

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Second Round - TBA vs Duke

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Brooklyn, New York, USA

Barclays Center

Duke Blue Devils

Coach Jon Scheyer

Tyrese Proctor

Mark Mitchell

Media Conference

Q. Wondering your thoughts on JMU made a bit of splash early, just some early impressions.

TYRESE PROCTOR: Obviously just watched some film today, quick turnaround. They try to speed the game up and muck the game up defensively and they play ^ free offensively. They like to get downhill. I think the more that we can be disciplined and just stay focused on us, and our defense has been good all year, but I think it's mainly going to be offensively for us not getting sped up and limiting our turnovers.

MARK MITCHELL: Obviously they have been a good team all season, beating Michigan State at Michigan State to start the year. They were ranked for a while there at the beginning, so definitely been on our radar for a while. Really good team. Only have three losses. That speaks to how good they are. So we cannot underestimate anyone because of their conference or anything like that. We know they are a good team and we are going to prepare hard for them.

Q. This is for both of you, but you lost in the round of 32 last year. Mark, you didn't get to play. What will be your mindset going into this having learned from last year from that loss?

TYRESE PROCTOR: Yeah, it's kind of ironic. Coach talked about it this morning. It's sort of the same matchup against Tennessee last year. Two teams that are both physical, try and muck the game up, outbully you. Playing in that game last year is really going to help us this year.

We sort of played in games like this all year. So we have



shown that we can handle it. I think the main thing is just limiting our turnovers. If we come out at the start of the game and throw the first punch, it's going to send a message to them. And I think that's just what we need to do, just be the aggressors all night, and I think, you know, we'll take care of business.

MARK MITCHELL: Yeah, obviously I didn't play in that gym but just piggybacking off what Tyrese said, for me, watching from a different perspective, it's going to take a lot of fight. Obviously they are a really physical team and going to bring a lot of physicality to the game. Us being tough and being together and fighting for 40 minutes is probably what's going to matter most.

Q. Last night, I was able to kind of sit along the court. You were vocal and yelling a lot. Even just like telling people where to go and on the defensive side, but also just like shouting, discipline, to kind of get guys in the right head space. Talk about being a vocal leader and how that's helped you during your time at Duke.

TYRESE PROCTOR: Yeah, I just try to do anything to help our team win, to be honest with you. You know, being a captain and being a point guard, I see the floor. I've got to be on timing with Coach Scheyer and pick his brain on the court as well and sort of spread his message. So relaying messages that he tells me, trying to stay vocal like you said, and making sure everyone on the court is locked in. Don't want anyone feeling like they're alone out there, especially defensively.

Coach has always emphasized letting your brother know that you have his back and stuff like that. And I think that's just been a big focus for me this year. Last year I was vocal as well, but I really stepped it up this year, and I'm going to have to do that in order for us to win.

Q. Yesterday with Wisconsin, they were bothered by JMU's pressure and they also missed a lot of point blank shots. Do you think, as you say, having a game mucked up, can lead to when you do get the good shot, then missing it. Do those things end up getting linked in some ways?



MARK MITCHELL: Obviously when you play a pretty physical team, I think especially when you are just around the basket, just having easy looks is going to make everything hard for you. Just concentrating when we get the ball, going up strong for all of us.

Yesterday, how we attacked the basket, having 29 free throws and just trying to replicate that and us inside and the guard attacking the basket at the same time, and us going up strong and playing with physicality against a team like that.

Q. To both guys, what's the mentality playing as a high seed against a lower seed, even in the second round, you're doing the same thing. Obviously you're not going to take it lightly, but even having to say that to yourself as kind of like a reminder. Is that something you talk about beforehand? Obviously when you play in those games, the crowd can turn on you. Do you almost treat it like a road game sometimes? Is there any discussion of that?

MARK MITCHELL: Honestly I haven't really thought about the seeding much. I just thought they are a good basketball team. Obviously in the course of the game, you can feel the crowd shift at teams. But here at Duke, we are used to that. We are rarely ever rooted for unless we are at home or at the Garden honestly. It's not anything new to us. We have been here before and I think our experience is going to help us in those moments.

TYRESE PROCTOR: Yeah, like he said, I feel like it's everyone versus Duke, especially on the road or neutral sites. You know you've got other games coming in so UConn fans will probably be there. Northwestern fans will probably be there. So sort of felt like a little bit of an away game in the second half yesterday as well, and you know doubt can't creep in. As soon as doubt creeps in, it could go sideways. I feel like we are all connected, we are all together and that's just the main focus.

Q. For the both of you, you won yesterday by 17 points. Flip only scored three points. I know the stat sheet showed otherwise how he contributed. But as you reviewed the film and watched the tape, what does it say about this team that your top scorer did not have his best night offensively but you still won by such a big margin?

TYRESE PROCTOR: Just shows like how versatile we are. I've sort of said it all year. We have seven, eight guys that can do a lot of different things. They decided to double Flip early in the post and we countered to that. I don't think it's smart to double Flip in the post because he's one of the best passers in the country. But it shows how

versatile we are. Everyone can do everything, and when we are all connected on a string, it helps our team.

MARK MITCHELL: Obviously we have a lot of firepower and obviously -- I don't think I'd put it as Flip didn't have a good one. He was just playing the game. They were doubling him in the post and he gave us a lot of good open shots all around, and we just contributed off the double they were giving him and his passing is good for us, yeah.

Q. What can you say about the fact that the ACC has not just this season, but it seems like in general, have had some disrespect from the committee and the amount of teams that have gotten in and overall has not been given the respect the last few years. Duke has been able to bounce back from that and show what you can do nationally. What can you say about representing not only Duke but the ACC?

TYRESE PROCTOR: I think it just shows how strong the conference is. You know, I feel like there's many teams in ACC that could have made the tournament and would have hang with a lot of teams at the tournament. I think it's just a credit to how strong and physical and how good the ACC play is.

MARK MITCHELL: Yeah, exactly what Tyrese said. I think we have a lot of good teams in our conference. A lot of teams that get overlooked. But I think at this time of year, it shows every year that the ACC can stack up with the best of them.

JON SCHEYER: Well, obviously it's good to be back and seeing you guys. Means we're playing another game and proud of the effort last night. Good to get that win. And you have to move on so quickly.

And we know what a great challenge this will be against James Madison. They are a really good team. They have great depth, great toughness. Really just getting our guys familiar. We've been in this situation three other times in the season where you play a game with one day of prep in between.

And so for us, it's been the same focus, turning the page, and really excited for this opportunity any time you get to play in a game to go to a Sweet 16. Our guys are connected, fired up, and really ready to turn the page here.

Q. Last year at this juncture of the tournament, you encountered a very physical one in Tennessee. Last night Greg Gard said JMU was as physical a team as they had seen all year. What did you learn from film?

JON SCHEYER: Yeah, it jumps off the page at you, no

question, and I think the experiences this team has been through and the different teams you play prepares us for that. You know, you can't be on your heels, that's for sure. You know, if they put you on your heels, it's going to be a long night.

I think for our guys, they remember that Tennessee game like it was yesterday. I can mention some other teams we've played this year that are really physical and really good, and I'll put James Madison up there with any of them. Ton of respect for them. But also for our guys. I feel there's no question we are ready for that, as well.

Q. Obviously the Dukes have made some commotion this year. Have they been on your radar and what's really stuck out the most about them and what they have done this season?

JON SCHEYER: When you're coaching, you have tunnel vision, at least I do. So you're not following everybody so closely. Although we played Michigan State right away, our third game of the year, and so you watch that game that James Madison played at Michigan State. So I remember watching and being really impressed with what they did. It jumps off the page.

They have high major players, their whole team. I mean, everybody that comes in the game, their size, their skill level. Obviously they are one of the most experienced teams in the country. And any time you go through a season and you have three losses, that's really impressive. That's the making of a special season.

These guys, I've known about them. We've known about them. Obviously the last 24 hours I've studied them a lot closer and have a much better feel, but the respect level, 100 percent is there at the highest level.

Q. You coached against T.J. Bickerstaff when he was at BC and Mike Schrage on your staff, he's coached and won games against Mark Byington's teams. Have those things helped when you have such a quick turnaround when you're trying to get ready for a team in a tournament setting?

JON SCHEYER: Sure, anything helps. It is a quick turnaround. The amazing thing I feel with the staff we have put together is the diversity of the difference experiences guys have had. For Schrage being a head coach, especially in this CAA, Emanuel coming from the Big 12, Jai from the SEC. Sometimes you'll run into opponents that they have already scouted or they have known and that helps.

But they are a different team. Bickerstaff, he is a different

player than he was at BC. And he was a good player there, too, but he's a different player, and their team is different than how they have been.

But certainly, any of that helps to get familiar in a quick turnaround. Because it's hard. I'm so focused on Vermont and that's it, and you have to have your staff ready for Wisconsin, for James Madison. You don't know what's going to happen, and our staff was fully prepared.

Q. You guys held Vermont to 25 points below their season scoring average last night. What's your assessment of the way you played defense last night and is it replicable going forward?

JON SCHEYER: I thought the defense was terrific for us. I thought the collective effort and focus was there. Are there some breakdowns of things that you have to clean up? Sure, like, of course. But Vermont is a tough team to guard, the way they spread you, their movement.

James Madison is no different. They do the same. They really spread you and put you in situations where you really have to talk off the ball and obviously on the ball. I'm proud of the effort. You advance in this tournament not by your offense but you advance by your defense. That's something over that seven-day stretch in between us playing we put a lot of emphasis on, and our guys took that to heart.

Q. How did Coach K when you were a player and as a coach for him handle and prevent complacency?

JON SCHEYER: Oh, man, many different ways, yeah. I could go -- I could have a whole list of all the different things that he would do.

I think the brilliance of Coach K, what he's always done, he would never handle the situation -- he wouldn't handle all situations the same. So if he didn't feel like you were as into it as you should be, he may handle it differently for you versus somebody else. And that's the brilliance of him, the motivation behind every game, every team, every player.

No one thing was the same. I think that's what made him so special. So we tried to replicate and do ourselves, but Coach was the best at that. Just being able to push the right buttons at different times. So I can't give you an answer specifically because he would do all different things all the time.

Q. Duke is no stranger to being the higher seed in a game against a mid major that's compelling and competitive, or the arena roots against Duke, especially if UConn is going to be in the same session.

How do you guys handle those types of environments or experience, especially when you do have a team that just pulled off an upset, so you are facing a team like that that maybe -- no one is going to call them Cinderella, but people are going to pull for?

JON SCHEYER: You know, I think it's one of the unique experiences of the tournament that you can't feel unless you're there in person. And even our Vermont game, what happens is, especially the first two days of the tournament, obviously the arenas, everybody leaves before the second session, right. And so the beginning of the game can feel a little bit quieter than we're normally used to.

And all of a sudden, the team starts filling in for the second game, and you can feel it last night in the Vermont game where all of a sudden, pretty sure we had three schools rooting against us, if not more. And for us, it's a blessing. Look, at the end of the day, we go on the road and it's a whiteout, it's a blackout, it's sellouts, and that's the responsibility you have wearing Duke across your chest.

But also, you'd rather play in those environments. And so you know it's probably going to be more like a road game tomorrow. I know our Duke fans are going to show up and be loud, too.

But that's part of the beauty of playing in the NCAA Tournament. You get to play in a sold-out crowd where there's a lot of people there that really want you to win, and there's obviously going to be people that don't want you to win. That's how it goes, and I think we are used to that.

Q. To follow up on that, is there any way to evaluate how a player reacts to these situations of being at a polarizing school like Duke and the recruiting process, or is it just see how they react when they show up and go through the stuff?

JON SCHEYER: We don't wing it, if that's what you're asking. I don't say, well, let's see if this kid has a chance.

But we scout for it. We talk to their coaches, families, and I think you can tell, to be honest with you. You watch some of the biggest tournaments, and naturally the guys who have done the best here, they raise their level of competition and just their readiness in certain environments. And that's what we try to see them in those environments, the Peach Jams, and the big tournaments, the big tournaments.

That's always translated well for us, and it's important. It's as important as anything.

Q. Following up on both of those questions, your team

always plays with some sort of confidence and swagger but this week seems like they are really on a mission to prove everyone wrong. They feel like everyone is rooting against them more than usual. Why is it with this group? Why are they on a mission to prove everyone wrong?

JON SCHEYER: I hope these guys play for themselves first and foremost, and they play for the people that have stuck with them and their families and all that. But you also, as a competitor, no matter what, you hear different things. Some of it, rightfully so. When you're at Duke, whether you're the coach, whether you are a player, you put yourself in a position where you're critiqued. That comes with the territory.

But also you can use that to motivate you, too. And our guys, the thing I've loved about coaching these guys for the first two years, is they have never made excuses after any loss, after any setback, and they have always doubled down on what we believe with where we need to go. And I think it's no different after the N.C. State loss, the week of practice, the week of prep, and I was really proud of just their mindset coming into the Vermont game.

We are going to need to do that and more tomorrow against James Madison, but I'm not surprised knowing the character of our team, and it's the reason I feel they are at Duke at the end of the day.

Q. Maybe this is the last follow-up to those last three questions. But as a coach, coming into higher seed, lower seed, knowing the crowd is going to be against you, is that something you address with the team? Do you say, hey, this is going to be like a road game, so be prepared; is that something you need to do? And as a player, you were in the same situations at Duke. What was your thought process then?

JON SCHEYER: Yeah, I think no matter what, the first time you go through it, it can knock you back a little bit. I experienced it in a hard way my freshman year against VCU. We are up in the second half and the momentum, and when it's one-and-done, part of what makes the tournament so special and part of what makes it so cruel is it's one-and-done.

But as a coach, I mentioned it briefly to them. Like I said something to them this morning. But our guys, by now, we've seen it. I think we felt it last night. And in a lot of respects, I think they like it. It's what comes when you sign up to come to Duke. It just is.

And they have handled it really well. You know, we lost our first two road games of the season. Since then, we've



played great away from home, neutral sites. And neutral a lot of times becomes where it can be a little bit of a road game, which has, I think, fueled our group more than anything.

Q. Last night Flip only took that one shot as we talked about, but also your bench only had four points. Those two things, can they happen again for you to advance?

JON SCHEYER: Probably not. You know, probably not. I mean, Flip, we have to get him more than one shot. That's on me. That's on us for the guards, when he's open, we have to hit him. But also, they sold out to double him.

So credit to him for making the right play. And we got some wide open threes, and so that's one of the most -- I think one of the best parts of his game is his passing. Now one shot, that's not good for us at the end of the day. He needs to take more than one shot, and I need to help him do that.

And as far as the bench goes, they can make an impact without scoring. I thought Jaylen Blakes and Sean -- both those guys, Jaylen and Sean brought an energy and toughness. Ryan and TJ have to be ready. Like we need everybody in this.

Scoring would be a bonus, but what they bring to the table is more than just scoring. The fact that we have those five starters, they all can score. They all can go out for 20 points on a given night and can all score in double figures. But Flip, if we give him more than one shot, probably is going to be a good thing for us.

Q. Is there a particular opponent this year specifically within the ACC, that you feel like has prepared you to play JMU?

JON SCHEYER: Probably not one specific team. They are unique with how they play and who they are. But I think they are a combination of some teams. N.C. State pressures you really well. Carolina's defense is physical and really good. Virginia, Clemson, they play physical and really tough defense. So I would say a combination of those teams.

Q. How familiar are you with Jaylen Carey given the family connections?

JON SCHEYER: Well, Jaylen, you know, he came on the visit with Vernon. You know, he didn't say a whole lot at the time. Was younger. But obviously the Carey family, they are a great family, and great people. And really happy for Jaylen how he's developed. He's just gotten better and

better. I've watched him play growing up, and you could tell he always worked at it. His skill level just always got better. He's done a great job there and it's been a great fit for him, it seems like.

Yeah, I remember seeing Jaylen, watching Vernon, go play in high school. The official visit, he would always be shooting in the gym. Just seemed like he always loved it, and happy for him with all the success that he's had.

Q. Talking to a lot of people from JMU about this matchup, feels like for those of us who are unfamiliar with Duke, the myth has exceeded reality. So from your perspective, as someone who knows the program probably more than anybody, what is something about Duke that those of us who are outside of Duke don't, like, know or understand?

JON SCHEYER: Going to end with the toughest question. I think the biggest thing about playing at Duke is it can feel like it's -- look, it's amazing playing here. Like it's a privilege. You get to play in front of a lot of people and you're playing on a big stage, and people care no matter what, wherever you are.

But it's also to me the hardest place to play because you get everybody's best shot. You really are scrutinized when it doesn't go as well. You compete like crazy in practice against other guys that are really, really good players. And that's what's always made this place special to me is the competition. It's the ability to handle adversity with the mindset of making no excuses.

And so, I don't know if everybody looks at Duke and sees that. I think they can look on the surface and think or assume different things. But this program has been built on work and it been built on competition, and it's been built on moments like this where you get a chance to play special teams in the tournament, see where you're at, and lay it all out there.

And that's for me is what it's all about, being the head coach here, and former player. And I think other former players would tell you the same.

Q. Between your time as a player and assistant and head coach, you've seen every outcome except losing in the National Championship game.

JON SCHEYER: Is that right? I didn't even realize that.

Q. Yes, started out the worst with --

JON SCHEYER: Yeah, hopefully we keep trending.



Q. Is there a common trait you've observed from the teams that maybe advanced several weeks into the tournament versus the ones that don't?

JON SCHEYER: I think the most important thing when you're playing in the tournament, you're playing teams at some point in each game that are going to make a run. And you have to be connected enough and tough enough to handle the run.

You know, if you look at the Vermont game, they cut it to two a couple times. But like those are the moments where you need to respond. And you're playing teams, especially as you advance in the tournament, the desperation is incredible. You know, tomorrow it's going to be that same feeling. And so you have to respond to runs and you have to have the mental toughness to handle those moments.

And I can go through each season, whether -- if you want to bring up the worst ones early or if you want to bring up the best ones at different moments, where 2010 you're playing Baylor in the Elite 8 and you're down four with a few minutes to go. You have to respond. National Championship in 2015, down nine to Wisconsin, second half, you have to respond.

I can go down the list. But to me, that's the difference. It's the mental toughness to handle those moments.

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