

Camping World Maui Invitational

Tuesday, December 1, 2020
Asheville, North Carolina, USA

Davidson Wildcats Coach Bob McKillop Sam Mennenga Postgame Press Conference

Providence - 63, Davidson - 62

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with coach.

BOB MCKILLOP: Hard fought game for both teams. To be down by, I think 19 points like we were, to come back, I couldn't be more proud of our guys.

Q. How do you keep close losses -- obviously, you guys had a shot to win tonight and yesterday -- how do you keep these close losses from becoming mental where guys, instead of looking to win, are thinking, are playing not to lose?

BOB MCKILLOP: Well, that's a challenge to both the players and the coaching staff and I feel confident that our guys are mature enough and disciplined enough to understand that the process of getting better is a big part of this, and it's a process, and what can we learn from it.

Well, last night we got a great look with about 10 seconds to go. We fought for the rebound, got another great look with three seconds to go.

Tonight we got a great look with, I guess, about eight seconds to go, 10 seconds to go for Lee and then we got another as good as you can get with 1.2 seconds for Sam. So we have done everything but put the ball in the basket. And if you put the ball in the basket, in either two of four of those occasions, we're a pretty happy group of guys right now and are we going to let one miss knock us out? Ain't no way, not in my vocabulary, not in my history, not in our players' history.

So we're going to move on forward and understand that we're getting better because of this experience.



Q. And this isn't so much about tonight, but how did you discover Sam? Where did you -- in the recruiting world, how did you come across him?

BOB MCKILLOP: He played for the NBA Academy in Australia and came to the United States during Final Four weekend. We had heard about him. We have got a network of international connections that are outstanding. We saw him play in Atlanta during Final Four weekend. We were very, very impressed and we couldn't be more happy to have him in our program because I think he's going to be a guy that years from now people are going to say, Wow, he was a pretty special player for Davidson's program.

Q. Curious what you were trying to do with Watson. Was he just too much of a load inside all night for you?

BOB MCKILLOP: Well, we were thinking about doubling him. We did it once. And I thought they did some terrific things to get him the ball.

And then of course he made those two jump shots on the baseline, and then -- is he the one that hit both bank shots? I know they had two bank shots rather unorthodox at the top of the key. Was he at both of them? We have no defense for that.

Q. And then the last shot. That's what you were looking for for Lee, I would imagine, he gets right to the rim.

BOB MCKILLOP: Yeah, I think he got a pretty good look and it just didn't, well, I thought it was in. If he had just a little bit more lift on it, then -- and credit Providence, they were right there and they made it a very difficult shot, so credit them.

How long you been at the journal, about 30, 40 years?

Oh, he can't hear me.

Q. Almost as long as you've been at Davidson. We're having a race, coach. (Laughing.)

BOB MCKILLOP: Here comes Sam. Sam's going to be



here for you.

THE MODERATOR: Take questions for Sam.

Q. I was wondering, first, if you could just take me through that shot with 1.3 seconds left. Did you feel like you got a clean look or were you just trying to get it off as fast as you could?

SAM MENNENGA: Yeah, I thought it was a pretty clean look. I was contemplating whether I could take a dribble to the rim or not, but there was 1.3 seconds, so that's the best look I felt like we could get, based on when he passed it to me and I just had to put it up.

Q. Not so much about tonight, but just in general, your path to Davidson, how do you feel like being here in that spring semester last year, how much do you feel like that helped you get acclimated to where, do you really even feel like a freshman right now since you had a chance to kind of learn the system?

SAM MENNENGA: It helps so much. I don't feel like a freshman at all, because I've got to know the guys tremendously and not just on the court, but off the court, which is huge.

I think settling in, coming from New Zealand, settling in to college, to the life there, knowing how everything works is a huge help so I can hit the season running.

Q. And at what point did you know you wanted to come to the States to play college?

SAM MENNENGA: I've always wanted to come ever since I was little. So I was just working to get that and now I'm here and got to keep pushing.

Q. What would you a tribute the slow start when Providence jumped up, I think it was 27-9 at one point, why do you feel like you guys kind of took awhile to get going?

SAM MENNENGA: I'm not sure. I think fatigue, I think from yesterday fighting so hard and then losing at the buzzer.

There's a lot that goes into it. I feel like it just, we were just, we weren't ready and it took us that 10, 15 minutes to get ready and by that time they were up however much they were.

Q. Did they play you any differently than you expected? It seemed like it was tougher for you to get into an offensive flow tonight?

SAM MENNENGA: I think just the switching caught me off guard. They did a good job switching and then once they switched the guards fronting was great.

But I got to get better at adjusting to that and getting down to the dunk spot, getting out to the three and creating space.

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