

Big East Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 13, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Madison Square Garden

Providence Friars

Coach Kim English

Devin Carter

Ticket Gaines

Josh Oduro

Postgame Media Conference

Providence 74, Georgetown 56

KIM ENGLISH: Good evening. Proud of our guys. It's a new season, the mission is to go 1 and 0. Most important game in tournament settings is to win the first game. Proud of our guys.

And these games, especially to end someone's season is difficult. Those guys over there had a tough season. And I have immense respect, one, for Ed, and then those players for never quitting. They competed to the bitter end, even in the second half. They shot 32 percent in the first, turned it around 52 in the second.

But proud of our guys for finding a way to put them away. They had a ton of change in defenses. Epps is a great player, really good shooters around him.

Devin was doing our game plan. Our guys were doing our game plan. Epps was making shots on our coaches, not our players. Those shots made where they were doing exactly what we wanted them to do, make tough contested twos. And he was making them. And proud of our guys for finding a way.

Q. Devin, great game tonight by the way. Obviously really historic night for you personally with the boards and such. But I just want to know, have you even taken any time to really process that and think what it means, or are you entirely focused on the team and what you guys have coming up?

DEVIN CARTER: I mean, I got the award, and then I took everything in here earlier at the Garden. And then the



moment I left, I locked in with my teammates. So I pushed it to the side. And my teammates did a great job of making shots and making the right plays out of the traps and posts. That wasn't everything.

Q. Devin, off what Kim said, just the challenge of facing Epps tonight. He had so much on his shoulders and ball screens were difficult to get around tonight.

DEVIN CARTER: Yeah. Our game plan was just to force him left. I was just trying to force him left. Like Coach Kim said, he made tough shots on our terms, what we call it. So I mean, credit to Jayden. He's a great player. He made tough shots tonight.

Q. Coach, this one being your first Big East tournament win, first Big East tournament game, what did that feel for you tonight?

KIM ENGLISH: Yeah. I really try to be in the moment. It was tough for me earlier. Dev had such a career-defining moment earlier today, winning the Player of the Year award. And as I was sitting there, I was like, usually the Player of the Years probably aren't playing on Wednesday.

But he was up since 9:30, shooting around, straight to the Garden for the press conference. And I was just sitting in the back of our Uber and I had to tell him, I want him to enjoy these moments, but sorry, he's going to have to relish that moment after the season is done because we have business to attend to.

And I grew up watching this tournament. But it's not important, the fantastical things, all of the Garden. The game is the most important thing. In this league if you're not focused, it's like a cannonball going through your chest. So we don't have time not to focus in this league.

Q. First, your thoughts on having a teammate named Big East Player of the Year and also there was a stretch there in the second half, I think you guys went about maybe five minutes without scoring. I think Josh you hit a three ticket, you hit a three coming out of the timeout. They never got within nine. How much



was defense important in that stretch when you guys weren't clicking on offense?

TICKET GAINES: For the first thing, just definitely seeing the work that he's put in all year. With Bryce going down, we knew some guys had to step up and he did that every game. Every game he came, showed up, and gave us a chance. And just to see his work put into the Big East Player of the Year was special for us.

And to the game, just guys have to step up and make shots. Like you said, we didn't score for five minutes, and Josh came down, hit a three for us, which is big in times where you can't score, always looking to your top scorers who can make plays.

And defensively that's what we want to hang our hat on every night. Every time we step on the court we want to be the best we can defensively, whether that's making sure we stick to the game plan defensively or also making sure we don't have any mental mistakes. We stand together on defense talking, things like that.

Q. Devin, great game tonight. What has driven you to be spectacular in these late game moments what you've done tonight?

DEVIN CARTER: I mean, just late game, like, my teammates, they all have confidence in me shooting the shots that I shoot. So I mean I definitely give a lot of credit to these two guys and the rest of the people back in the locker room. They tell me to shoot shots, and they just space out and let me go to work.

Q. For Devin, I was wondering, what was it like for you to come out on to the court at MSG tonight right after being Big East Player of the Year. And also I'm also just wondering what your thoughts were on the crowd tonight. Friars fans did travel, and it felt throughout the arena tonight.

DEVIN CARTER: It was great. I mean, we had a lot of fans. You know, they come to every game. I mean, we have a lot of fans and a lot of road games. But Madison Square Garden, they like to pop out for this one a lot. So I mean, it's great having them here, and just they bring a lot of energy, and we feed off of it. So it's great for us to have them here?

Q. Devin, Georgetown went on a huge run, they got it down to 10 and they hit a huge three. And the next possession you got a big lay-up. Tell me what was going through your mind when that was happening?

DEVIN CARTER: I was just trying to put the fire out at that

time. A lot of crazy things can happen in March including like a 10-0 run for them. So I was trying to put the fire out as fast as possible and that's what happened.

Q. Coach, big game. You guys pushed the tempo early. That kind of threw Georgetown off and made them play faster. Was that part of your game plan or was that something?

KIM ENGLISH: Yeah, we absolutely want to go. We want to get rebounds and play. Maybe I give too much freedom, but it's what I want. I want our guys to play the right way. I want them to go in the first seven seconds. Watch Creighton tomorrow. Creighton wants to go in the first seven seconds.

Lay-ups and open threes and free throws is what we want. And then we want to flow transition. We couldn't do that in the second half. They shot 52 percent. You're taking the ball out of the net, your break is going to be a little stymied. Credit to them for making tough shots.

It's the essence of coaching. Do we do what we do better defensively or do we switch? And we considered trapping Epps. We did once. I think Fielder or Bristol made a three in the corner. One of them. Yeah.

Q. For Devin to win Player of the Year this off season, there was a decision he had to make. He chose to stay with you. And for you to see him through this process this season, what does it mean for the partnership between you two?

KIM ENGLISH: Well, it's the power of Friartown, honestly. Devin's experience at PC on campus, in the community, the support at games made him not want to leave.

In the days before I got here, Steve Napilollo was my ace recruiter, recruiting guys to stay, even before I met them. And then once we got here, it was quick. He's a tough kid. He's a son of a pro. He's a son of an NBA player. So he doesn't get caught up in the a lot of times emotional things that happen in our business.

His dad has played for a lot of coaches. Devin has played for his third coach in three years. We talked about the way we play and didn't promise him anything except for a great opportunity to be the best version of himself. And he took it and ran with it.

Q. Coach, you talk about the first half you only had one turnover. And then in the game you had like a inordinate number of assists on your field goals. You had like 18 assists on 24 field goals?

KIM ENGLISH: 16 on 24. Yeah.

Q. Is that just better sharing the ball?

KIM ENGLISH: Yeah. We had 19 assists last time we played them. We want to share the ball. They impact the ball and pick and roll. So that's putting two on the ball. When you have two on the ball, you want to pass to the one that's open. And then the one that's open, he has a decision. It's four on three from there. Just make the right play. I thought our guys turned down some shots. But, yeah, we want to take what the game gives you.

Q. The challenge of turning around now in less than 24 hours facing another tough opponent?

KIM ENGLISH: Yeah. Very good opponent, coming off a great win last Saturday at Nova where they got out to a huge lead, like 34 to 7. It was a crazy lead. Them, UConn, Marquette, maybe the smartest teams in our league. The players are like coaches. Just play the right way, never make mistakes, don't beat themselves. We're going to have to have a very mature and great effort tomorrow night.

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