

# Camping World Maui Invitational

Wednesday, December 2, 2020  
Asheville, North Carolina, USA

## Providence Friars Coach Ed Cooley David Duke

Postgame Press Conference

Alabama - 88, Providence 71

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from coach.

ED COOLEY: I hope everybody's well. Where do you start? First, you got to give credit to Alabama. They did exactly what they wanted to do, how they wanted to do it. We were a half step slow today on all levels, guarding the ball, anticipation, got manhandled on the glass, got manhandled in transition. Very, very disappointed in our performance. We got a long way to go to become the team we want to become. Hopefully we can stay healthy from this virus and build a team because right now we're nowhere near ready to compete in the Big East to be a factor in that league.

So that's my opening statement. You guys can talk to David and I'll answer some questions when I come back.

But right now, the Friars got a long way to go.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for David.

**Q. Do you think the group as a whole just wasn't ready to play tonight or do you think that you got tired? It seemed as if Alabama was a couple steps ahead of you guys.**

DAVID DUKE: Yeah, I can take some of the responsibility in not really getting the guys as prepared as I should. As a leader, that's your job. You got to inspire your group. You got to inspire the key guys to come out and give us a spark off the jump, and I think tonight I didn't do that well and that just trickled down. That put coach in a tough spot to try a lot of different lineups.



So, yeah, I think I'll take that one and I just got to be better and inspire the guys and motivate them to come out with that sense of urgency.

**Q. What did you learn about your team on this trip?**

DAVID DUKE: That we do, we are a long way from where we want to be, that there are some good things that we saw, but as you can tell, there were a lot of bad things and there's just some things that we need to clean up and we're going to take that, go back, practice, and prepare for our next opponent.

But everything, from all the losses, we can just take a bunch of lessons and fix them. Like we said, we're a long way from where we want to be, so we just got to chip away and try to get there.

**Q. What makes playing Alabama, their system up-and-down, a lot of threes, what made them so hard to defend tonight?**

DAVID DUKE: Like coach said, they did exactly what they wanted to do, run, get a lot of threes up, and tonight they hit a lot of threes and credit to them for shooting the ball really well.

I think we didn't get back in transition as well and when the other team is making threes, that can hurt the energy of a group, and we just needed to find guys to really lock in and take pride in defending the ball, defending the driver, to close out, don't get blown by, and things like that, but tonight we just failed to do that. So that was all it was.

**Q. You mentioned the good stretches of play that you guys had on the offensive end and some of the lapses there. What's the challenge to be able to try to string that together for five, six, seven possessions at a time and hopefully string something together?**

DAVID DUKE: I think that comes with IQ, just knowing what you're doing when you're on the floor. Also, chemistry, knowing who is good at what, putting guys in positions for them to succeed, and we want to score off our defense, so when we're getting stops, that's when we're more confident on offense. When we're not getting so

many stops, then it's really tough on the offensive end. You put a lot of pressure to put the ball in the basket when you can't stop the other team from scoring.

So I think that's one thing that will help us on the offensive end. It starts with us on our defensive side.

**Q. What can you take out of the stretch where you fall behind by 20 in the second half and you shaved it down to 11. In terms of the guys that came in, is there something that you can, a positive that you can take out of that?**

DAVID DUKE: Yeah, credit to them. They were ready when their number was called. Coach went with the lineup that he trusted and we went out there and just tried to give it all we got and unfortunately we weren't able to get over that little hump, but we did show some fight in there for that little segment.

So credit to those who came in and really gave us a spark.

**Q. You guys had some issues last year in nonconference this time of the year and obviously rallied to have a really strong end to the end of the season. Does that give you any confidence that a slow start doesn't determine your finish?**

DAVID DUKE: I'll never give up on the team, no matter what. No matter what happens, I'll never give up on the team. So, regardless, we just focus on our next opponent and that's all we got to do.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for coach.

**Q. Curious, the experience of covering, of having three games with no fans, crowd noise, cutouts, it's a different vibe. Does it affect anything you do? Does it change anything you do with calling plays so the other team doesn't maybe hear it, trying to get energy out of your guys, is there something different about it?**

ED COOLEY: You know, being the fourth game, honestly, I really didn't, it really doesn't factor in. The first game was probably the toughest.

But for me coaching the group, no, I don't feel any change. That's maybe a question more for the players, but I don't feel a change at all. It's a great question, yet, I mean, I can't, I mean, I don't recognize the fans.

**Q. Alabama was one of the fastest teams in the country last year. Of course after three games you guys were looking a little tired tonight. What was it like having to adjust to Alabama's pace of play after**

**three games in three days?**

ED COOLEY: Yeah, I mean, they're very, very hard to play that tempo. When you play teams like that you got to try to control it on offense, but if you're not making shots and you're giving up second shots -- I mean, it's not like they shot a scintillating percentage, you know? I mean, they got 20 offensive rebounds.

I got to do a better job coaching my team defensively. But right now we're just not very good defensively and that's very odd for a team that we coach. Our staff thrives on it and they took advantage of us in every way. We were a half step slow to everything.

So give them credit, they played the way they wanted to play, they executed, they made shots, they rebounded the ball, long, long way to go for us to be a good basketball team.

**Q. What kind of importance is this going to now put on with Fairleigh Dickinson coming up. How do you get this thing turned around in two days?**

ED COOLEY: Well, the good thing is we're going to play another game. I'm not very happy with how we played in this tournament at all. I'm happy we came away with at least a win. Yet there are so many holes right now on our team. We have to figure out, as a staff, rotation; we got to figure out what combinations work well.

At the end of the day we need to play some tough kids that know what they're going to do, that know systematically how we want to play. To get beat by 20 rebounds is just embarrassing. I promise you, we'll be ready to play on whenever our next game is. We'll be ready. We'll be prepared.

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