

Crossroads Classic: Purdue vs Notre Dame

Saturday, December 19, 2020
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Coach Mike Brey

Trey Wertz

Notre Dame Fighting Irish Postgame Media Conference



Purdue 88, Notre Dame 78

MIKE BREY: Well, you've got to give Purdue credit because they shot the heck out of it the whole game. They started the game really shooting well from behind the arc. I thought they cooled off enough where we could make a run, and we did, and as soon as we tied it they banged down a couple again. So you've got to give credit to them.

That's the first time I had my seven guys that we've been counting on, with Durham and Djogo coming off the bench, and I kind of liked what I saw, and we've got to try and build on that. Our schedule is not going to let up, and that's a good thing. That's what we signed up for because Tuesday night will be a great challenge, as well.

Q. How big of a challenge is it for you guys when you can't get the five starters maybe all on one page scoring together the way you maybe need to?

MIKE BREY: Yeah, you know, I feel for P-Hub tonight, but you know what's amazing about him? I give him a lot of credit. So his roommate gets eligible, and everybody else is scoring, and I just thought he was really good with the ball, finding people, and we had him guarding their shooter, who we lost track of in the first half. He almost had -- he was almost a defensive stopper for us most of the game, and I think that took away from some scoring.

Now, we need him to score some, and he had good looks. He just didn't knock any down.

Q. Can you find answers defensively and on the backboard?

MIKE BREY: Yeah, I think we can. You know, I don't know what those are yet, but there's no question on that end of the floor, we're just giving up too much too easy. It puts such pressure on our offense.

I give Juwan Durham a lot of credit today coming off the bench. I thought in his 20 minutes he gave us some good stuff and was able to -- but we're going to have to look at some zone at some times. We tried to play a little bit today. They just were shooting the ball so well. I thought they'd come back to earth, and they never really did. They made 14 out of 28, and I didn't expect for them to shoot it like that.

Q. You kind of mentioned it the other night, but can you put into words what Trey Wertz has been able to do in like five days?

MIKE BREY: Yeah, it really is staggering. That was the easiest 27 with no forced action, just nice and easy, that maybe I've ever witnessed, and it was on -- he's got five assists, and I give him a lot of credit.

Now, I was talking to him last night, I said, so you're going to start your 6 fourth game. He started 63 games in Santa Clara. So he certainly knows how to play. He plays the right way. He's a great addition to our group, and I think he loves big challenges. I'm just kind of excited about him and the rest of the group, the seven, that seven, as we play more together.

Q. Do you now ride this rotation and starting lineup for a couple weeks?

MIKE BREY: I think so. Definitely until Tuesday. We've got to get some rest and be ready to go. We'll come out of the gate the same way on Tuesday with that 2-3 zone and come off the bench with Nick and Juwan. We've got to understand what we did with the schedule in December and not panic and just kind of -- let's keep working through it and seeing if we can pick off one and understand that it's a long process, but I do like the fact that today that was what I envisioned, those seven guys flying in and out of the game for each other.

Q. We've obviously only seen Wertz a little bit. I'm not sure how much you guys have been running him through in practice, but is he and Prentiss, is that a situation where Prentiss needs to operate with another point guard on the floor like that, or it just wasn't Prentiss's day do you think?

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

MIKE BREY: No, I don't think so. I think the two of them have played a lot together, and I think they'll be really, really good together.

You know, again, I thought we made Prentiss kind of a defensive stopper when 55 got going for them, and that probably took some of his legs out of him. I think you'll see the two of them joined at the hip scoring the ball moving forward.

But I think with Prentiss and Trey and I'll say Cormac and Dane, those guys, they're kind of perimeter players who understand the game, and they're unselfish. We had 21 assists. We were unselfish, and they share it, and if we continue to do that, we're going to score enough. We've just got to figure out how to dig in on that defensive end a little better.

Q. What do you take from seeing the team down 15 right before halftime rallying all the way back to tie it at 53 and then also how much does that maybe illustrate the slim margin for error for your team, that they can't expend all that energy just to draw even?

MIKE BREY: I was really proud of them. I told them after the game. We made a run to cut it to a two-possession game at halftime, and then we turned it over in the first four minutes in the second half. Then that hole, again, was too hard to dig out of. We'll go back and look at that and teach, but you know, it's a prideful group. They're disappointed when they lose. I mean, look at who we've lost to. Look at who we have put on the schedule and lost to. And again, it's not changing the rest of the month.

But I like that we've thrown ourselves to the wolves in December.

Q. Trey, what made it so hard for you guys to maybe get that one stop or that one rebound that was maybe going to push you over the edge this afternoon?

TREY WERTZ: I think we did it at times but I think we've just got to string it together. I think we don't necessarily have a defensive identity right now. I think that's something we've got to talk about as a team and with the coaches, just try to -- because I mean, we can score with the best of them, but we've got to get stops when we need to, so that's definitely we've got to talk about and fix going into the end of summer ACC play.

Q. What kind of a rhythm and a roll did you find yourself in today?

TREY WERTZ: I mean, I didn't try to force anything. I was comfortable out there. I was able to play with the guys in

practice the last couple days, and I just kind of took what was there, didn't try to force anything and just tried to move around and shoot when I was open.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports