

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Regional Final - NC State vs Duke

Sunday, March 31, 2024

Dallas, Texas, USA

American Airlines Arena

Duke Blue Devils

Jon Scheyer

Jeremey Roach

Jared McCain

Elite 8 Postgame Media Conference

NC State 76, Duke 64

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by the Duke Blue Devils, Coach Jon Scheyer and his student-athletes, Jared McCain and Jeremy Roach.

Q. If you could just start kind of an assessment of today, what you thought maybe went wrong in the second half that allowed NC State to take control?

JON SCHEYER: First of all, look, this is really tough. This is not easy. Congratulations to NC State. They earned the win.

I thought in the first half, we played great defense. They only scored 21 points, but we never had a rhythm on offense. Never. So in the second half, they started to score more, and our offense just -- it was probably the most disjointed game that we've had all year. It really was.

I know that's the biggest differential. We've been in every single game this year, and that one at the end was -- we're just trying to make it a couple possession game.

So it's really tough. You have to give them credit for some of the shots they made and all that, but I could not be more proud of this group and this team. We did this year differently. We didn't have a transfer. We had four freshmen. We had five sophomores.

This group, every time we played bad, lost, they always responded and came back. Part of the burden of wearing the jersey is the criticism that comes with that, and part of the amazing part about wearing this jersey is all the people



that stick with you through those moments.

I'll never forget the people that messaged me, messaged these guys, our team, in that moment after losing to Carolina, NC State back-to-back games because those are the ones you know that are really with you, that kept believing, kept supporting.

I know these guys are hurting and disappointed that we couldn't get it -- that we couldn't go to the Final Four and go to Phoenix, for us most importantly, but also for those people.

It's disappointing. I feel for these guys, but I'm thankful for them for everything they've done for our program and for Duke. They've been awesome to coach. I'll let you guys ask these guys questions.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for our student-athletes.

Q. Coach mentioned the offense and the discombobulated nature there. What do you think went wrong offensively, and did State do anything in particular that made it tough for you to execute and run your sides?

JEREMY ROACH: I mean, just give credit to State. They're on a hell of a run right now, but I think just them switching us up like that, us not moving it side to side, getting to the second side and stuff, it was kind of sticking. That's what happens when people switch. But, I mean, just give credit to them. We weren't us today.

Yeah, when they were switching and stuff like that, kind of took us out of the flow of our offense and our routine and stuff like that. So just give credit to them.

JARED McCAIN: It was the switch in. Just got stacking after a while after we switched in, and we had nothing to attack. That was it.

Q. Jeremy, what has this specific Duke team meant to you over your career as a Blue Devil?

JEREMY ROACH: It meant everything to me, especially



Scheyer. He's had confidence in me since day one that he took the job. I can't thank him enough, but just this group is special. As young as we are, just the ups and downs of the season, they just kept fighting, just fighting for my senior year. They made my senior year special.

Like Coach said, a lot of people would have folded after the UNC and the NC State loss, but we kept fighting. We kept going. This group is so resilient. I can't thank them enough. These will be my brothers for the rest of my life.

Q. Jeremy, a little bit more on Coach Scheyer there. Everyone knows what he signed up for when he took the job. How do you think he has navigated that, and what's kind of your big picture view of where the program is?

JEREMY ROACH: The program is right where it left off. We've been top 10 in the country for both years. We got to Elite Eight this year.

Like people don't know how hard his job is. People don't know how hard his job is that you are taking over after the GOAT. That's not easy work. Just give credit to him. He is always instilling confidence in us every day. Whether we're messing up or not, he just always has that strong face.

A lot of people would have folded in this situation. All the criticism that people say, I mean, it's unacceptable. There's no reason for that. If somebody wanted to, try doing his job and see how easy it is. So I give credit to Coach Scheyer. I love him. I love him.

Q. Jared, you've had a memorable impact here on this program in a very short time. Can you just talk a little bit about what Duke has meant to you and what this team has meant to you coming here all the way across the country?

JARED McCAIN: Yeah, it's meant everything to me to come here for Coach to believe in me, for my teammates to believe in me. Especially in the beginning of the year when I felt like I couldn't get things going as a freshman, they instilled confidence in me, especially him right here.

THE MODERATOR: We'll excuse our student-athletes.

Questions for Coach Scheyer.

Q. Jon, when they got rolling in the second half, I know asking you to second-guess it 20 minutes after the fact is a tough deal, but what could have gone differently to get them out of an offensive rhythm?

JON SCHEYER: Well, I have to go back and watch the film for sure, but I thought it was our offense that hurt our defense. I mean, it gives a team, especially these guys -- it gives them life when you miss an open three, you get the rebound, and then you throw to them for a fastbreak or give them run-outs. The whole game changes.

For me really our defense was a product of our offense. That was a start. Look, with Burns and Horne, obviously they've done this a lot to other people, but you can't let both of them get going.

Burns we could live with to a certain extent, although I still think some of those, again, he got late and all that, but he hurt us, no question. But we couldn't let Horne get going also. I think there were some breakdowns there that I'll have to go back and watch and see. You can't let them both get going.

Q. You know what the standard is here, and twice you've tried to get to the Final Four. Haven't gotten there yet. What's your view of where things are and how this job has stacked up for you, and what have these two years been like?

JON SCHEYER: To be honest with you, I'm not thinking about my job and these two years. I'm thinking about the fact that this group just came back after having a tough ACC Tournament loss and have played their hearts out in three tournament games, and they're winning at halftime. They're heartbroken after the game because it didn't go the way they wanted it to. I'm thinking about these guys.

Where is our program at? I think our program couldn't be in a stronger place. We're just 20 minutes away from going to a Final Four in our second year. I don't shy away from our expectations or what we want to do, but for me, that's not the way I'm thinking at all. I'm just hurting for these guys right now.

Tough loss. I've always used the motivation in my time at Duke from the things that happened. Some of the most heartbreaking moments in my career have happened at Duke. We didn't go to a Sweet 16 until my junior year. We didn't go to a Final Four and national championship until my senior year.

Culture is the hardest thing to have and to build, and you're doing it now with -- we did this with a fresh group. We had Jeremy Roach and Jaylen Blakes. I'm so proud of these guys.

What Jared McCain has done as a freshman in the NCAA Tournament is special, and we'll have to regroup and figure out who you have coming back and coming in and all that

stuff, but for me, I couldn't be more confident in where this thing is heading and what we're doing. That's not where my mind is at in the least bit.

Q. You guys dealt with a lot of adversity, especially with injuries throughout the season. Can you talk about how your team has stepped up and responded whenever their number has been called throughout the year, especially with a lot of those injuries?

JON SCHEYER: To be honest with you, I don't think that's talked about, right? For us, you need to be a little fortunate with some things. Look, it's part of the game. That's the way it is. That's why you have a team. That's why you need other guys to step up.

Happened to Houston last game. That's how it goes. We played the whole postseason without Caleb Foster, who has been a key guy for us. Last year, the tournament was without Mark.

Obviously that's hurt our continuity, no question. That's no excuse. That's part of it. We have to continue to have a team where if somebody goes down, we can step up, which these guys did. I thought our back court was terrific the whole year. Even stepping up without Caleb, Jaylen Blakes, the minutes that he gave us. Continuity is important, and we'll have to figure out how to do that better next year.

Q. I know you said it's tough for you to kind of take a step back in the big picture after a game like this, but you guys were the only team that didn't have a transfer in and out this last year in the age of the transfer portal.

Will a result like this or how things went this season, will that impact the way you look to build the roster going forward instead of going heavy on the recruiting trail, maybe look for some guys in the portal?

JON SCHEYER: Again, I'm not there right now, but I'll tell you, I'm proud of how we've done it in a unique way. Just because you do something this way this year, I mean, look, that's not going to happen for next year. There's just no way. There's too much. It's been such a blessing coaching basketball games and every day you see hundreds of kids go in the transfer portal. That's just the world we live in.

We're going to continue to adapt and adjust with all that, but you are always looking for balance. When you have our team this year, when you have a Filipowski, when you have a Mitchell, a Proctor, those guys come back. Well, you always want to build from within if you can. Getting

those guys returning where you have a relationship, you've been through some battles together, there's always value in that.

Again, I'm not going to give you any big answers on what we're going to do this offseason or next year. We have to digest this loss first, which will take some time. Like we've experienced this postseason, some of the beauty of the tournament, and this is the heartbreak of it. We have to figure out why.

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