

# Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 10, 2023

Chicago, Illinois, USA

United Center

**Penn State Nittany Lions**

**Micah Shrewsbury**

**Jalen Pickett**

**Andrew Funk**

**Seth Lundy**

Postgame Press Conference

Penn State - 67, Northwestern - 65

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by the Penn State Nittany Lions, head coach Micah Shrewsbury, Seth Lundy, Andrew Funk and Jalen Pickett.

MICAH SHREWSBURY: Again, like my hat's off to Northwestern. They've had an unbelievable season. It's not over for them. They're going to play next week, and they're going to cause people problems. Those two guards are really good.

And their defense is fantastic. We've struggled with that. We got it going a little bit better in the second half and hit a couple shots in the overtime, but they really bottled us up for a long time.

I'm proud of our guys. Like this is -- I think tonight was the definition of probably gritty, not pretty. We're showing that we can win in a couple different ways. We can go bombs away from three. We can be a great offensive team.

But you can't have that night every night, and here recently, our defense has been really good. If we're not making shots, we can guard people and grind out some tough wins.

**Q. Seth, with 47 seconds left in overtime, you took that pull-up three. It looked like Micah was telling you to pass the ball to Pickett there. What was going through your head at that moment?**

MICAH SHREWSBURY: I was. It was a great audible by his part though.



**Q. What gave you the confidence to rise up in that situation?**

SETH LUNDY: Just having confidence in myself. I'm in the gym every single day. It's nothing new for me. I felt like I've doing it my whole career. It was a great opportunity. I felt like I was trying to front him anyway and I didn't want to have a turnover. I felt like getting up a shot was better than nothing. I just iso'd him and that was the outcome.

**Q. Take me through what went through things from your eyes and how close that final shot looked to going in.**

JALEN PICKETT: Definitely. We talked about it right before they went. We felt like he was going to throw it right at the rim. We've got to do a better job of getting those guys out of there. I was looking at it, and my heart dropped for a second. When it popped out, I was full of joy.

**Q. Andrew, went three up in that last second. Was that the game plan or was that an audible for you?**

ANDREW FUNK: Coach pulled me aside when Seth was shooting his free throws and talking through all the scenarios, especially after he made the first one. If he would have made that second one, we would have left it be, obviously up four. He told me to stay up, and if it did come off, get one right away. Obviously the outcome ended the way it did.

**Q. Jalen, when you miss a lot of free throws, sometimes it takes away from other parts of the game, but you guys didn't let that bother you. What's up with the free throws, and how did you overcome it?**

JALEN PICKETT: We were just talking about that in the locker room. We're actually a pretty good free-throw shooting team. You miss a couple, it gets mental. But our teammates and the encouragement they give us every time we go to the line, next-play mentality, make this next one, we're going to get it back and get a stop for you.



So just believing in each other and keep working.

**Q. Seth, down the stretch of the season, you had some ups and downs there, but it seems like your confidence has never wavered in terms of taking shots. What has kind of gone into building that approach over these couple of years in college to get to now?**

SETH LUNDY: Like I said before, just believing in myself and like just sticking to my work and just believing in my faith. Everybody has ups and downs. The best person in the world does so. So there's nothing to it with me. I just try to stay focused.

Next-game mentality. Next-possession mentality.

**Q. You guys had a quick turnaround the last couple days. Got another quick turnaround tomorrow. How do you stay prepared during a tournament like this?**

JALEN PICKETT: Definitely. We're going to get in with Justin, our trainer. We're going to do some stretching tonight, film work, and just treatment all day today, probably in the morning after breakfast have another stretching section.

We're going to let the adrenaline kick in and get us going.

**Q. Andrew, the last shot in regulation, what did you see from where you were?**

ANDREW FUNK: Yeah, man, it looked good. I was having flashbacks to last week after it didn't go. I guess I owe them one. I owe my teammates one at the end of regulation there.

Cam made a great play, drew two defenders, freed me up a little bit. I'm going to let it go when I'm open. It felt great off the hands, but then even going into overtime, I felt great about the group I was going into the last five minutes with.

**Q. It was on line, right?**

ANDREW FUNK: Absolutely. Just a little long. The adrenaline kicking in a little bit.

**Q. Funk, it looked like you were attacking closeouts more this game. A little more confidence off the dribble. We saw you shush the crowd today. Do you feel like you're hitting your stride at this point this season with your confidence and how you're playing?**

ANDREW FUNK: Definitely. It's kind of been that way all

year, run me off the three-point line. It's honestly something I need to do better, knowing when to shot fake and when to attack closeouts. Like you said, I think I did a good job and got in the flow of it. Getting that and-one out of halftime, it gives me confidence putting the ball on the floor.

I think picking my spots with the guys around me has gone a long way, and definitely finding my groove in terms of how we're all playing together.

**Q. Seth, question for you: I know you were on the team in 2020, and you guys were headed to the Tournament. Just at this time of year, it's been a long kind of circle to get back there. What's going through your mind about what this means for the program knowing they haven't been in the NCAA Tournament since 2011?**

SETH LUNDY: Yeah, at one point of the season we were having a lot of ups and downs. We were 5-9 in Big Ten play. I just talked to my team and like I remember that feeling, about to go to the Tournament. I was just saying to myself, I can't go out without getting that experience.

We just fought every single day. Like in practice, we just had a different mentality. We've really believed in each other, and we knew we'd be a really good team when everybody is locked in and focused. Ever since then, we've just been on a rampage to just get better every single day and to just go out there and play with confidence.

**Q. Micah, just wanted to ask, I vividly remember sitting at Indianapolis last year and listening to your post-game press conference after the Purdue game, and you did not want to leave that podium. It was like I think you talked for almost 18, 20 minutes. It showed to me how much the games mean to you. I just want to know how you're feeling year two and you're in this position about to play in the Big Ten Tournament semifinals after how close you were last year against a really good Purdue team.**

MICAH SHREWSBURY: The press conference is so long because I'm long-winded too. Like I can't stop smiling, sitting here. Like I'm enjoying every moment with this group. It's so fun. So fun to be with them. They prepare the right way.

We weren't at our best, and you could tell. You could tell early, like in warmups. Like our coaches are like, I don't know if we have it tonight. Last night was really emotional in how we won and quick turnaround.

But they dug deep, and they found it. I'm just having a blast. I'm having a blast. Pinching myself. Man, we get a chance to play tomorrow. We're in the semifinals of the Big Ten Tournament, like a tournament I've been watching as a little kid, and now I get a chance to coach it.

**Q. Can you just talk a little bit about Kanye Clary, his poise as a freshman and how he's kind of added a new wrinkle to your offense as of late?**

MICAH SHREWSBURY: I tried to get him in early. We needed a little bit of a spark. I didn't think we had it early. Trying to get him in early. He's such a change-of-pace guard, especially to Pickett. It's like the tortoise and the hare out there.

He's so fast. He can get to the rim. Sometimes he doesn't always make the right play, but his heart is in the right place. So he's growing and getting better. We need him. He was big time for us. Ten big points for us, attacking the rim, getting baskets when we needed it.

I think that steadied us and gave us confidence to continue to play. It gave me confidence to keep him in in tough situations down the stretch.

**Q. Coach, you had 15 turnovers in today's game. It's a season high for you guys, and they scored 23 off of that. How many of those were just your simple errors and how much of that was them being really solid defensively?**

MICAH SHREWSBURY: It's an area we have to clean up. We haven't been great here in the last probably four games or so. We've really turned the ball over a lot the first half. Then we've been better in the second half. This time it continued. But they're good defensively. They cause you problems.

They're hard heads, drags you all the way out to half-court, and then you're trying to make passes through long arms with guys ready to rotate. They fly around. They come over and trap the box. They take charges. They're a well-drilled defensive team.

So they probably cause a lot of those.

**Q. I don't know how many times I've written "must win" since the end of the at-Maryland game, but this must have been like pushing a boulder uphill forever. Now what's it feel like to be able to exhale because you really can now?**

MICAH SHREWSBURY: But we don't want to. Like we're having fun, like I said. Like it's fun to go out there every

single day with these guys. It's fun to prepare with them. It's fun to like just being there eating dinner together at night.

We don't want this thing to end. We never want this thing to end. We want to play as long as possible.

It was. It was hard. It was challenging. But none of those guys ever lost faith. They believed. They believed in each other, and they believed in what we could do as a team.

Maybe it took a little bit longer than we wanted to, but we always said we want to play our best basketball in March, and I think we're doing that right now.

**Q. Micah, do you feel like you guys are playing more freely, maybe with some of the confidence that you've locked yourself into the NCAA Tournament at this point?**

MICAH SHREWSBURY: I don't know. I think we're playing good basketball. I think that's what spurred us a little bit more. They're seeing what, if we play the right way, they're seeing the rewards of it. Like when you do that, like when you have that feeling, you want to keep that going.

So like I said, I didn't think we had it from an energy standpoint. We turned the ball over a little bit too much, but I thought we were guarding, and I thought we competed, and we played the right way and made timely plays when we needed to. Now we get a chance to play again tomorrow.

**Q. Micah, going back to Seth and how he was shooting it tonight and that level of confidence, what's it like to coach someone like him where I think that he feels like he can make any shot and he can make a lot of them too?**

MICAH SHREWSBURY: He does feel like he can make any shot, right? Like sometimes, like yeah. I thought we were going to try to get the ball to Pickett there. He had Buie there, but Seth works on his game more than anybody.

One of our GAs, Taaj Ridley and Josh Townsend, they're in the gym with those guys nonstop. Taaj always posts it on Instagram, calls it "daily vitamins." We've got a lot of guys getting their daily vitamins in. Seth has probably shot that shot millions of times.

He was feeling it. He was confident. When he looked and kind of like backed up, I was like -- you know, I felt good about it either way because he's made tough shots like

that. If he didn't make it, we were going to get a stop and come down and score again.

That's how good I felt about how we were guarding, what we were doing, and I knew somebody would come down the stretch and make a tough one.

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