

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

Sunday, March 24, 2024

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Barclays Center

Duke Blue Devils

Coach Jon Scheyer

Jared McCain

Kyle Filipowski

Media Conference

Duke 93, JMU 55

JON SCHEYER: Really proud of these guys and proud of our team. James Madison, you're playing a team that's had three losses the whole year and they had a really impressive performance against Wisconsin.

And I don't know if we expected this, but I just thought our guys came out with such a great competitiveness and they were obviously ready to play. Not just ready to play. You have to be ready to compete in these games, and everybody that was on the floor I felt had that.

It helps when you have a guy like Jared McCain. He broke the Duke record today for threes in the NCAA Tournament. We've had some pretty good shooters here, so to break that record with eight, I'm sure he's mad at me for taking him out early. He's going to be mad at me. He wanted to be in there more. But he had a great way about him, obviously.

And Flip, just the attention that he gets in his passing. I thought it was one of the best passing games we've had, 22 assists and six turnovers. They are in the top 20 in the country with turning you over. Obviously we are going to enjoy this one, celebrate it today, and find out quickly who we are playing and can't wait to go to Dallas.

Q. Jared, at what point did you know you were just feeling it today and were you upset that he didn't let you try to break the record of nine?

JARED McCAIN: I feel like every game, I'm always ready to see if I'm going to go off. I worked so hard so I'm just



prepared every game. I do blame him a little bit for sure. He definitely just wants to keep that record. Yeah, I wanted to beat him.

JON SCHEYER: It's not mine. He's talking about the points record.

JARED McCAIN: I just want to beat him, really. That's really my goal in life is just to beat him (laughing). That's really it.

Q. When you hit that sixth three, was that the MJ shrug you did?

JARED McCAIN: I don't know what I did out there, to be honest with you. I think so, I'm pretty sure that's what I hit. Yeah, I don't know what I was doing. I wasn't really conscious out there.

Q. What was it like, a first half there, you hit your first six threes, NCAA Tournament game, can you describe what it felt like?

JARED McCAIN: Yeah, it's the best feeling in the world when you know the work that you put in is showing up on the court, especially in such a big game like this, to go to the Sweet 16. For these types of games, you just want to win and I want to do everything I can to win, and tonight if it's making shots, making 3s, whatever it was, I'm just grateful for the opportunity to go to the Sweet 16.

Q. After last year, how much do you guys want to make Sweet 16?

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Obviously Jared wasn't here last year to experience what we went through, but none of us forgot about what happened with Tennessee in the second round. I think that just added a little bit more fire to us, to the returning guys, and we knew it was going to be a similar type of game. I think we learned our lesson playing last year. We didn't want to repeat that at all. Just learned and moved on from that and I think that showed tonight.

JARED McCAIN: I was watching that game last year, so we've been talking about all year how in the Tournament,



people get more physical and just try to punk you, and we were not going to let that happen. I wanted to win for all these guys, especially after what happened last year, so we're just going to keep going.

Q. Kyle, can you talk about the start of the game, the first few minutes where you took control, what went into that?

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Yeah, I mean, just staying poised. Knowing that it's a long game of runs and just staying with my guys. I think just sticking to that game plan, having that trust and faith in one another, that really just gets the momentum flowing in our favor. And you know, it was just a great feeling tonight.

Q. I feel like the other night there was a couple balls that were halfway down and popped out and you were kind of just like smirking. How much did you think that this kind of game was coming knowing that you were that close the other night for this happening as well?

JARED McCAIN: Yeah, I was talking to my family, when those shots go in and out, I know I'm due to make some more the other night, and tonight was that night. Yeah, when I see a few go in now, I smirk at the rim because I know the rim just wants to give me back some makes, and that happened tonight.

JON SCHEYER: Or just don't hit.

JARED McCAIN: All right, Coach, all right.

Q. James Madison got off to a fast start and were confident coming in. How essential was the first few minutes so they didn't build on Friday's night momentum?

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Watching the game against Wisconsin, they had 14 of their first 17 points off of turnovers and in transition, so just not letting them get in the flow early on in the game. Just we won that game a lot with our defense, and I know we had guys that were on fire tonight, too.

But you know, that just came with our defense. It was great.

Q. Quick one for Jared. When you hit your first three, I don't know if you were smirking at the rim or the JMU student or family section. Was that smile towards the section?

JARED McCAIN: Yeah, it was mostly towards that, the section.

Q. When you hit shots early like that, and maybe Kyle, you can address this, does it take away some of their physicality? Does it ease up some of their physicality or make you more comfortable with it?

JARED McCAIN: As a shooter when you hit some early, obviously they want to press up on you. So it definitely makes the game wide open for drives, for kicks. But yes, I did see a few go in early and I knew they were going to press up on me. So I knew how to get by them and make some kicks.

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Jared said most of it, and you know, I think just with, you know, my passing at the beginning of the game, the first one to Jared, that really got him the start with those eight threes. So yeah.

JARED McCAIN: All credit to Flip.

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Thank you.

Q. When you are that hot, is it hard to contain yourself and just not shoot from wherever you want?

JARED McCAIN: Definitely. I definitely have to listen to Coach here sometimes. But when you get that high, you want to just throw it from half, do whatever you can. But in these games, it's a game of runs and they can obviously come back. So you've got to make the smart play but you definitely want to shoot it from anywhere.

Q. I saw Roach, get his hand, looked like he was writhing in pain -- any update going into the Sweet 16?

JON SCHEYER: Not yet, we have to get an X-ray for Jeremy. Clearly looked like he dislocated his pinky. And Jaylen, that's a scary play. I don't think there was any bad intention at all. Just it's a scary play.

Obviously we have to get him examined and checked out, but I don't know his status yet.

Q. A little bit of a deeper question, but there's been a lot of talk about freshmen struggling in the tournament. Kentucky went out early. Seth Greenberg saying only older teams advance. How do you balance freshmen? What's the right balance for freshmen? Obviously you have really talented freshmen and you're going to have a whole bunch next year. How do you get the right balance with the older guys and the freshmen?

JON SCHEYER: Well, it's an art form. I don't think it's an exact science, right. And when you recruit, especially in

today's day and age, there's so much uncertainty, especially for us, at least, when you have multiple players that have a chance to hopefully go pro at some point.

So everybody has their own journey. But you know, look, for me, should I not have recruited Jared McCain because he would be a freshman? At the end of the day, you go after the guys you believe in. We've been a part of -- since I've been on the staff with Coach K, these last two years that I've been head coach, we've won a National Championship with a freshman-heavy group. We've gone to two Elite 8s where you're right there.

This group, certainly helps to have a Jeremy Roach. The '15 team had Quinn Cook. There has to be some balance of course, but you can't sit back and say, this is exactly what you need, because when you have a chance to bring in the freshmen that we did this year, or the freshmen for next year, we're going to do that every day of the week.

I think anybody would, if they could, or they tried to. But you still need experience and returning players. So for me, you try to find that balance. But that's the nature of being in college basketball in 2024.

Q. (Off microphone.)

JON SCHEYER: There's no question you feel it, right. The average age has certainly gone up. Next year will be the same way. I think a year from now, it will go down a little bit where things can maybe even out just from an age perspective. But you feel it now more. You definitely do versus a few years ago or hopefully in two or three years from now as well. But absolutely you do feel it.

Q. Between Houston and Texas A&M, is there a matchup that you prefer or a matchup that you sense that your team prefers?

JON SCHEYER: You get what you get. You get what you get. We'll be ready, whoever it is. Two really good teams. I can't tell you, yeah.

Q. You mentioned a couple days ago when you were at Duke and you lose two games, it can feel like the world is ending. How did you guys get from that a week ago to the performances here in Brooklyn?

JON SCHEYER: You know, our guys talk about it all the time. They talk about having humility. This game can humble you. I don't care if you're a coach; if you're a player. Our last regular season game, the ACC tournament game, you have to have great humility to understand what you have to do better.

Clearly all of us had to do something better, and you know, there's no replicating the work you need to put in. The silver lining in that was, it gave us a week to work on ourselves, to look in the mirror, to not listen to what people may think or were done. I don't know what was said because I truly don't pay attention. And I'm proud of our team for just sticking to the work.

One thing our guys always say is having humility, but just having gratitude. You have to be grateful for the bad moments that come your way, too, and if you handle them the right way, it can put you in a position where you're even more ready. And I thought that's what it did in the Vermont game and tonight against James Madison.

Q. You have this extra time -- the backdrop is obviously losing the conference tournament game, but you have this extra time. What did you do with the extra time that got your team looking like this coming in?

JON SCHEYER: I think it started with a lot of individual conversations. Honest team conversations. Because you know, obviously there's the work you need to put in on the court. That work doesn't matter if you don't know where your players heads are at, what they are feeling, what they see and what they are getting. So there was a lot of talks started there.

For us, our defense was actually pretty good, but our offense hurt our defense in both games that we lost. And so for us, we just spend more time working on what's the next -- we just kept saying, what's the next action? Team takes away the first thing; what are we going to next.

You're not going to score 93 points every game, but I do think our offense was a lot better in these two games. And then just getting back to how you need each other. You just you need each other in this, and I thought we had great connectivity and great practice habits.

I know that's the last question, but shout-out to our women's team. We are both in the Sweet 16. I'm watching the game, getting ready today, and Reigan Richardson, oh, my gosh, she was incredible today. So seeing our team go to the Sweet 16, to share this with them, hopefully we can both keep advancing. But I just want to give them a shout-out and we'll see the ladies back in Durham. Thank you.

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