

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

Friday, March 20, 2026

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

**Duke Blue Devils**

**Jon Scheyer**

**Maliq Brown**

**Cayden Boozer**

**Darren Harris**

**Nikolas Khamenia**

Media Conference

**Q. Maliq, this one is for you. Siena was able to score a lot in the paint, especially in that first half. What adjustments do you want to make coming into this TCU game with a team that really focuses on scoring the ball inside?**

MALIQ BROWN: Obviously the first half we played against Siena, we were being very soft on the ball, to be honest, just giving them any type of shots they wanted to, and their momentum carried onto the whole first half.

Going into the second half, we had to pick it up, listen to the adjustments, and be more physical. Not just settling for our offense, just taking better shots.

From that game, just moving on, taking the positive feedback from that and just moving on to TCU.

**Q. Cayden, do the Frogs remind you of anyone that you saw in the ACC? Do they look similar at all to anything?**

CAYDEN BOOZER: I feel like they're a very physical team. They're going to be very aggressive with us. They're a big paint team. I wouldn't say they play exactly like anyone we've played in the past, but it's a similar game plan of protecting our paint and being strong with the ball.

**Q. You guys mentioned that you felt like you were settling a little bit offensively. What is it about the**



**team or what do you have to do to feel like you're really flowing in the offense? Is it paint touches? Is it being a little more patient? For any of you offensively, what are the keys to flowing a little bit more?**

DARREN HARRIS: I would say just getting to the second side more. I think yesterday, like we would get a paint touch and take a tough shot, or we would run one screen on one side of the ball and take a quick shot or force someone at the rim.

I think just getting multiple paint touches and multiple kickouts allows everyone to get in more of a rhythm and basically just getting the ball to both sides.

**Q. For anyone just experiencing this March Madness Tournament now, into another round. You guys felt the roar from your game but also other games. Is there anything about the Tournament that you're just trying to also embrace and enjoy maybe even outside of your own games, watching everyone else play here in the chaos of the Tournament?**

NIKOLAS KHAMENIA: Yeah, it's super exciting. I know for a lot of us freshmen, it's our first time obviously, and the guys coming back from last year, it's their second experience. I think for all of us just being in the moment, embracing our win yesterday.

It's not easy to win in March Madness, so we're not taking it for granted at all. Yeah, just tuning in to other games, you know what other teams are doing, but at the same time trying to be locked in for our next one.

**Q. Cayden, what are some of the biggest pieces of advice that Caleb has given you about being a point guard, especially about March Madness and the quick turnaround and things like that?**

CAYDEN BOOZER: I think just to play confident. Obviously it's a big moment in our season. If people aren't playing to our best potential and playing confident, we're not going to get the best out of everyone. So just being confident, being poised, and just trusting in the work that we put in all year.

**Q. For any of you guys, there was a stat going around**



**on social media after your game yesterday that 1 seeds who have beaten a 16 by less than 10 have never gone on to win a National Championship. I'm wondering if you make anything of a stat like that or if you think what yesterday's game was has absolutely nothing to do with where your ceiling it as a team?**

MALIQ BROWN: I would just say obviously you hear a lot of noise outside of the locker room and the team, but just I feel like our team and our staff do a very good job of just keeping out the outside noise. Whoever's in that locker room, just stay within each other.

Obviously everybody wants to win. It's March. Whoever loses, you're going home. So everybody's out there playing their best basketball, especially in March in this tournament. Just knowing that we've got to go out there and play our best basketball and just staying focused.

**Q. With Siena, does it change your approach? There's a couple guys that alluded to maybe you took it lightly or whatever. Do you feel like it changes your approach going into this game?**

MALIQ BROWN: I wouldn't say it changes our approach, but just making us more aware of just we can't start the game the way we did against Siena. Obviously every team is in the Tournament for a reason. Everybody can compete with anybody who goes on that court. We've got to play the full 40 minutes until the end of the clock is 0:00.

**Q. Once again for anyone, just about how you looked at TCU. Is there something that stands out about their attack, y'all's comparison and the short turnaround of availability to look at your next opponent?**

DARREN HARRIS: TCU is a really physical team. They play really fast. So I think for us it's going to be about playing our pace, not getting into their game. Sticking to our principles, same things what we've been doing all year, and just continue to be us.

THE MODERATOR: We're going to get started with head coach press conference for Duke.

JON SCHEYER: I don't have a whole lot to say other than for us it's been back to work. Learned a lot from last night. We focused on all the things that we can control to do better, but for us it's getting our minds ready for Game 2 against a really good TCU team that we're excited about and ready to take the next step here.

**Q. Coach, speaking to Cam and Isaiah in the locker room just now, they emphasized that the communication just wasn't as high as it normally is**

**yesterday. The fun vibes before the game just weren't quite there during the warmups. What's been your message to the team regarding that, and how important is that to just have fun out there and keep talking?**

JON SCHEYER: When you really want to win very badly and you're playing in the Tournament for the first time, it brings out emotions you can't even prepare for. I think what happened to us yesterday, we got very inward. Our competitive spirit was not there where it needed to be.

You have to go into this thing as the aggressors. That's why we've been really good and we've had the year that we've had. For us it's all about getting back to ourselves, nothing other than doing what we've done, defending, rebounding, the whole thing.

Our talk and energy, I can tell you it will be back tomorrow. I know these guys, and it will be back the way it needs to be.

**Q. Do you have an update on what Pat has been able to do? Is he any more likely to play tomorrow than he was going into the week?**

JON SCHEYER: We're about to practice. I'm hopeful he's going to be available for tomorrow. We'll see what he can do in practice today. If all goes well, I know -- he was itching to play yesterday.

Now, he hasn't done what he needs to do in order to play, but if everything goes well, we'll see him back in there.

**Q. Just to follow up, in your mind, what does he need to do to be able to play? What does he need to show you?**

JON SCHEYER: He needs to practice. He needs to just be on the floor and move the way that he needs to to be successful. He's been ramping up and doing a really good job. We just want to make sure he's feeling right to play at a high level. Not just to be out there, but to be him.

**Q. Beyond just Pat's physical ability to be out on the court, do you have any concerns about just because it's been a few weeks since you've had that lineup on the court, not to sort of mess with something that's working and kind of limit or kind of ease him back in gradually?**

JON SCHEYER: We want Pat to be out there as much as he can. He's a game changer for our team. He's one of the most impactful players in the country.

I think what he does is not something that -- again, I'm sure there will be some plays that he hasn't played in a little while. I hate to call it rust, but I'm sure some things that he has to work through. But end of the day, he just changes the dynamic of our team where other guys aren't playing out of position as much. We're able to get a better rotation.

And you have a guy who's a big-time rim threat. His passing, his pick-and-roll defense, his rim protection, he does a lot for our team that changes the dynamic of who we are.

Again, we've done a great job of managing without him, stepping up. We have had seven really good players that have managed, but we need to become complete. That's the thing that we want to do.

**Q. Jon, Cayden has either set or tied his career high in each of the past three games. Other than meeting the moment and taking advantage of the opportunity with Caleb out, has he done anything differently? What has been the source of this?**

JON SCHEYER: I just think it's his composure in these moments. Whether you have the opportunity or not, to play in the ACC Tournament in the moments he's been in, that kind of game like we had yesterday against Siena, you're either wired for it or you're not, and he is.

Then his ability to get downhill for us, we've personalized and changed a couple things that we do to try to put him in a better position, but he's really the guy that's made it happen. I just love the aggressiveness, but then also the composure that he's had.

**Q. Isaiah last night talked about your message to him at halftime. He's very honest about your message. Can you just talk about what your message was to get him to step up in the second half?**

JON SCHEYER: I love the fact that -- like Isaiah felt -- he took that to heart last night. He wasn't himself in the first half. He just wasn't. The impact that he's made scoring and shooting has been there from day one, but he's grown up as a player this year with his defense, his rebounding, and his energy. We were missing his energy in the first half.

You think about what he did in the second half, I thought his dunk, the left-handed dunk was the play that really got us going. So I was very direct with him, and we have that relationship, always going to be that way. Then for him after the game, I think that's a great lesson of just, I know he's going to come back in a much different way tomorrow.

**Q. TCU, do they remind you of anyone in the ACC as you look at them? What did you know about them heading into this tournament?**

JON SCHEYER: Well, I've followed them from afar. You see them play certain games. When I first got here to Duke, Coach Dixon was at Pittsburgh. So very well aware of his style, the way he coaches. He has a hard-nosed team.

I can't say they're just like a specific team. I think they're a hard-nosed defense like Clemson is, except they're more disruptive. They create a lot of turnovers. They do a really good job, though, and I've been very impressed to see the way they compete, to see how they really know where to be at all times. It's going to be a really tough game against a well-coached team.

**Q. Following up on that, I'm curious, what are your thoughts of their big men duo, Xavier Edmonds and David Punch?**

JON SCHEYER: They're really good. They're versatile. They really crash the glass hard. They're ball friendly. As big guys, their ability to step out on the perimeter and handle and pass.

But they're best putting pressure on the rim. I think their versatility has been a big skill for them, and they make you work the whole game. You have to be in a stance guarding them, one-on-one defense. You have to guard them in the post. You have to guard them when the shot goes up. You've got to rebound it and finish off plays.

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