

Camping World Maui Invitational

Monday, November 30, 2020

Asheville, North Carolina, USA

North Carolina Tar Heels

Coach Roy Williams

Andrew Platek

Armando Bacot

Postgame Press Conference

North Carolina - 78, UNLV - 51

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from coach and then take questions.

ROY WILLIAMS: I'll take my mask off to do this, but I'm not taking my mask off to coach a game. I see a lot of guys doing it, but I'm not that comfortable.

Opening statement. Okay. You know, those guys who have been around here a long time know that, knew that I wasn't going to call a timeout and I told them when it was the TV timeout that I didn't get us in a problem. They did. And they came out tried to double our post and we threw it out and shot the ball on the first pass out and none of them went in and we also didn't do a very good job of guarding and Bryce got off to a much better start than we wanted him to. But I felt okay about the score. I told them at the first timeout I wasn't worried about the score. I was just worried about how we were playing. And then I think the two guys that are here to talk to you, Armando and Andrew, were very efficient. Armando was 4-4 and Andrew was 4-6 and we got to get everybody to have that kind of feeling of being efficient with the ball, not just getting a number of shots up. So after the first six minutes or so, I thought we did some good things and got better and I hope -- and I hope and think we learned a lot from tonight. That's about it.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for the players.

Q. Andrew, after the 13-0 run, you guys not only closed out strong in the first half, I think it was 15-3 to close the first half, but then 11-1 to start the second half. How huge was it to be able to extend the run into



the second half?

ANDREW PLATEK: We knew, as coach said before in his statement, when we went down, he wasn't concerned about the score. I think we were worried for a second, but then we just knew if we played our principles and played our game plan we were going to be fine. And that run that we went on afterwards was a culmination of that. So just sticking to what we know how to do helped us go on that run and keep our foot on the gas in the second half.

Q. Going back to that timeout when Roy's telling you guys, you know, don't worry about the score, it really seemed like you were able to use your defense to sort of propel you guys on that run. Bryce stopped getting so hot, you guys were grabbing all the rebounds. What does that say about the defensive potential of this team and how does that compare to some of the defensive lapses maybe that you guys would have seen last season?

ANDREW PLATEK: Well, I think that we're so big and we're so long and Leaky was unbelievable tonight on Bryce, just not letting him get to his spots, denying him the ball, and when he would get the ball, making him take, like, tough fall-away jump shots and stuff he wasn't comfortable with. And Leaky is that kind of player on the defensive end. He can do that to anybody in the country just because he's so big and can use his length so well. But I think what we didn't have last year was two really big interior post guys that we could rotate, so, like, if our two bigs get tired, we got two more big guys coming in right after. And they're not the biggest team in the world, so I think we kind of used that to our advantage. And they shoot a lot of threes anyway, but they weren't getting anything inside, so that helped us.

Q. After the first game, no one shot it well from three-point range. What was, I mean, did your confidence, at all, dip? You seemed to be assertive when you came out early in that first half when everybody else had missed so many shots to start the game and I felt like your threes were able to kind of loosen everything up.

ANDREW PLATEK: No, I just keep shooting because I



... when all is said, we're done.®

know they're going to go in and that's just my mentality, just the next one's going to go. I was actually watching a lot of Klay Thompson stuff, like, in between last game and this game, like, when he was in a slump and it's, like, what is anyone going to tell me about, well, this was his words, like, the interview from when he was slumping, like, what is somebody going to tell Klay Thompson about, like, his jump shots or whatever. So he is just going to shoot the next shot because he's a really good shooter. I'm not equating myself, obviously, to someone of his level, but it's the same mentality as someone at any age. You just got to keep going and keep the confidence in yourself that the next one's going to fall.

Q. Armando, what was the key defensively after UNLV came out and hit their first five shots? What was the key in kind of settling down?

ARMANDO BACOT: Just, like, just to go out there and hustle and not let them get the easy open looks and shots that they wanted. Early we struggled to just get back on defense and obviously was missing a couple shots. They were making shots, so we just knew we had to go out there and just play hard.

Q. The rebounding, you guys dominated them on the glass. The longer the game went on, the more shots they missed, you guys got them all. How much of a, how much of a strong feeling did that feel for you guys tonight in terms of you knew you were going to get your hands on them every time it seemed like?

ARMANDO BACOT: Yeah, we just know that's one of our strong suits for the season just with us being so deep in the front court and having so much length. We know that's something we can lean on. Even if our shots aren't falling as long as we attack the glass and get a lot of rebounds that will give us the advantage over the other team and get us extra shots.

Q. I was going to ask you about you guys got in such a big early hole, but you responded in a way that maybe last year might not have happened. Is there a confidence that these guys can get from that, do you think?

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, I hope so and I think it should. I congratulated them during the timeout. I congratulated them at halftime. And I congratulated them after the game, so I'm hoping that that will be something that will help them, there's no question. But we have got to play better. I mean, you can't spot a lot of people 13 and think you're going to come back and win. So we got to play better during that time period.

Q. This is Walker Kessler's first significant playing time. What do you like about his skill set and how do you think he played tonight?

ROY WILLIAMS: Well, again, you're concerned about his conditioning more than anything and I think with each and every day of practice and each and every game, he'll help that a little bit. But he is really long, guys, and he can bother shots inside, he can get his hands on some offensive rebounds that the other guys can't get, and then you saw him dive on the floor like that tonight, that kind of effort is only going to get him a heck of a lot more playing time. But I'm comfortable with all those guys. It was tougher on DayRon and Armando probably with all the double teams they were doing because DayRon is going to be a fantastic player. He's going to be a fantastic player this year, and I hope even this week, but that was something that, it was new for them. It was only the second game we played and so it was something that bothered them more than it bothers, usually bothers our teams.

Q. First game against Charleston and then again tonight it looked like both teams are wanting to make your guards beat them, given your, the size you've got up front. What do you tell your backcourt guys to how to respond to that?

ROY WILLIAMS: Make shots. (Laughing.) I know that's the easiest answer, but it is, you've got to have the confidence, but you got to take good shots. Just because they double-team you and you throw it out and you shoot it immediately that's not, that's what their coach wants to do. I want them to do what I want to do. So we have got to understand that part.

And I think RJ's a good shot shooter. I think Caleb is a good shooter. Andrew made some tonight -- I'm leaving somebody -- Kerwin, I think is a good shooter. He made one for us in the first half. But those guys have got to take good shots and I think they will go in. I think we're going to shoot it better this year than we did last year for sure, but we haven't done it the first two games, so...

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