

CBS Sports Classic: North Carolina vs. UCLA

Saturday, December 21, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Madison Square Garden

UCLA Bruins

Coach Mick Cronin

Tyler Bilodeau

Press Conference



North Carolina 76, UCLA 74

Q. Tyler, obviously a tough loss. You had a big game and obviously got in foul trouble. How hard was it to sit and watch it unravel a little bit and not be able to come back and hold them off?

TYLER BILODEAU: Yeah, it's tough. I've got to be smarter. Can't reach in on those or take silly fouls because it hurts the team. So that's on me.

Q. You were doing so well leading up to that. Did that make it even harder? Obviously the trajectory of the game was headed in a positive direction?

TYLER BILODEAU: Yeah, it's always frustrating because I want to be in the game and help my teammates out.

Q. Feel like sitting kind of took you out of rhythm when you got back in late in the game?

TYLER BILODEAU: No. I felt pretty locked in the whole game.

Q. Tyler, what's been your assessment of what went wrong. There were some missed free-throws. You missed a couple, the and-ones, the turnovers, sent to the line a lot. Do you think those three things?

TYLER BILODEAU: Yeah, there's a lot of factors that go into it, but I think those free throws definitely, and that's on me. I can't miss four free throws down the stretch there. It was a big part.

Then turnovers, too, we've got to be better at taking care of the ball.

Q. Did you think missed free throws, turnovers and --

MICK CRONIN: It's a rhetorical question. You miss eight free throws in the second half, two of those -- both of Skyy's, I don't know about Tyler, but we definitely missed the bonus on seven and eight.

So eight missed free throws is really ten. So I'm not sure if we missed another bonus. I know we missed two. So we had at least 10 missed opportunities at the foul line in the second half of the game.

Hard to win when -- two things: When your point guard player is minus 14 and turn it over late in the game. He's minus 14. Then when you miss eight free throws in the second half, two of those from the bonus from your other point guard. Hard to do. Hard to do.

Q. Tyler went out --

MICK CRONIN: Tyler played great. Obviously I'm not going to comment on officiating. Him going out changed the game. If he doesn't go out, if they call that a charge or a no-call, we obviously would be having a different press conference.

Q. Did you have an idea if he would come back in?

MICK CRONIN: Try to get it under five, especially the way the game was being called. The way the game was being called, you know...

Q. In the second half --

MICK CRONIN: Took a shot to the face in the first half.

Q. I know a lot of games like this teach you something about a team. Do you see a silver lining around this game?

MICK CRONIN: No. Zero. There's no silver linings in losses. None. Got to make free throws. Your point guards got to take care of the ball at the end of the game. That's what real teams do.



If that happened to Trent Perry, I'd understand.

You have veteran guys out there. You've got to make free throws. You've got to take care of the ball at the end of the game. Then also on the last play, you've got a trap going on with Dylan, and the same two guys against RJ and they fouled him.

Now, I haven't seen the clip, but I know it was called. What are we doing fouling the guy? Making pass at the No. 3, who's got two made baskets on the game. Instead we go over and foul him. This guy fouls out. You don't foul out with the game on the line. My teams don't do stuff like that.

So I'm still fighting to get this group -- it was the same thing last year, to where we were a couple years ago. But it's hard to find guys as smart as Tyger and Dave Singleton, Tyger Campbell.

Q. They changed up their line in the second half and you guys weren't able to force as many turnovers --

MICK CRONIN: Let me just say this, too: The only change that mattered in the second half adjustment was Tyler's Bilodeau's fourth foul. Their lineup was not a problem. Because Tyler Bilodeau wasn't in the game.

Q. Did you ever consider putting him back --

MICK CRONIN: We played four guards the whole second half, my friend. I don't know if you know that. We played four guards the whole second half.

Q. And they matched that.

MICK CRONIN: Is there a question in there?

Q. I'm saying you guys were able to force a ton of turnovers in the first half. That's what you do; second half not quite as much.

MICK CRONIN: They had 10 in the first half and eight in the second half; 11-7. I mean, they got seven McDonald's All-Americans and a great coach. You think they're going to have 30 turnovers? We turned them over 18 times.

What do you think you're going to do? They've also got the great Jeff Lebo on their staff.

Q. (Indiscernible) out-rebounded.

MICK CRONIN: Tremendous point guard despite his current build.

Q. I just realized you were out-rebounded --

MICK CRONIN: Three of the last four, Oregon, Arizona, Carolina. Hard to play big against them, though. I'd like to play a bigger lineup, but now, again, Eric Dailey took a shot to the face. He didn't play well early, when he took a shot to the face, and I could tell he wasn't himself. He passed whatever test there is and all that, but I could tell.

So we were playing small. But then look, I don't think that was the difference in the game. You miss eight free throws in the second half and Tyler Bilodeau sits half the second half, that's the problem.

Then we still got the lead and turned it over after a time-out, with a veteran point guard. Like he didn't know the guy was going to reach in.

You've got to deserve to win, guys. One thing they do is -- first of all, what are they down today, 16? They're down 16 every game, so it ain't like they're not used to it. I told the guys, it isn't like we didn't tell them. They're just going to keep coming. They're going to play faster. They're going to go small. They're going to drive the ball, try to draw fouls.

We didn't do a good job not fouling. We fouled way too much. You get what you deserve, guys.

You guys have a good Christmas.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports