

Big East Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 13, 2026

New York, New York, USA

Madison Square Garden

Georgetown Hoyas

Ed Cooley

Julius Halaifonua

Jeremiah Williams

Kayvaun Mulready

Postgame Media Conference



Q. Jeremiah, you guys really kept Acaden Lewis out of the paint tonight. Where was that on the scout and where did you think the success was?

JEREMIAH WILLIAMS: Big credit to the scout. We paid a lot of attention to him due to our last matchup. He was a very big focal point of our scout. He's a great player, and like Coach said, Isaiah did a great job with his energy, effort, his length, and getting over those screens. He's a great player and we wanted to neutralize him as best as we could.

Q. You guys had ten turnovers in the first 13 minutes, four the rest of the way. What did your head coach say to you? What changed there?

JEREMIAH WILLIAMS: There was a lot of yelling at us. No. It was very uncharacteristic of us to turn the ball over that much. Maybe we just had some miscommunications. They do a great job at pulling in on defense and executing their defense. So we just had to settle in, settle down, and that was a big focal point in the second half, and adjustments, just make sure we get a shot up every time. We were doing a good job rebounding the ball, and our only miscues were just giving them the ball and not getting a shot up. So attention to detail and making a good adjustment and settling down in the second half.

Q. Julius, how did your confidence grow? You got two early baskets, one on a put-back and, frankly, you guys dominated the paint all night rebounding and scoring. Just talk a little bit about how you got energized so early in the game.

JULIUS HALAIFONUUA: Those two first baskets definitely helped, but I think the rest of the game I just trusted my guards to make the right play, and they trusted me with the ball, and I just happened to make shots, and so, yeah.

Q. Kayvaun, this was a back-and-forth game the whole time. When do you think it swung and really broke open?

Georgetown - 78, Villanova - 64

ED COOLEY: (Video feed cut out) -- we need to advance by any way and means, just continue to advance, however we do it. I thought it was back-to-back days. I think our defense, once again, was tough. I thought we connected. I thought we had incredible leadership all over the court. Everybody that stepped on the court participated in helping us win.

I thought Isaiah Abraham's defensive length on some of their guards was a little bit disruptive. We wanted to make this game a tough two game as they're one of the better three-point shooting teams in our league, if not the nation, and we just tried to wear them down as much as we can.

What we did tell the men about yesterday is sometimes the teams that play before a team on the bye -- I've been on the other side where we had a bye where we just didn't have a lot of rhythm. We were off since the Saturday before, and then you got to come and play the Wednesday.

That five days, that's not normal other than a bye in our league.

So just really proud of how connected we've been over the last two days defensively, and I think when you guard, offense becomes a little bit easier, a lot easier, and we were able to make some threes today as last night we only made three threes. I haven't seen the stat sheet, but I know we made more than three today as Kayvaun made back-to-back shots, which I thought was really game, set, match in that situation.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.



KAYVAUN MULREADY: Halftime. It was our speech. All the teammates, all of us gathered together. Just like you guys said about the turnovers, we acknowledged that as well. We said we got to trust each other, and no regrets. We didn't come this far to come this far. We got a couple seniors on our team. We don't want it to be their last game, so we're also playing for them.

So just coming together, trusting each other, and just saying to each other no regrets.

Q. Kayvaun, when you look at the stat sheet, you didn't miss a shot. So if you look at that paper and you see perfect shooting plus eight rebounds in that stat sheet, what are you the most proud of?

KAYVAUN MULREADY: My rebounding. Coach Cooley always told me I could rebound the ball, especially as a guard, and I know this was a game that my teammates needed me -- or anybody needed each other to help each other rebound, and I'm happy because my teammates trusted me. Especially after I had that 1-3, they were seeking me the whole entire time to hit my second. So it was really just credit to my teammates.

THE MODERATOR: We're going to thank the players for taking questions and then we'll go to questions for Coach.

Q. We talked yesterday about you had a storied history playing Kevin Willard. Now tomorrow you're playing a UConn team that you've played close this year twice. A storied history between Georgetown and UConn. How do you feel? Does that also add a chip on your shoulder? You're playing UConn, two-time National Champion, No. 2 seed in the Big East tournament as well as a ranked team.

ED COOLEY: I was born with a chip on my shoulder. I don't need to play against somebody else to have a chip. We're going to play one of the best teams in America. They have earned that right. They're national champions. Danny has done an incredible job building that program back to where it's supposed to be. We're just excited that we are here. I want our men to feel how special it is to play on a Friday night in Madison Square Garden. We're going to give them that experience, and if we continue to do what we've been doing the last couple of days, we're going to give ourselves an opportunity to advance.

But Danny's done an unbelievable job. I mean, to win the national champion not one, but two, you got to give him and his staff a ton of credit.

Q. So UConn today outscored Xavier 42-16 in the paint. How are you going to stop that? Tarris Reed

was absolutely dominant.

ED COOLEY: You know, we're going to have to watch film. We have played them twice, so we are pretty comfortable. We're not content. He's one of the better bigs in the country. Last time I checked we had a couple of big guys too, the last time I looked at it, and one played incredible. And you heard his voice today. One of the smoothest voices in all of college basketball. When he talks I'm like, damn, I wish I had that voice.

Vince, say hi to the folks. Say hi. Say hi, Juice.

(Someone said hi.)

ED COOLEY: That's big-time. That's a little Barry White New Zealand style (laughing).

Q. You've talked about the love that you have for the Big East conference --

ED COOLEY: More than you know.

Q. Well, it's the first time since 1994 that all four semifinalists are charter members for the original seven. You coached at three of those seven. How special is that to be a part of this quartet of semifinalists, knowing that they're all original members? And what have you talked to your players, either this year or the past few years, about what the Big East was like when you coached? You got Boston college or knew about the Big East back in the '80s and '90s?

ED COOLEY: I appreciate that question because every time I come here I just get the goose bumps. Whether you're walking up that steep hill that I was really exhausted by the time I got to the top or you're in the elevator and you can smell the history, it's just so special to try to tell them about it and they will feel a different environment tomorrow.

I've been blessed. The fact that I've been able to be in the Big East this long says I've had opportunities, and I'm grateful to the administrations that's given me the opportunity to coach in this historic league and to be one of the veteran coaches to last this long. Not many of us could last long in this league because it's so heavy. The coaches has been great, the players have been great, and I'm just grateful that I've had an opportunity to walk on that floor, and I'm going to have another opportunity tomorrow. Just, it's a special -- I love the Big East Conference, absolutely love it.

Q. Coming in as the 11 seed and beating DePaul last night, and now beating Villanova, the 3 seed, at MSG,

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what does this say about the fight and identity for this team?

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ED COOLEY: Said it yesterday, about the resilience of the group. We have not had the record that we thought we would have as we started the year, and then we went through some injuries that all of us go through. I think we had a chance to shut this down. We lost six in a row, we lost seven in a row, we lost 10 games in the last minute and 37 seconds in the Big East. So it wasn't a matter of we weren't good enough, it was we just had to find a way to win and get over the hump. In the last three games we've been able to get over the hump, so I'm really proud of our resilience and character of the group.

Q. To that point kind of, you've had a rough season, not what you expected, but getting to the semifinals of the Big East tournament, what do you think that does for the program?

ED COOLEY: Well, it gives us a hope as we're continuing to rebuild Georgetown and trying to move our program forward. It gives our players belief in what we're trying to do. It gives our fans and alumni, our donor base, our community, that we have a lot of fight in us. And we know tomorrow's going to be a monster, an absolute monster. They're playing for a No. 1 seed. They're playing for a tournament championship. Everybody's waiting in the wings to see, you know, what that result's going to look like. It just, it's a process, and we have a great plan to rebuild this thing the right way, it's just not going as fast as we want. But we are here today. To be in the semifinals, somebody said the 11 seed hasn't advanced to a semifinal in I don't know how long. But we are here, we're present, and we'll see where we can go from here.

Q. As someone who has cut down the nets on Saturday, you mentioned how special it is for these guys to have the opportunity to play tomorrow. Have you talked to them about how special it would be to play and win on Saturday?

ED COOLEY: There's some conversations that are super private. And I talked to our men about that about just the emotion of being a champion. We talked about that from day one when we recruit them. We're going to have an opportunity to advance tomorrow. And those private conversations individually and collectively we're going to keep in-house. And we won't expose that until we have a net around our neck, around the building. If it's this year, great. But we're going to have to advance tomorrow in order to get there. But we've had some private conversations, and I'm pretty sure it's deep in their soul of how hard it's going to be, but how sweet it would be when we get to that opportunity.

