

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - Siena vs Duke

Thursday, March 19, 2026  
Greenville, South Carolina, USA  
Bon Secours Wellness Arena

## Duke Blue Devils

## Jon Scheyer

## Cayden Boozer

## Cameron Boozer

## Isaiah Evans

Media Conference

Duke - 71, Siena - 65

JON SCHEYER: One, I've known Gerry for a long time, G Mac had his guys way more ready to play than I did. He outcoached me, he outcoached us. That's one of the hardest moments for me in sport, period, to not have your best stuff.

They played at such a high level. You're down double digits in the second half, and the toughness that these guys showed. Cayden throughout the whole game, what he did, 19, 5, and 0 turnovers. Isaiah has a double-double. Cam has a double-double. I think these guys have showed over and over again what they're about. Today was no exception.

It doesn't matter what you win by or how pretty or any of that stuff. It's about getting it done, finding a way, and then learning and growing from it.

I'm really proud. Credit to Siena just for their readiness and the way that those guys played. They did a great job.

**Q. Cayden, I'd love to hear about what it's been like to step into this role as the leading point guard on the team, obviously going from ACC Tournament play, but how is that different coming into the March Madness tournament?**

CAYDEN BOOZER: I feel like it's not that different than the rest of the season. I feel like my role is pretty similar. Obviously we have two people down right now, and



everyone's got to step up and play better in their role. That's all I'm trying to do. I'm just trying to do whatever I can to help the team win.

I feel I could have done a better job of that today in the first half helping us lead. I think all of us have to understand that we have to have each other's backs, and that's the main goal for us to play as a team, play as a unit, and just play Duke basketball.

**Q. Cam, I was wondering, Siena's been a very good defensive team this year. What did they do in the first half that really kind of stymied you guys and made you -- you took a ton of 3s in that half?**

CAMERON BOOZER: They did a great job protecting the paint. They really softened the ball. They assaulted the paint. They make you settle for 3s. We took the bait on that.

I think we really didn't come out ready to play today, and we've got to be a lot better moving forward. Coach says all the time, whether you win by 1 or 25, it doesn't matter. So just onto the next.

**Q. Isaiah, also, Cam, you can comment on this as well because you had the block. With 17 minutes to go, they're up 13. They missed a couple of dunks at the rim that could have put them up by 15. Isaiah, you got a run-out dunk. How big was that? Because you guys ended up going on an 11-0 run after that.**

ISAAH EVANS: I think we had to lock in our rebounding. We knew that, once we get stops, we can run. I knew once we see it, instead of just saying it, we just fall into line with everything we're trying to do.

CAMERON BOOZER: We had to do something to get some energy going. The first half, we came out flat. Not much energy, not much defensive presence. Whether we're missing dunks or blocking shots, whatever it is. Had to do something to get the energy going.

I think Slim's two dunks back to back really helped us get it going for sure.

**Q. For any of the three players, how concerned were**

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**you when you were down 13 in the second half to that team? Was it always like "we got this," or did any panic set in at any point?**

CAMERON BOOZER: That game was ours to take. The first half, we put ourselves in that position. We knew we were going to be able to come out of it. We just had to come together, do what we do.

We ended up figuring it out and came out with the win.

**Q. Cayden, I'm kind of piggy-backing off of that, but for me watching, it was your second floater. Was there a spot in the game where I know you guys never felt out of it, but you were like, okay, this is now manageable now?**

CAYDEN BOOZER: I think just the second half, I felt like that whole second half we just had the right mindset, we had the right energy that second half. They put us in position to win this game. Obviously you've got to give Siena a lot of credit, they played way harder than us in the first half.

We had to just regroup, understand that we only have 20 minutes guaranteed. So we all had that understanding, and we made sure that we all had the right energy in the second half.

**Q. Jon, Cam said that you guys weren't ready to play. Why do you think that is, and how concerning is that to you moving forward that it happens again?**

JON SCHEYER: It's not concerning from the standpoint that, unfortunately, this is the nature of the tournament. It's the nature of the tournament.

Look, I wish it could just be smooth sailing. These guys, even though we have returners from last year's team, we're all in different spots. You can face a team like Siena. They're incredibly ready to play. We made some mistakes early that they made us pay for. All of a sudden, you want to win very badly. So you can start making plays to try to get back in the game that are probably uncharacteristic of who we've been.

These guys, the character they showed -- look, we just dealt with a very similar thing. Two different teams, different situations. Florida State really is very similar in terms of we couldn't get stops in the first half. That game we couldn't get stops in the second half either. But the toughness down the stretch, I just think that's what this tournament is all about.

**Q. Coach, can you talk about the impact of switching**

**to a zone defense and what that had on the game?**

JON SCHEYER: Just trying to -- look, even when we came out in the start of the second half, our defense was not there. I've been in that position before where you do have to make adjustments. You have to throw different pitches. For us, we were just trying to stand them up a little bit, try to get us more aggressive.

We did something we haven't done in a long time, three-quarter court. We've had that defense in our back pocket for different moments. Preparing for the Tournament, we said this could win us a game. I think it just got us back in the game, and we went back to what our bread and butter has been. It's been our man defense, and our guys really found it down the stretch. That was the difference.

**Q. Coach, you've been in a lot of these 16-1 matchups as a player, assistant, now as a head coach. I know every game's different, but how would you rate this one as far as toughness and difficulty?**

JON SCHEYER: Toughest one, not close. Toughest moment, toughest game, toughest position I've ever been in in the tournament, no question about it. You have to credit Siena for it.

Look, I remember a lot of our teams, we've had some games like this. 2018-19, North Dakota State, it's a one-possession game there. These games are fragile. Unfortunately, you have to lose some, where I've been on the other end of some of these in the past where you have great appreciation for it, but it doesn't mean you can avoid it. It doesn't mean you can avoid it.

You have to credit Siena, but again, what was it? Down 13 right away, they scored to start the second half. All right, you've got to show what you're made of, and these guys really did that.

**Q. Often it's said that teams sort of resemble the personalities of their coaches. How would you draw a parallel between Gerry, the personality, and the Siena Saints, the team?**

JON SCHEYER: Gerry is a tough competitor who's won at the highest level. I think the thing that you can say about his guys today, they weren't afraid at all. We knew that going in. There is a reputation in the league, they were the aggressors, and that's a reflection on him and their coaching staff. That's who he's been his entire life that I've known him as a competitor.

**Q. Coach, you said a couple times that Gerry**

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**McNamara outcoached you today. What is it about what he does as a coach and how he adjusts to different things that you really just respect, his positives and what he does coaching?**

JON SCHEYER: A tournament's all about your competitive readiness, and Siena had that as well as any team we've gone against. We anticipated them trying to really do things to keep us out of the paint, and they executed great. The moments we made runs, they didn't flinch.

I think that's a reflection on him, and that's a reflection on his players. They were big time today, and it took us everything that we had to win it.

Look, the beauty of the Tournament, when you get to advance, it's the most amazing thing. You also put yourself in a position where this can happen to you. I'm just really proud of our guys to be able to persevere and find a way against a team that was incredibly ready to play today.

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