

Big East Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 13, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Madison Square Garden

Georgetown Hoyas
Coach Ed Cooley

Jayden Epps

Dontrez Styles

Postgame Media Conference



Year. I voted for him on that as well.

Taking nothing away from anybody in the league because you could have had three or four other players of the year and maybe another Defensive Player of the Year. But credit Providence. They made the right plays. They withstood a run. We didn't execute from the free throw line.

But again, really, really proud of our program. We'll continue to grow. We'll get better. But it's our goal as the league to make sure we put as many teams in that tournament, and Providence is going to be right there. They're going to be a worthy opponent on Sunday.

Q. Two things for the Jayden. When you look back at the season, what's going to stand out to you? What memories are you going to have from it? Like Ed was just talking about the start of rebuilding this program. And also, what was working so well for you today in particular.

JAYDEN EPPS: When I look back on the season, like Coach said, it wasn't really the season we wanted, but we can look at it as a learning experience. We learned a lot from it. And I always just take it as it builds character.

What we went through this year, it builds character. And Coach told us before the game like it's not going to rain forever. We gotta move forward. We gotta keep building this program, and we gotta just keep trying our best. And today Coach was drawing up sets. My teammates were finding me. Obviously it wasn't enough for us to get the win, but, yeah. He dialed me up. And whenever it's called, I try to deliver.

Q. Despite this moment right now, what words of encouragement did you tell your team in the locker room?

ED COOLEY: I mean, you have to have gratitude no matter what you do. As much as we want to win, we as leaders, you still have to understand we have young men, emotionally distraught. You know what I mean? I told

Providence 74, Georgetown 56

ED COOLEY: There's a lot of ways to start. First, I want to thank my team. This has been a very challenging year, an emotional year. I wish I could have done a much better job with them over the course of the 32 games we played. It didn't turn out the way we wanted, but it's an opportunity for us to grow, get better.

But anytime you have an opportunity to come play in the Big East tournament, there's something special about this. I said this the last time I sat here about a week ago, and, unfortunately, we weren't. There's no greater tournament in America. There's no greater venue in America to play than when you play in this building. We have the longest-standing conference tournament for a reason. The partnership with MSG is amazing, and we hope it stays for eternity.

As far as us, just wasn't our type of year, right? We got a long way to go, a long way to build. But I'm proud of our guys' effort. I thought we laid it on the line right till the very end. It gives us an opportunity to build Georgetown once again.

And it wasn't a good year, and I think all these losses, I take. I gotta do a better job as a leader, and I'll continue to get better. But I thought the struggles this year helped me become a much better coach, helped me become a better listener, more attention to detail.

It's obvious we have to add a lot more talent. We played a very talented team. We played a very talented player, really talented player. So I'm really proud of Devin being the Player of the Year. I definitely voted for him. I thought he should also have been the Defensive Player of the



them let's keep the main thing the main thing. 99 percent of college basketball players are going to need a J-O-B. And you have one of the greatest academic degrees in the world. Let's keep that the main thing as well.

Hug them up. Let them know -- like be open, honest and direct with them. Be real with them, right? Don't try to BS your kids. They will smell that. If you're open, honest and direct, your men will respect you. I feel for them.

Like the room is quiet in here. We'll get better. The better team won today. All the credit goes to Providence. We have to continue to build. We'll get better. It's not the end of the day. The sun will come up tomorrow. I got a hell of a job. I work for a hell of an AD. I work for a hell of a president.

And we're going to move this program in the right direction. The Big East is going to be healthier when Georgetown gets to where we're going to go.

Q. Jayden, this question is for you. Despite the loss tonight, you made a bit of history being the second Hoya only in the history of the Big East tournament, second to Allen Iverson, with 30-plus points. What's it like to be in that elite of company with such an NBA great?

JAYDEN EPPS: It's good to be in the company and beside a name like Allen Iverson. You know how great he was. Like Coach said, it's always good to play in this building as well. Growing up as a kid, you see so much about it. You watch games here. You hear how legendary it is.

It's just a dream come true playing in this building, getting an opportunity like that, and I just gotta keep working and trying to keep getting better.

Q. Just a quick question. You had mentioned earlier how obviously this wasn't the best year for you guys. What are some things that you think that you're able to build on going into next year to kind of start building this program up and up even more?

ED COOLEY: Obviously we gotta add some pieces. Right? We have a really young core that's coming in. You know, the nucleus, we feel we have a good nucleus. So there will be some carryover. Given how our jobs are definitely challenging now with the landscape of college athletics with the portal and NIL, we as coaches will build teams versus programs, and hopefully the carryover you have with the men that will be in the locker room can build on that culture and that philosophy. So, you know, that's something that I'm grateful about going into year two. Hopefully we make a big, big jump.

Q. Coach, one of the things I noticed you guys have a storied program, but the effort you put out there tonight, it would have been easy to quit. You had a horrible year, not because you weren't trying. But that effort you put out tonight, tell me what you said to your team and how did they respond to you to show such great effort?

ED COOLEY: You know, when you have a year like this, this is the first time I'm going through this as a head coach. I had a similar situation as an assistant coach in this building, at Boston College in 1997, I believe. Played against a very talented Syracuse team. And I think before the first media timeout it was like 30 to 2. Right? And, again, when you're having these type of years, it's a credit to our coaches, it's a credit to our team that they still fought right till the very end. There's a lot of people that would throw in the towel. A lot of teams would throw in the towel. So it's a credit to the culture that we're building, the DNA of the men, the care of the men, the pride of the men. It wasn't a year to write about, but it's definitely a year to learn from.

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