my abilities to do what I can do. I just want to shout out to them and the Saint Francis community for letting me be part of their family.

It's always a great blessing to have a couple guys with me on my team that's from where I am. It's fun. We all bond together. We're a brotherhood.

**Q. A month ago, it didn't feel like you guys had much of a postseason, but you got hot at the right time. What has been the difference by how you guys played in the last month as compared to the first half of the season?**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: Yeah, the biggest thing for us is



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just we changed our motto just to play hard for 40 minutes straight. Putting 20 minutes together instead of just one half and just putting both halves together. Staying together as a team, staying confident, trusting our coaching staff.

We took a bigger role in that and played hard and did what we could do best.

**Q. Riley, your answer pertaining to the change and the winning streak that you're on?**

RILEY PARKER: To be honest, there wasn't too much change. We believed in ourselves the whole time. It was just little things down the stretch of the game as in execution, getting stops when we needed to get some stops, and just winning some close games rather than losing them.

We figured how the how to win those games, and that really took our team to the next step to win these games lately.

VALENTINO PINEDO: Following on what Riley said, pretty much every four minutes, every media, you just do little things to be able to in the last four be in a position to just win the game, finish the game.

**Q. If you win tomorrow this would be the first program win in the NCAA Tournament. What would that mean to you guys to get that first win for the program?**

VALENTINO PINEDO: Obviously it would mean a lot because it means we still keep playing as a team and as brothers. It means a lot just for us, for the program, too, just to be able to get a W tomorrow.

JUAN CRANFORD JR: Yeah, what he said. It means everything to us to be here. This is a great opportunity to be here to show what we can do and showcase our talents. We're just going to take advantage of that.

RILEY PARKER: Yeah, man, we just want to keep making history and put the middle of nowhere on the map, really. Just keep putting Loretto on the map and the Saint Francis name, because we've got a really good thing out there in Loretto. So just keep winning to put Saint Francis on the map.

**Q. Riley, in talking about this amazing tournament, what's your -- do you have a memory as a fan of growing up and watching March Madness?**

RILEY PARKER: Yeah, absolutely. I remember staying in a hotel watching Jalen Suggs hit the half court buzzer beater for Gonzaga, and I was like, holy -- that's where you

want to be. That's the highest level of basketball you can play at, at the college level.

After watching that I just dreamed of this moment to be in position to play, and we've worked so hard to be here and we've earned it, and we're just really excited to get out there and play and work our way to a win.

**Q. Juan, do you have a favorite March Madness moment?**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: I wouldn't say I have a favorite moment, but I have a couple games I've watched over the years that I really enjoyed and I wished I was there in that moment.

I'm here now, so I can't ask for nothing else, man. It's just great to be here, man.

VALENTINO PINEDO: Well, me being from Spain and the time difference, I didn't really get to watch many of the live games. But I've been watching a lot of highlights and everything. I haven't really watched a full game.

Only when I got here when I was, like, a senior in high school. I don't really have that many memories, honestly.

**Q. You said a second ago that you used to watch games on TV and wish you were there. Do you ever remember watching First Four games right here in your hometown and wishing you were there, and did you ever see a First Four game in person?**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: I feel like I seen one, but I was really young. I don't really remember.

Yeah, it was a great time, man, just to see everything, like just the environment of March Madness. It's great, man. I couldn't ask for anything else.

**Q. You certainly have helped put Saint Francis on the map. Before you guys went to Saint Francis, could you have found Saint Francis on a map? How much did you know about this school?**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: I didn't know anything about Saint Francis, honestly. But like I said, the coaching staff reached out to me, and that meant a lot to me because they gave me a chance and they believed in me. I just want to shout them out. It's a true blessing to be here. All the hard work, it shows, and it paid off.

RILEY PARKER: Yeah, exactly what Juan said. Just the coaching staff reached out to me. They made me feel like they could give me a second family away from home, and



they brought me in, and we have a really great community out in Loretto, and they really embrace us as a team and they've supported us this whole way and we have so many people come from Loretto to Dayton to watch us play this game.

It means the world, and we just want to keep doing it, keep giving back to that community Val valley would say the same thing as Riley. I really didn't know much. Well, actually nothing at all. It was just when they reached out to me in the recruiting process. I'm just so grateful they gave me a second family, me being from Spain, just being able to showcase my abilities.

**Q. Valentino and Riley, you guys are a little bit older than Juan; what do you notice about a freshman coming in, how he's been able to make an impact, what he's done for you guys?**

RILEY PARKER: Yeah, I tell Juan this whole time he's a professional hooper, from the way he carries himself to on a daily basis. He's in the gym. He's working out with us. He's giving 100 percent effort.

It's just the little things. Like he's a great teammate. He would do anything that we need the team to do to win. And just those little things coming from a freshman, he's not selfish. He's willing to do what we have to do to win.

That's just the biggest credit I can give him. He's just very professional and mature for his age.

VALENTINO PINEDO: I would just say on the court he doesn't look like a freshman. He looks like a veteran sometimes, and that's a big compliment to him because obviously he's a freshman.

But off the court, obviously we do treat him as a freshman, so we do make some pranks every now and then.

**Q. Gentlemen, initial thoughts. So you guys are going to be playing the first game of March Madness. What are you guys feeling emotion-wise? How are you going to feel when the whole world is watching you play for the first time?**

VALENTINO PINEDO: It means a lot, man, opening this whole thing up, the whole March Madness thing. It means the whole world to me, and obviously to the team, too.

JUAN CRANFORD JR: I mean, I'm pumped up, man. I'm ready to go right now, honestly. But yeah, it's a blessing, man. I can't wait to go out there and play, man.

RILEY PARKER: Yeah, man, like we've been watching

this since we were kids. Just to be back out here, back on Dayton's court, it was probably one of the best environments we've ever played in, so just to be back here on a higher level again, it's a great opportunity, and I'm so excited to play in front of everyone.

**Q. Riley, in your game in what was such an impressive season and first-team all-NEC, what's been the biggest improvement from playing at Saint Francis this year and what you've been able to accomplish?**

RILEY PARKER: Just honestly having confidence in myself and just learning game by game, day by day, just trying to be the best version of myself. The coaching staff here has really believed in me and given me the opportunity to maximize this type of season.

I'm just very grateful for that, and just staying consistent to my day-to-day craft and getting better every day is really the biggest difference from this year to last year.

**Q. Juan, as a freshman, Rookie of the Year and then being named the MVP of the tournament, was there a moment in this season where you really felt comfortable in the college game?**

JUAN CRANFORD JR: Yeah, it was, I'd say, towards the middle of the season where I went on to score in double figures. That's when I really started to feel my motor and just get comfortable with the college game.

Beginning of the season I didn't really play -- I wasn't really playing how I wanted to play. Confidence really wasn't there. I was still learning. I'm still learning now, but just learning from these guys and my older guys just throughout the time, it just got better throughout the games.

**Q. Valentino, third team all-NEC. What have you enjoyed about this year and this ballclub and the run that you guys are on?**

VALENTINO PINEDO: Well, obviously the fact that they accepted me as one of their own. Me and Riley being from different places, it's just like, we truly treat this as like a family, so it's really fun just being able to treat this as like a second family pretty much.

**Q. Down the stretch here, you guys have survived close game after close game after close game after close game. What has that been like, and how valuable is that now having survived and gone through all that and the confidence you got from surviving a lot of close games?**

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VALENTINO PINEDO: Well, I remember Riley and Juan, at first we got to those close games and we lost them. Then it was like it got to a point where we figured out how to, like, win and put ourselves in a situation to win those games and we learned from all those games.

I feel like having more experience in super close games, winning in overtime, then winning by three with one minute or something like that, it gave us a lot of confidence coming into the last media, the last minute, that we can actually win the game.

JUAN CRANFORD JR: Yeah, basically what Val said. The beginning of the season we were losing those close games. We just had to figure it out. We came together as a team, talked, we had a couple meetings, just talk it out, do what we do.

Towards the end of the season we started to figure it out, just little things like playing hard, extra loose balls, 50/50s, the rebounds, it all mattered. Once you realize that, everything just started to fall in place.

RILEY PARKER: Yeah, man, it's always fun to win close games. It's always fun to watch those games and to be a part of them, so just being able to win those games and be in those situations, we've really learnt a lot, and we've had fun doing it.

That's probably the biggest thing. Making sure we have fun down the stretch but win -- like do what we've got to do to win.

**Q. How would you describe your identity and culture from throughout the season until now?**

RILEY PARKER: It's a real team-based team. We probably go to one of the smallest Division I schools in America. We don't have all the glitz and glamour of all the high Division I schools out here, but we embrace that.

Yesterday we had our power go out during practice, and we practiced for a whole hour with the lights off, and everyone embraced it. It was high energy and we had fun playing together and just being a part of a team that just embraces our journey.

Our journey is different to everyone else's and we've fought through a lot of adversity and the team just gets closer and closer through those times, and I think that's really the big difference between this team, because we stay together through those times and we don't separate.

People really leave from the middle, they separate from each other, but we just like to pull back to the middle and

just be close with each other the whole time.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, before we open up to questions from the media, just an opening statement on this amazing run and winning the championship in the Northeast Conference.

ROB KRIMMEL: I heard our guys talk a little bit about the journey, and it's the best a team has embraced the journey of a college basketball season since I became a head coach.

We played the toughest schedule we've ever played in my time, and my starting year was no easy start, and then off to Clemson and then Georgetown and Penn State, Maryland, and Robert Morris and Mount St. Mary's, both of whom are in the NCAA Tournament.

It was a very tough start to the year, but at our level, we need to be playing our best basketball in January, February and March.

Once we got to January, we started to get a little bit better, started to develop a little bit of an identity.

February things took a turn and they were moving in the right direction.

And then we're playing our best basketball in March.

That's ultimately what we've judged on at this level is we've got to be good for three games in the Northeast Conference tournament to put ourselves in a position to play meaningful basketball.

It's a fun group to coach. I heard Riley talk about it's a close group. Early in the year I don't know that we were very composed. We had to go through some very difficult moments and we got knocked down, but these guys kept getting back up.

Some embarrassment in there, some tough losses, some close losses, but once we figured out how to win those close games, the composure turned to confidence, and that confidence turned into a belief, a belief in our locker room.

These guys believe in each other. They believe in themselves first. They believe in each other, and as a coach, when you walk into a locker room with a group of guys that believe, it's a big word in our program, brought to us by Jorden McClure through the Team Impact Program.

It makes my job easy. Belief is such a powerful emotion. Our guys have really embraced that throughout the year.





Again, there's a lot of coach-speak and a lot of cliché, but the players are driving the bus here. Riley Parker, first team all conference and Juan Cranford Rookie of the Year, and then obviously Val was third team.

We've got about guys who can make the plays but they're leading the way. It's been a fun group to coach. I just want to continue to play.

I want to keep playing 40 more minutes with them, that's all they're promised, but I'm excited to get out there and compete with them.

**Q. Every coach in the tournament, it means a great deal to them. But when it is your alma mater and you have spent your life there and you're doing something that hasn't been done in decades, is that a different level of special for you? Also, how did shooting go when the lights were out?**

ROB KRIMMEL: Oh, it was great. It was fantastic. I was going to see if we could play with the lights out here tomorrow.

It went out, and our guys did not skip a beat. They just looked up and we continued with the drill and got everything we needed to accomplish.

I don't know if it's more special for me than it is anybody else that's a college basketball fan. We grow up dreaming of this moment. It escaped me as a player. It escaped me as an assistant coach and three times as a head coach it had escaped us.

I sat next to Father Malachi, our president yesterday during the selection show, and he said, has it sunk in yet? I said, it's been a blur. The last couple days have been a blur.

There's so much tradition and passion at Saint Francis, which goes all the way back to the 1950s with Maurice Stokes and then to the Golden Era with Kevin Porter, Norm Van Lier. And then the 1991 team led by Coach Jim Baron, Joe Anderson, and Mike Iuzzolino, and that crew, I mean, Mike Iuzzolino is from Altoona, which is 20 minutes down the road from us.

So not only are our alumni excited, you've got the community that's excited.

I said to Father, you know what, I think it'll finally hit me when we look up on that screen and see our name actually in the tournament. I compared it to him getting a big donation from a booster and that check clearing.

You hear about it, but wait until that check clears and it

gets into the bank because then the money is there. Wait until your name appears on the screen because then you know you're officially in the tournament.

**Q. You won all of your conference tournament games by only three points. What does it say about your team that they're able to win these close games coming into March?**

ROB KRIMMEL: As you go throughout the season, the later you get, the closer the games are going to be. Our margin for error all year was slim. Our strength was in our numbers.

Like I said, early in the year we weren't winning those close games, but once we got into January and February and started to figure out how to do that, that confidence started to emerge.

I can remember a couple times going into huddles. Our second overtime game was against FDU and I came in and to our guys said, listen, we were just here two days ago. Let's go win this thing. A couple weeks later we are playing Chicago State, goes to overtime. We got this.

Again, my job is easy when the players are telling each other, hey, we got this. Let's just execute, do the things that we need to do to put ourselves in a position to win, and then the tournament was no different.

The neat thing is we had three different players make three different plays down the stretch for us: Riley in the quarterfinals; Juan in the semifinals; and then Daemar Kelly in the championships.

These guys, that team concept I think has helped us in those moments win the game for you. We've got a group of guys that know the strength is in the numbers and whoever's night it is on that particular night, there's a lot of joy for the person that makes the big play or gets the big stop or gets the big rebound.

**Q. How do you prepare for a game when you just found out who your opponent is yesterday?**

ROB KRIMMEL: Yeah, it's a little bit of a challenge, but we played our championship game on Tuesday. Once we got back to campus we started to try to predict a little bit.

Each day that passed, we were able to kind of knock some teams off that list. As a head coach, I'm very fortunate to have a staff around me that does so much work to put our guys in a position to be successful. Oliver Allen, Devin Sweetney, and then our associate head coach Luke McConnell, and then our GA, John McKeown.



You want to talk about stress, it's easy trying to figure out who you're playing. He's been trying to map out where we're going, what hotel we might be staying in, what kind of food we're getting, are we going in a bus or a plane.

Trying to figure out how ball screens are going to be covered or what kind of defense they're going to play is pretty easy in comparison to what he's had to go through.

The idea of preparing on short notice our guys each day were able to hone in a little bit more on fewer and fewer opponents to the point when we got to practice yesterday we knew it was probably going to be one of two teams and then we were able to lock in and watch that film and get as good of a feel as we can.

We are going to have to rely on what we did all year. Follow scouting report, do what we do, and rebound the basketball, and let's get to the under four minute time-out, and we like our chances.

**Q. To recall what you said earlier, you had a gauntlet of a legacy teams: Maryland, University of Dayton, Penn State, Clemson. If you compare that to currently right here in the March Madness First Four, how can you compare both those games into your current game against Alabama State?**

ROB KRIMMEL: They're all big games. That's what we've talked to our guys. Really since February 5th. February 5th for us was Kevin Porter Night. We honored one of the best players to ever put on a Saint Francis uniform.

Early in the year when you're playing those big name opponents that you talked about when the stands are packed and you're playing all-Americans and people they've watched on TV in the NCAA Tournament, that big game mindset is something that you can't wait until you get to that big game to figure out, oh, okay, we've got to play in a big game.

So those ones early February 5th Kevin Porter Night, and then every game since talked to them about why he's got to the conference tournament we didn't have to talk about big games.

We've experienced them in the non-conference playing some of the big boys and once we got into our league finding a way to embrace that big game mentality all the way to the conference championship.

No bigger game than that biggest game in Saint Francis history, well, in the last 34 years. You think that one was big, this one is even bigger. So the mindset is something

that is created early in the year, but you've got to build on that as you go into your conference and then into the conference tournament. I think our guys understand that tomorrow is a big game.

**Q. What has Juan been able to do to impact your team so much as a freshman, and how did you end up with three guys from southwest Ohio?**

ROB KRIMMEL: Juan, his transition to college, and the great thing about college coaching, everybody transitions differently. Sometimes it takes a month. Sometimes it takes a year. Sometimes it takes two years, three years.

But Juan's transition was smooth. I don't want to say it was as easy as anybody that I've coached, but he had to compete in high school. The great thing about Juan was he wasn't handed the keys to the car as a freshman. He had to scratch and claw his way in a very competitive, very successful high school program, then to his sophomore year to his junior year to his senior year.

So coming in he understood what it meant to compete, but to be able to compete in a team concept. Because there's some people that compete in a selfish kind of I way, like I want my minutes, I want my shots, I want my time.

That competitiveness combined with he's got a pretty level head for a freshman. He doesn't get too high. He doesn't get too low. That's a very mature trait to have. You don't see that in too many freshmen.

So if he had a poor game -- the last time we played Central Connecticut, he had two shots in 25 minutes, and before the game I went up to him, and I said, Juan, we play you 25 minutes tonight, you can't have two shots. I showed him my notes. I said, Juan did not play well in the last game.

Maybe to another person that would irk them a little bit, but he's like, I got you, Coach. That's the type of player he is. He's self-aware. He understands it. To be able to get kids out of this part of the country is something we've tried to do.

Ohio has got such a rich tradition with basketball. We've had a lot of success with the Moeller program. One of our former assistant coaches, Eric Taylor, he's from the Cincinnati area. And Eric had a great career, was my teammate at Saint Francis, introduced me to my wife, taught me what it meant to work hard, and he's a Cincinnati guy and played professionally for over a decade.

That presence -- so people don't know -- maybe some people don't know about Saint Francis, but when you go



into certain areas where we've recruited or there have been players that have come from pockets of whether it's Ohio or Pennsylvania, the SFU means something. It's not San Francisco or it's not Saint Francis in Indiana or South Florida or they're trying to get what the SFU stands for.

They know not just what the basketball is about, they know what the university is about and what the community is about, so it makes our recruiting a lot easier, and we're very fortunate that Juan said yes to us.

**Q. The NCAA Tournament, one thing about it, it has a lot of teams of very different worlds, very different circumstances. You're sharing the stage this week with schools that have glitz and glamour and now million dollar NIL. Can you talk about how different your journey is than a lot of these places and how different your world is to get to this point?**

ROB KRIMMEL: Yeah, I think every institution has its challenges. Maybe we're not dabbling in the world of NIL and that kind of crazy money, but at that level you're competing with wanting more money.

Everybody has their challenges, and even before all of this, the portal and NIL, there were the haves and the have notes. It's really no different. I just think it's a different discussion point right now. We've always traveled by bus and had to find a way to pinch pennies a little bit. My middle brother played at Penn State. He chartered everywhere. The first time he had to fly commercial he was like, wait, I have to check a bag and wait in line? Hold on a second; time-out.

That was my life. We're going to fly commercially and you can't bring more than one bag and you've got to pack a certain way. Some of that stuff has been around forever.

But I think the journey and what makes our place so unique, it's still about fit. We've got to recruit kids that want what we can offer, and when you find people that are two feet in regardless of your circumstance, success becomes a byproduct of that. Success becomes something that becomes engrained in not just the players that are there but the players that came before them.

So much of that is rooted in relationships. So much of that is rooted in development. But those are long-term -- think about the relationships that you have or development. That's a long-term concept.

At the heart of what I believe, the college experience is about, it's about development. It's about developing relationship, it's about developing players, it's about developing students, but most importantly, developing

people.

If we find kids that fit that, they'll be successful. It's just, we've got to make sure that we find the right -- we've got to turn over enough stones.

Is it a little bit more challenging now than it was five, ten, 15 years ago? Absolutely, but it's not impossible.

**Q. Coach, how much do you deviate your play from the conference tournament until now, if any?**

ROB KRIMMEL: We can't. We are who we are. Do what we do, follow the scouting report and rebound the basketball. We give ourselves a great chance to win. I've used the Bobby Knight line a couple times, winning favors the team that makes the fewest mistakes, and we've added one more layer to that, that plays the hardest.

The margin for error, when you're playing in your peer group like we have in the last week or two, that's who we are, and we can't change that.

Our guys understand that. They know what's at stake here. They know what we need to do. We're not going to reinvent the wheel just because it's an NCAA Tournament game. We're going to go down competing the way we've competed for 33 games, and if we do that, I like our chances.

If we do that, I'll lay my head down at night knowing that we put everything into winning a basketball game.

**Q. What do you feel like you got out of playing here to start the year?**

ROB KRIMMEL: The atmosphere. I told our guys when we came to Dayton I think about four months ago now that it would be one of the best atmospheres that they'd ever play in. The people that make up this community -- and we've had the fortune to play here twice.

The passion here is unbelievable, and I don't expect anything different tomorrow night. There's no secret why they haven't moved the First Four, the opening round out of Dayton, because the people here love college basketball.

So I think the atmosphere and the environment won't be new to them, and I think that'll be a big part of allowing them just to settle into, it's a basketball game. It's a big basketball game, but we don't have to worry about our surroundings because we've been here before.

**Q. You've talked a little bit already about sort of the history and the tradition of Saint Francis as a program.**

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**If you win tomorrow, it would be the program's first ever NCAA Tournament win. What would that mean to you personally and to the program to get that win?**

ROB KRIMMEL: It would be a special moment for a lot of reasons that I mentioned before, the passion that -- and the great thing about what our guys experienced in the last four or five days since we won the championship, guys that wore the jersey before them that couldn't get to this point didn't say they won the championship. It was "we" won the championship. There was a sense of togetherness.

So if we're fortunate enough to win the game tomorrow, I don't expect anything but the same response. We won our first game. That's just a part of the tradition, the people that make up our community.

There's a shared experience here. So yes, it would be big. Anytime you win your first NCAA Tournament game, that's a big moment. But what makes it a little bit more special is how shared it is with our community, with our alums and with our university.

**Q. Why is it that Cranford could come in as a freshman and hit the ground running?**

ROB KRIMMEL: It's really, I think, twofold. It was his upbringing in high school, having to work his way into being a guy, instead of just being handed the keys to the car as a freshman and being able to shoot up all the balls and play all the minutes and score the points.

He had to compete on a very successful high school program, so that competitiveness, coming to college, and a team concept -- because the competitiveness can be I've got to get mine, I've got to get my points, having I'm going to compete in a team setting. Those are two very different types of players.

Because he had to compete in a team setting with a successful program in high school, coming to college, that transition for competitiveness and learning how to do it with four other guys or five other guys or six other guys, seven or guys, whatever the rotation is, wasn't foreign to him.

The other thing is just his demeanor. He doesn't get too high or too low. He understands his game. He doesn't try to play outside of who he is. I think that pace that he plays with -- and he's a physically gifted kid, so coming to college his strength and his ability to maybe play against some kids that are a little bit more physical, he didn't have to worry about getting bumped around.

It's part program, I think, and then just part some of his natural talents that allowed him to make that transition so

easily.

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