

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - Northwestern vs FAU

Friday, March 22, 2024

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Barclays Center

**FAU Owls**

**Coach Dusty May**

**Bryan Greenlee**

**Vladislav Goldin**

Media Conference

Northwestern 77, FAU 65.

**DUSTY MAY:** Like to express gratitude for taking so many people on a great ride and we had great moments today. Credit Northwestern. They are statistically better in almost every facet of the game, and we just were not at our best and they made enough plays to win. But credit them. They made them when they needed to.

**Q. All season you've seen teams hit tough unassisted shots. Was there anything that could have been executed on defense to stop that?**

**BRYAN GREENLEE:** To prevent them from hitting tough shots? I think just maybe trying to disrupt their rhythm a little bit. Not let them walk down into shots. Just get the same shots over and over. Sometimes you've just got to live with them making difficult shots and move on to the next play.

**Q. That stretch where you hit a couple 3-pointers and then you had the end one, how much was it in your head that it could possibly be your last game playing and were you trying to put the team on your back at all?**

**BRYAN GREENLEE:** I wasn't really thinking about trying to put the team on my back or it being my last game potentially. I was just in the moment, to be honest, and trying to create when I saw an opportunity.

**Q. Is it particularly disappointing to lose in the first round after your run to the Final Four last year?**



**VLADISLAV GOLDIN:** I don't think disappointed is the right word because in this tournament, there is, like, only good teams, and every game is the last. Every game is important and it's like, as we say, the most important game is next game. So, no.

**BRYAN GREENLEE:** Yeah, I'd have to agree on that. Just appreciative to be able to play honestly and both are disappointing. Obviously last year we accomplished or went farther, so it was more bittersweet. But this one I feel like just hurt a little bit more because it was our last time with this same group.

So I don't know if disappointed is the right word. Maybe just a little sad. You know, you always think back on what you could have done better and I try not to do that because what happened is what happened.

But it is what it is.

**Q. Whenever with you were checking off the floor, it seemed like you were smiling a little bit, backing up some of your teammates. Can you walk me through the emotions walking off the floor for FAU for the last time?**

**BRYAN GREENLEE:** Very bittersweet. Obviously you want to win every game in this tournament. And at that point we knew it was over for us, but at the same time, I'm just appreciative of everybody that's in that locker room, from the coaching staff to the players. And I know that at the end of the day, it's bigger than basketball.

So I was just expressing my gratitude to everybody, just thanking them for what they gave me these past four years that I've been here and that's pretty much it.

**Q. Are you able to kind of capture and appreciate what your guys did the last two years or is it too soon after the fact?**

**VLADISLAV GOLDIN:** I think we are all appreciative of what we done because we won a lot of games, and I feel like we built something more than just one run or something else. I feel like we built like great relationships



with everybody in the organization. So I think it's -- we made more than just a run.

BRYAN GREENLEE: For sure, I can sit here and appreciate these past two years, especially, but just the whole time I've been here, building something from the ground up, you know. And of course, it's disappointing, but to even make the tournament is something you've got to appreciate in itself because there's a lot of good teams that don't.

So it is difficult but I think all of us in the locker room are appreciative and we're just kind of talking to each other and reminiscing a little bit on everything that we've been through together as a group.

**Q. In the landscape of NIL and the transfer portal, you all return your whole team other than Michael who graduated last year. Can you speak to that decision, either one of you, and like what would you say to student athletes that are considering transferring versus staying and finishing what they started?**

BRYAN GREENLEE: Could you repeat that question again, please? I'm sorry. I didn't understand it as well.

**Q. My fault. Essentially, in the landscape of NIL and people transferring like every season, y'all returned the same team and y'all kept y'all's culture intact. Can you speak to the decision with all the options out there, NIL, and opportunities to make money, what went into that decision and would you just speak to that?**

BRYAN GREENLEE: For sure. I think the relationship that we had as a unit, just the unselfishness that we play with, and the togetherness that we have was a huge factor in everybody coming back. And there probably was more NIL money opportunities for players, but just the idea of bringing this same group back that loves playing with each other and trying to do something special again, I feel like was more important than chasing the money. Because at the end of the day, the money will find you if you're a good player, so I think that's what was most important for us.

VLADISLAV GOLDIN: I agree with him. It's more than just NIL or something else. We came there for the reason; the reason because we loved each other, and that will pay off in the future.

**Q. I was watching your face and your expression as you were listening to the players talk about building more than just a run. What was going through your mind?**

DUSTY MAY: That they were both transfers here to us;

the irony of it. Just the irony of that; that they were asked about sticking it out when they were both transfer-ins.

**Q. Also, what kind of words did you have with Brooks in the handshake line after the game?**

DUSTY MAY: Just pulling for him. Proud of him. He plays the game to win. You know, now that our time is up, he'll be the guy I'm rooting for going forward.

**Q. You guys were down nine a few times in the second half and you come back obviously. Two-part question. Is that your Final Four pedigree paying off there when you come back so late like that, and did it take Northwestern an extra gear to finish you off in regulation and overtime?**

DUSTY MAY: They played really well in overtime. They got a couple loose basketballs early and got off to a great start, and then obviously Langborg made some big, big plays.

We've had that fight in us pretty consistently for the last couple years. This is the first time we've lost consecutive games in two years. It's the first time we've lost by double-digits in a long, long time.

So like I say, credit them. They made the plays, but we looked like we were a little bit, I guess, out of gas in overtime and emotionally spent. But definitely proud of our effort to claw back in and make a game out of it.

**Q. You mentioned a few times that this was kind of a trying season. But looking back on everything, how would you describe this season from your perspective, negative, positive, whatever?**

DUSTY MAY: All positive, man. I love those guys. These experiences are what make us us, and what make them them.

Obviously I wish I coached better in the off-season and practice, preparing the team, always. I've been doing this 20-some years and there's never been a year where I didn't end the season extremely disappointed that I didn't coach better, and I don't think that I ever will.

So very, very proud to be a part of this group. Did we let anyone down? Did we disappoint? I don't think so. We fought. We battled. Did it go our way all the time? No. But it went our way last year most of the time. That's the randomness of winning, but it was a blast. It was a blast.

**Q. The message that Nick and Alijah left us with after the Final Four was, "We'll be back." What is the**



**message to the world heading to the off-season?**

DUSTY MAY: No idea. All intentions now have been with this team, with this group. As we see, though, college basketball is very fluid. Just click on Twitter to see. No idea what's next for anybody in our locker room. I love it at FAU. I love coaching these guys, and that's it.

**Q. This may be too soon, but how do you plan to navigate the off-season with open head coaching jobs, the portal, and looking to grow the program with an opportunity next season?**

DUSTY MAY: One day at a time. We signed a very good high school class at FAU, and all of those decisions are for a later date.

I think this time of year, in our profession, whether you've been at a place one year or two years or three years, you're either on the hot seat or you're rumored for another job or your guys are in the portal. It is what it is. It's never not going to be fluid. We'll see what's next. We'll get everybody back and do our individual meetings and figure out what's next.

But right now, I can't speak for anyone in our locker room. We just poured our heart and soul into this team, into this run, and unfortunately for us, we didn't get where we wanted to get to, but life goes on.

**Q. You mentioned your guys being sort of like emotionally spent going into that overtime period. So knowing that, what was the message to your guys going into that last period?**

DUSTY MAY: Going into overtime that we still had it in us. We need to find a way. That was the extent of it is we needed to rally together and find a way to get some stops, knock down some shots, and generate some good possessions. We weren't able to do that tonight. We turned the ball over tonight, we didn't rebound well enough, and they made timely shots.

But once again, proud of our group for staying together and fighting back when they were against the wall.

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