

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Four

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Dayton, Ohio, USA

UD Arena

Lehigh Mountain Hawks

Coach Brett Reed

Nasir Whitlock

Hank Alvey

Media Conference



Prairie View A&M 67, Lehigh 55

BRETT REED: The outcome of this game was disappointing. I want to give credit to Coach Smith and his entire staff at Prairie View. I thought their length and their athleticism was bothersome for us. We couldn't get a lot of dominos to fall where we had matchup advantages. We certainly tried to capitalize on any that were materializing from their switching. That's part of the reason why Hank got so many touches and ultimately demanded so much traffic.

On a night where we needed to play really well, we just didn't necessarily shoot the ball as well as we needed to. But this moment and this disappointment doesn't define the season that we had, and it doesn't define these young men, their productivity, as strong as they've played, and I couldn't be more proud of them. I couldn't be more proud of the way in which they represented Lehigh University, and I care a great deal about each and every one of them.

Q. Nasir, obviously not the outcome you expected. What do you think was going through your mind and going on throughout the game?

NASIR WHITLOCK: Yeah, I mean, definitely not the way I think anybody up here -- players, me, coach and Hank -- thought it was going to go. But that's just basketball. Sometimes it goes your way, sometimes it doesn't. Sometimes the season has and hasn't. But today is one of those days where I thought we couldn't really get too much going. Yeah.

Q. Hank, what was it about their team defense, Prairie View, that really frustrated you guys tonight?

HANK ALVEY: I think it was their physicality. I wouldn't say we weren't prepared coming in, but we just didn't know it was going to be like that. But part of it was the refs just letting us play. Because it's a big game, so the refs don't want to have any real influence on that. I think it was just getting used to that aspect. We struggled with that all night.

Q. Hank, obviously career highs, double-double. Once you guys found that it was really successful for you within the paint, did you start to shift your focus more inwards instead of trying to get those three-pointers? I know Andrew had a couple himself, but obviously you were capitalizing on that moment.

HANK ALVEY: Yeah, I think the focus was to get inside all along. That was our main focus. We knew we had the advantage inside. It just took a second just because of that defense and the physicality and everything.

That was our mindset going into the game, and we just didn't execute the way we needed to and just didn't knock down open shots.

Credit to Prairie View; they're a good team. So yeah.

Q. What were the conversations like in those small moments, after fouls, in between free throws and whatnot, because there were so many turnovers on both ends, and then just a lot of missed shots and a lot of players on the ground. What were you guys trying to tell each other during those small moments not during the time-outs?

HANK ALVEY: We just came together and said, we're good, just reassured each other. There's not a lot you can say after something goes wrong. It's just next play, next-play mentality. Just keeping the next play in front of you and not worrying about what just happened. That was a lot what we talked about in those huddles.

NASIR WHITLOCK: Yeah, kind of just to second what Hank said, in those moments we were kind of letting the refs get to us more than we should have. So I was just telling the guys, don't worry about that, we've got to play. We can't control them, so we've just got to go out there and play. Knowing that they were letting us play, I mean, we

were fouling them, they weren't calling it; they were fouling us, weren't calling it. So I was trying to tell guys, it's going both ways.

Then just defense. I think they went on that run in the second half, and we didn't get the stops we needed to. Only started to get some buckets in some key moments where we couldn't score the ball, so needed our defense to step up in that moment, but we just didn't. And that's what happened in the second half. So they went on a little run, so we weren't able to get back from that.

Q. Big picture, not the way obviously you guys wanted it to end, but the injuries that the team went through early, to bounce back, to get here, to win the Patriot League tournament, to get here to Dayton, is that something you can use big picture going into the off-season?

NASIR WHITLOCK: Yeah, I mean, definitely. It's a good question. I think I didn't play the way I wanted to, so I'm going to be in the lab, in the gym over the off-season just working, thinking about the game I had tonight. Definitely going to use that as motivation but also a common goal knowing we can get here. A lot of people didn't expect us to be here.

So I told the guys God don't make mistakes after the game. Even though we wanted to win this game, we wanted to go on a run, it just wasn't in God's will for us tonight, so we have to accept that. But just come back next year and do our part so he can do his and just leave it up to him.

HANK ALVEY: Yeah, I think we set the standard for what this program is about and how far we can go. Yeah, use this as motivation. This feeling that we have is enough for -- I'll be thinking about this for a while, just realizing what it took to get here. And we're going to have to do that and more.

It shows what we took this program from -- not this program -- just the season we had last year to this year, it was a big turnaround. Just keep building off that and just remembering what this feels like, and we don't want this again, so we're going to do everything we can to just prepare better next year.

Q. Coach, when those guys subbed out for the last time, there was a huddle there. What did you tell them when they came off the floor for that last time?

BRETT REED: I actually told them, provided they stay together, they have an opportunity to continue to advance. We've done this thing this year with unity by making a commitment to each other and trusting each other.

What they were able to build as a foundation, even though the moment was disappointing, is very promising as we continue to move forward. I just wanted to plant that seed and remind them of what they were able to accomplish and where they could go next.

Q. How were you guys planning to approach Prairie View's physicality? As you know, their pace of play and everything, since Lehigh tends to be more of a share and shoot it type of team?

BRETT REED: Yeah, it was disappointing. I thought we had some looks. Unfortunately, the whistle wasn't blown, and it resulted in some turnovers, which actually gave them some open-floor opportunities.

I thought we tried to manipulate the floor balance as best we could by getting the ball inside. I knew that there were times when we were not shooting the ball as well, so it was harder to kind of come with that next option.

The way Prairie View played us with their athleticism at all five positions, they were just able to switch on the ball. We've got a great player in Nasir Whitlock, but he had somebody blanketed in front of him all night long, and it was harder for him to get angles and opportunities to really finish at the rim or the separation that he needed.

The same thing could hold true even with some off-ball screens. It just seemed like no matter where they were, they were switching and staying in front. We're a team that really, as you mentioned, shares the basketball, creates advantages for each other. But this was a night where it was more difficult for us to be able to do that.

When we had the opportunities, it felt like every time we made a shot, it's like, here we go, this is going to be the run. Okay, here we go. Because I've seen these guys make so many plays and make so many shots throughout the course of the year, but we also had a lot of them that we just didn't convert.

Q. The little positive, the little wins of the night, Alfredo got some points on the board and Andrew pulling through with some three-pointers and eight points total, how did that feel for you and what did that mean for you? I know that they are younger players, but they're not the ones who are commonly shown off like Nasir and Hank.

BRETT REED: I think it's a bit of an indicator of how important every single person on our team is to what we were able to do, win a Patriot League championship.

People may have stepped in for just a few moments. We had a number of games this year where somebody like Henri Adiassa came in for 19 seconds and played as hard as he could in his particular role. Tonight, Alfredo played really hard. Hank has been a great player for us. Andrew came in and made shots. Peter Kramer has been somebody who answered the call for us all season long, particularly due to injuries, to play out of position, to play a bigger role.

And I could continue to name players, but there's so many that have contributed to what we're doing, and that's why when we talk about that word "unity," we won a championship as a team.

Tonight, we're going to lose as a team. We've got great players, but unfortunately, Lehigh just did not score enough points, and we didn't get enough stops to be able to advance.

But I'm going to ride with these guys because they gave everything they could to our program, to the season, and I'm proud of them irrespective of whatever role they might have had for our team.

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