

Maui Invitational presented by Novavax

Wednesday, November 27, 2024
Lahaina, Hawaii, USA
Lahaina Civic Center

North Carolina Tar Heels Coach Hubert Davis Drake Powell Eliot Cadeau

Postgame Press Conference

Michigan State 94, North Carolina 91 (OT)

Q. Drake and Elliot, you guys did take that one point lead at one point in overtime, but you guys shot 2 for 8 in that overtime period. What did you think about the shots you were getting and what kept you from extending the lead at that point?

DRAKE POWELL: I think they just didn't fall, really. I thought we took great shots. I thought the right players took the shots. Yeah, they just didn't fall.

Q. Elliot, you guys were able to force overtime. I think you were down seven in the final minute and a half of regulation. How do you think you guys were able to pull that off? What sort of fight did you see in the way you guys were able to extend the game?

ELLIOT CADEAU: I think we just shifted our focus on defense. I feel like we never have a problem offensively and scoring, so it was just a matter of getting stops, and that's basically all we were talking about in the huddle, just getting stops, getting rebounds, and that's what we tried to do.

Q. The shot there from Seth to force overtime, looked like it might be a play for RJ coming on the weak side. Can you take us through that and how he ended up with it, making the shot?

ELLIOT CADEAU: Yeah, it was a play for RJ in the corner and also the second option was Seth coming back on the screen and that was the read, so we got that.

Q. For both players, it's a tough loss, but what can



you take from this type that you've had here in Maui, and what do you want to focus on as you start to move forward into the rest of your season?

DRAKE POWELL: Personally, as a kid coming from Pittsboro you don't get to come out here to Maui and see the things that I've seen. I've seen great views and just play the game that I love with the people that I love at a place that I love.

Q. Elliot, obviously you displayed a degree of frustration; missed that lay-up. I know you guys obviously did go into overtime. What do you remember about that sequence of events?

ELLIOT CADEAU: Yeah, I just remember it being a big shot and I missed, but I told Seth in the huddle thank you for having my back, and he came back and hit the shot for me. So yeah.

Q. Elliot, what was the feeling of this group leaving with two losses in three games back to back?

ELLIOT CADEAU: I feel like we feel hungry now. We know that nothing is going to be given to us, and we just learned a lot from it. I think the main thing we learned from it is our toughness just has to be better.

We have to be more tough. I feel like we're going to start bringing that every day in practice. We have to. We have no choice. So I think that's one thing.

Q. Drake, how would you assess what the problem is with the starts that you guys have had? I think it's like an 11-point deficit on average at halftime for you guys, and the starts haven't been there. What do you think is going wrong and what needs to change?

DRAKE POWELL: Well, first, you're exactly right. We come out flat and put ourselves in a hole to where we're trying to come back the whole game. Like Elliot said, I think it's just the toughness. We've got to want to get the 50/50 balls, want to get defensive rebounds, offensive rebounds.

We've have to do all the dirty work, and I think we'll do that continuing forward.

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Q. The last few games you've really taken a bigger role. Seems like confidence is up on both ends of the floor. What's been working for you and what's your head space at this point?

DRAKE POWELL: Just to keep playing and just growing my game, and whatever is asked of me by my coaches, my teammates, I feel like I can do it at a high level. Yeah, just going forward, just looking forward to the next game.

Q. Hubert, Xavier Booker for them has not done much of note this season and had a really impactful second half. I'm wondering what the scouting report was on him given what he had done this year and what his impact was on the game for them.

HUBERT DAVIS: Well, I thought he had a huge impact on both ends of the floor. I thought like his left defensively when we tried to get to the basket, if he didn't block a shot, he altered a shot. I felt like from an offensive standpoint, he played to his size.

I would say normally he drifts to the outside and shoots threes and did a really good job rolling to the basket. Offensive rebounds, being able to finish around the basket with his length and his athleticism.

I thought he caused problems with us on both ends of the floor.

Q. It feels like when you extend pressure, it unlocks your athleticism in your group. Have you thought about from the jump extending a little bit more, getting them locked in?

HUBERT DAVIS: I've thought about a lot.

Q. Hubert, what did you think the difference was in that overtime period? Of course small amount of time, obviously, but you guys go up one, they end up kind of taking the lead. What do you think was the separator down the stretch?

HUBERT DAVIS: Well, the separator is just the possession by possession, little details here, whether it's -- it just comes down to a make-or-miss situation. We put it into overtime, and as you mentioned, we were able to take the lead in overtime, and those times you've got to tighten the screws in terms of the discipline and details of getting stops.

Guys, they scored 50 points in the paint. I mean, just in shot 55 percent from the field. I mean, you guys can keep asking me questions, but it's right here. We have to

improve defensively.

To say that we took it to overtime letting a team score 55 percent from the field, 50 points in the paint, they beat us on the boards and they beat us at the free-throw line and it went into overtime? I mean, it's right here.

Q. To that point, do you have to change something defensively? Maybe with switching everything? Do you just have to change what you're doing defensively or with the lineup?

HUBERT DAVIS: Well, I definitely think this gives time to be able to look and do a deep dive in terms of doing something, maybe tweak, a little pivot, alter, or maybe even change because what we're doing defensively is not sustainable, especially against good teams.

We've always struggled defensively in the first half. Second half we've picked it up. Now with the level of play that is increased, it's made it even more difficult.

So yeah, you're right. We've got a game next week, and we've got a full week to really take a close look at some things that we're going to have to change or maybe stay the course and work even harder to be able to put us in a position to do better consistently for longer periods of time on the defensive end.

Q. Hubert, what was the sequence that led to the technical, and do you think you deserved a technical?

HUBERT DAVIS: I'm not going to comment on that, but I never use profanity. I never show up anybody.

Q. Can you talk about Drake's emergence here? You're obviously gaining more confidence in him. What is he doing to deserve all that playing time?

HUBERT DAVIS: Well, I would disagree just because he had playing time that I'm gaining confidence. I don't equate confidence in regards to a number on a stat sheet. But I was very happy with the way that Ian and Drake played. I thought they stepped up for us on both ends of the floor, and I was happy with their effort tonight.

Q. Where are you at on the starts? Three straight games with double digit deficits in the first half. I know you don't like it, obviously. Are you pulling your hair out at this?

HUBERT DAVIS: I don't have any hair. Or limited hair.

Q. What is the frustration level with this? That's another thing, it feels like you've just got to fix it.

HUBERT DAVIS: No, guys, this gives us a -- one of the things that I love about playing in this tournament and playing the competition that we're playing is it really gives you a clear picture on the things that you need to work on.

There's things that -- there's problems that some people can't change. There's just no solution to it. And there's things that you can change. One of the things I told the team is the things that need to be changed I feel like can be with this group.

I believe in this team. I love coaching them. They're a bunch of unbelievable and great kids, and I'm honored and blessed to be their coach.

Q. Obviously you guys are wanting to be the fast-paced team that you have been thus far, but when it comes to the defensive side of the ball, does the increase in possessions almost make for another challenge defensively, if that makes sense? From a points-per-game perspective, the increase in possessions, does that create almost another challenge for you as a defense?

HUBERT DAVIS: I don't think so. I've said before to play at our pace there needs to be a full commitment and everybody has got to be in the best shape of their life, and we check those two boxes.

Again, we gave up 50 points in the paint. We gave up 50 points in the paint against Kansas. We only had the lead for a minute and eight seconds, and in the game last night we didn't take the lead once.

We've got to find a way to get off to better starts in the first half and find a way to get better defensively and rebounding the basketball. Those are things that we're going to look at and fix and try to get better at.

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