

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - High Point vs Wisconsin

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Portland, Oregon, USA

Moda Center

High Point Panthers
Coach Flynn Clayman

Rob Martin

Cam'Ron Fletcher

Chase Johnston

Media Conference

High Point 83, Wisconsin 82

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by High Point. Coach, congratulations on a great win. Begin with an opening statement.

FLYNN CLAYMAN: Yeah, tough to even put into words what just happened. Couldn't be more proud of this team. In the summer when we get those tracker numbers back, there's 63 schools in the country that have it, we're number one every week in shots taken. They can talk about whatever we have, but we're working. We're selfless. It's pretty obvious to me that something needs to be done about this non-conference scheduling.

High Point and Miami Ohio are 2-1 in Quad 1 games. We couldn't get games. They couldn't get games. Akron, UNCW, Belmont couldn't get games. We won 22 of our last 23 games and we didn't move up one spot in the metrics. Not one. We won 22 of our 23. We've won 25 games by double-digits.

That team right there is a fantastic team that beat five top-10 teams. If we can get games like this on neutral courts and some home games, I think we'd know who's really the best teams.

I'm proud of these dudes. We're not just here to win one game; we're here to get to the Sweet 16.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.



Q. Chase, talk about what the two-pointer was like.

CHASE JOHNSTON: It's amazing. First and foremost, I want to thank my Lord and savior Jesus Christ for giving me this platform that he's given me.

It felt amazing just to be with the guys. It's a special group, like Flynn said, starting June 1st. It's a feeling you can't put into words until you're in it. I'm just so grateful to be here with these guys.

Q. Chase, is there somebody that you model your game off of in terms of the way that you pull up for three-pointers, the speed, off balance?

CHASE JOHNSTON: I wouldn't say I model my game after any specific player. I watch a bunch of shooters like Duncan Robinson, Steph Curry, JJ Redick back when he was playing.

For the most part I just go in the gym, put up the work. I trust my work, I trust the Lord, and allow everything else to take care of itself after that.

Q. Coach Flynn, you guys were in a lot of Gortat screens, get your guys downhill. Was that a read or a decision you made as a staff?

FLYNN CLAYMAN: Yeah, that was a decision. I mean, that's how we've attacked dropped coverage all year. We didn't execute that early. Last year when we played Purdue, it was the same thing. We didn't execute it well.

We harped on this year. We felt like last year we were really close with Purdue the whole game, and we didn't execute offensively and we didn't rebound. We just felt like this was comparable team to that. If we got to the level of screens, executed what we wanted to in the half court, then rebounded. Last year we gave up 20 offensive rebounds to Purdue. Today six. That's the difference in the game.

That was definitely by design. That's how we've been attacking that all year.

Q. Coach and Cam, by comparison, Wisconsin is one of the tallest teams in the country. You on paper don't



... when all is said, we're done.®



have as much height. You out-rebounded Wisconsin. Talk about the game plan, how you attacked that.

CAM'RON FLETCHER: I mean, we knew they were a pretty good team. We knew they had a lot of tall guys, a lot of shooters. We knew our advantage was that we had the better athletes on the team, so...

We just attacked the glass like we talked about before the game. We came out with the victory.

FLYNN CLAYMAN: We felt like at that position we had the advantage. Like, not like, Oh, we can hang. We felt like with Fletcher and Anderson, we had the advantage. This guy was a starter at Florida State on a really good team.

The beautiful thing is, we talked about it earlier this year when he was going through some ups and downs and some injuries, I said, Man, if you just stick with this, when we get to the most important part of the season, you are going to be the best player on the floor. In our Big South championship game, he had 17 and 19. Today he had 14 and 11. I couldn't be more proud of Cam.

Q. Chase, knowing that twos aren't really your thing, were there any nerves with the layup? Were you worried you were too close? Flynn, what kind of player is Chase to have on your team?

CHASE JOHNSTON: I mean, when Rob threw that up, I was like, I got to put this in the hoop and win this game. I wasn't really thinking whether it was a two or a three. I was just trying to put it in and win this game, so...

FLYNN CLAYMAN: Yeah, I mean, Chase, how he's finished the season, just his career. He passed Steph Curry today on all-time threes. That's the kind of player he is. I think he's top 20 now or he's 21. Curry I think was 22.

He's been an all-conference player two times already before he came here. He was two times all-conference in the ASUN. They played at USC when he was at Florida Gulf Coast, and he had 25 points and they won. He's been doing this for a long time.

For him, we started this season 8-3. I really got down to the nitty-gritty of what we needed to do. At High Point that's not good enough for our standard. With how small we were at the point guard spot, I felt like I kind of mixed up our roster composition, and I asked him to take a bench role because we were a little small starting games.

His willingness to take that role and keep leading, then at the end of the season to be doing what he's doing, again, it speaks to how selfless these guys are. These two guys

next to me were starters at the start of the season. They took different roles. They owned them and they helped us when it mattered most.

Q. Chase, speaking to that basketball journey that you have been on, the places you've been, what goes through your mind with this moment knowing what you had been through in your career?

CHASE JOHNSTON: Oh, man. Just to be on this stage and play at a game like this. This is something you dream about. I remember playing basketball with my brother in the backyard one on one. We had our own little brackets, picking what teams we wanted to be, and trying to win March Madness. Now to be on this stage with these guys, be able to hit a couple shots, finish with a layup, it's something that I'll never forget.

Like I said, all credit goes to the Lord. I wouldn't be sitting here if it wasn't for Him. I wouldn't be the teammate I am if it wasn't for Him. It's just something that I'm at a loss of words, honestly.

Q. Rob, it seemed like the times that you guys got behind you were really a calming presence out there. You finished the season strong, but what do you think the characteristics are with this team that allowed you to fight back when they go up by eight?

ROB MARTIN: I was just staying poised, knowing that basketball is a game of runs. So next-play mentality, staying together. That's the main thing. Having each other back. They make runs; we make runs.

Like I said, just staying poised. I feel like these guys are high-level guys I'm playing with. That's the main thing, to be honest.

Q. Chase, did you think about dunking it?

CHASE JOHNSTON: I was actually telling Cam on the way here, I got high enough. I was just trying to finish it, honestly. To be down one, get the ball thrown up to me, I was just like get this in the rim. We can go shock the world if we do this.

Q. You got subbed out right after that. Is it fair to say you are not a defensive specialist?

CHASE JOHNSTON: I mean, I'm a three-point specialist. I think my defense is underrated. I get overlooked for that. We have a couple other defenders on the team that it was better for them to be in the game at that moment. I actually went up to Coach Fletcher in that moment, was like, Hey, put this other guy in for size and let's go win this basketball



game.

FLYNN CLAYMAN: I want to add to that. He doesn't get credit for his defense. He gets deflections, he hustles, he dives on the floor. He's been one of our leaders per minute in deflections. In our conference championship game, he had a deflection to a dive where he got fouled, that basically sealed the game for us.

It's a common thing with guys that can really shoot to kind of overlook that they are active defensively. The only reason we subbed him out there was just we thought they were going to throw it down and shoot a quick shot. We just wanted a little more size.

He should get way more credit as not just a defender but all-around player. He averaged 16 a game at Stetson, 15 a game at Florida Gulf Coast. We have now again a top-10 most raw efficient offense in the country. Top 10 in the country for three years in a row. We asked him to be more efficient.

It's such justice that he gets all this national attention for never making a two-point shot all season. Then the first one he makes is to get us to this win in the NCAA tournament (smiling).

Q. Rob, you took 23 shots today. That's one shy of your career high. A lot of times you hear in March it's all about guard play. What does that mean to you, that effort today?

ROB MARTIN: Man, all glory to God. My teammates finding me in the right spots, me making the right play. If it's open for me or my teammates, I try to make the right read. Coach trusting me to have the ball in my hand. I just go out there, make the right way play. Whatever happens, I'm confident enough in the way I work and stuff, so yeah.

Q. Rob, when you threw it to Chase, were you like, Oh, my God, he doesn't shoot twos? What was I thinking?

ROB MARTIN: No, Chase got a little bit of bounce. Chase could probably dunk a little bit, y'all don't know. But Chase could get up there.

I knew Chase was going to make the layup, of course. I believe in him. He put the work in, so...

Q. Rob, you said all glory to God, what you've gotten to accomplish today. What has your faith meant to you overall, what it means to this team to have faith in each other?

ROB MARTIN: It played a huge factor in my life. I got in a

really bad accident like two years ago. That woke me up a little bit, just being grateful and just believing in the Lord each and every day. Grateful to be here. My teammates giving me the confidence to go out there and play.

So it's a big factor. All glory to Him always.

Q. Coach, I know your wife is going to be headed out pretty soon. Did you have a chance to speak to her?

FLYNN CLAYMAN: I'll see her after this. I didn't get a chance to see her now. I can't even tell you what's happened after that game. It's like...

It's a pretty cool story. If they get an upset over Vanderbilt, that's going to be... That's at 2:15. But I wouldn't be sitting here without my wife and her sacrifices. When we first met, she had opportunities to be DI head coach, high major, associate head coach, all those things. She made a decision to support me and follow where I was going.

I just love her to death. I'm so happy that she got to this game and got to watch it. I'm looking forward to seeing her right after this.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. We'll see you tomorrow.

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