

Invesco QQQ Legacy Classic: Hampton vs NC Central

Saturday, December 18, 2021

Newark, New Jersey, USA

Prudential Center

NC Central Eagles

Coach LeVelle Moton

Randy Miller Jr.

Eric Boone

Postgame Press Conference



We've been in discussion for this game probably the last two years. The first time Michael B and Jordan Bizant (phonetic) we were all on the call, it was maybe two years ago. It was on the heels of the George Floyd situation. Whenever it was. Was it about two years ago, right? So much coming at one time, production companies -- Chris Paul, Serena Williams and Kevin -- everybody's production company and we were overwhelmed.

Michael B. initially said we want to do a basketball game but we want to do it in the Bahamas. It was too much. It was overwhelming. I said let's do one thing at a time. We did the documentary with Chris on ESPN first.

They went back and they started getting this thing together. Then he changed it to his hometown of Newark, which I thought was a beautiful idea. He put his name on it. TNT got behind it. And a bunch of sponsors and media got behind it. End result, it's a beautiful event.

It's great for the kids because -- look, they're on TNT. They're on TNT. TNT is selling out for them the same way they do the NBA All-Star Game. The cameras, dynamics, the hydrographics, all those things, that's what it's about -- for them for these kids to have a platform to utilize and display their talent.

So their families can see them and be proud, and execs and NBA general managers and scouts and people that assess the game of basketball in the next level can see the brand of basketball that they play, too. They're just as capable.

Q. (Question off microphone)?

COACH MOTON: It was just our night. We can shoot the basketball. But we just haven't had -- I'm getting to know these guys, right? It's 10 new guys. So, like, we're in the dating phase. We just went out and first couple of 10 games and we just don't know them until they actually thrown in that fire.

And you assess, you evaluate and you critique, and then you go back and adjust. And try to put the -- basketball is

NC Central - 86, Delaware State - 53

COACH MOTON: It's been quite the whirlwind. But what we tried to understand amongst ourselves is that we never try to get too high or too low or too emotional. Because when you're doing that you ain't going to make good decisions anyway. Control what you can control.

I think us being in the position we were in last year with all the COVID bouts and things of that nature that we had going on, it kind of prepared us for this moment.

And once Buck called me from Hampton he said he had a few guys that tested positive. And we just knew that we had to have a replacement. And my agent called Delaware State. And ten minutes later he called me back and said, we got him. I don't know what he did. Shout out to Cecil White. I don't know what he did to make it happen so fast or so quick.

We just have to change the game plan. Our guys were just ready to play. We could have played the Brooklyn Nets and we would have been just as excited to be here. Shout out to my team. They did an incredible job. Looking at the box score and one thing that jumps out glaringly, holding a team to 26 percent. We recently changed the lineup, tried to get some guys who could hold us down on the defensive end a little more and let this guy do what he do out there.

He started us off and everyone seemed to follow. Shout out to my team. They did an incredible job tonight.

Q. (Question about the university as a whole exposure)?

COACH MOTON: It's big because it's a national stage.



such a cohesive game, you try to put the five guys out there who can develop the chemistry.

We knew who we had to surround him with. This guy to my left is, he's learning how to run the offense. But he's a dog on the defensive end and he takes that matchup personally. That gives him some support.

And Justin Wright, we implemented him into the starting lineup. He's another dog. That gives him some support.

So I've got two dogs and one of them smooth dogs. So he can be what he be. So he's the silent killer and the other two, that allow killers. They're going to announce when they're about to kill you. He just going to kill you and just sneak out of the room. And so it kind of blends and it works best for them.

And now we've got to get the 4 and 5 position together as well and just have everyone playing the same. But the ball movement was incredible. They started finding each other. They were unselfish. The ball didn't stick. When that happens and you share it, good things happen.

Q. (Question off microphone.)

RANDY MILLER JR.: I would say, one, it was great playing on national TV. Everybody's watching. So just like Coach said, I felt like we were ready. We were excited, excited for the moment. And we just came out there and played hard.

I feel like playing for Coach, he always going to push you 100 percent. Never going to let you [inaudible] -- I apologize. It's great playing with a coach who's done it on the court and off the court.

ERIC BOONE: I would say it was fun playing out there. We just knew what we had to go out and do. This guy right here, he pushes me to be the best I could be. I love playing for him and I'm happy I came here, honestly.

Q. Coach, would you schedule more games in the New York City area? And also if you could go back in a time machine to 1992 what would you tell LeVelle at 18 years old as he's navigating through life?

COACH MOTON: First part of the question, if I could schedule more games in New York I absolutely would. We look at our seniors and we try to get close to their hometown. One of the difficulties is whenever you establish yourself as a respectable program, it becomes more difficult to schedule. So we get that all the time, like, when you all coming up here? When someone up there says they want to play us. But nobody wants to play us.

Everybody talk that talk until it's time to put pen to paper on the contracts. And nobody wants that.

We don't take it personal. We take it as a sign of being revered. So we try to get up into this area as much as we possibly can. My agent is up here in New York. And we had MEAC Player of the Year, I want to say three years ago. Patrick Cole was from Newark.

We are up here heavy. I've always been up here. I've also recruited this area. I just want to give these guys a an opportunity not only to come home but to play in front of their hometown crowds as well. We long for that.

Second part, what would I tell 18-year-old LeVelle Moton, don't take nothing for granted. One day that ball going to stop bouncing and everything that you do is going to be judged off wins and losses. You have to make sure you win in the classroom, on the court, in the weight room, in life, socially, around campus, because the relationships that you build, or not build, will allow you to ascend through life.

That's what I try to tell these young men to my left and right and in the locker room. They think I'm crazy because they're 18-year-olds and 22-year-old self can't see their 47-year-old self. That's the key. It's a 25-year-old difference. They're like what are you talking about?

One day that ball is going to stop bouncing. They've got to figure it out. It's easier to figure it out once you establish the relationships and you go out and do everything that you can on this basketball floor and play basketball and don't let basketball play you.

I've seen too many instances where basketball has played people. Now they return back to their old neighborhoods with nothing and 24 hours short of college graduation. They're no different than the guy that dropped out of high school in the ninth grade and went and started his own trade. You know what I'm saying?

We see that from a grown-man perspective. We understand that this life is not going to feel sorry for a Black man. I won't allow these guys to make excuses because you're going to become a husband, head of household, a father. That mortgage company don't care about what you been through the last 30 days. All they care about is when we going to get that payment is on the 1st or 2nd. When can we expect that?

The same thing with light bill and with your kids. They don't understand that right now. But what I understand is that how you do anything is how you do everything. And if

you do it now, then you'll be able to make the necessary adjustment in life.

Q. How important is it from a legacy standpoint playing for a coach who graduating from [inaudible]?

RANDY MILLER JR.: It's important because it's culture. And like Coach always says, it's not always about us. It's for the people who did it in the past and before and that created that for us. So I feel it's cultural and it's important to us.

ERIC BOONE: I would say the same thing honestly. It's cultural, it's HBCU. And it gives us a chance -- an opportunity to be seen by other people.

Q. (Off microphone)?

COACH MOTON: I think that might be a misprint. I don't know about the 13 assists.

Q. (Off microphone)?

ERIC BOONE: Never selfish. I like to get my team involved before I do anything. They were just hitting the shots. Why not go back to them? That's how I see it. And if they're hitting shots, it's better for me. The lane was there, but they were hitting shots. I'm not going to be selfish and take shots away from them just so I can get points on the board or anything.

Q. (Off microphone)?

COACH MOTON: I don't say anything in particular because I don't believe in trying to press a button every speech. If you've got to make a speech every time for these guys to play hard, you've got the wrong kids in your locker room.

Sometimes I've got to remind them. Sometimes I gotta give them a reality check. This one to my right, it's been tough on him. He ain't liked me the last two weeks. I don't care. I'm not here for him to like me. You know what I'm saying? I don't have no 20-year-old buddies. You know what I'm saying?

I'm here to push him and maximize his talent. How he played tonight is indicative of how he could play every single night, but he wasn't doing the necessary things prior to. I saw that. I played his position. I've been there, I've done it. And I got relaxed one time. My coach did the same thing to me. That's what I had to do to him.

As he go and as he go the team goes. Follow what I'm saying? I don't have to concentrate too much on the team.

They're going to follow. It's just like the reindeer. It's Rudolph in the front pulling everybody -- Blinky an Jinky. We don't know their names but we know Rudolph. These are my Rudolphins. As they go the sled is going to go and I can sit back and say ho, ho, ho and deliver some gifts.

Q. (Off microphone)?

RANDY MILLER JR.: I feel like it's a great experience. We came out excited, ready to play. And we knew that it was going to -- the defensive side was going to be important. And that's what our focal point was. And we was getting stops, running in transition and just having fun out there.

ERIC BOONE: It was a great experience, and I feel like everybody was ready to play. It's a great opportunity to get seen by scouts or anything. So I just feel like everybody was ready to play.

Q. (Off microphone)?

COACH MOTON: They like each other. And they cheer for each other. They pull for each other. That's rare to find in the locker room. Rare to find.

Right now we just have to turn, they're pulling in the silliness into maturity, where they're locked in and focused all the time. But the most difficult thing is that locker room being a cohesive group. And they definitely had that. So it starts with respecting and liking one another.

And I think when they do that it radiates itself. I'm a big energy guy. So whether it is never going away is never transferred. It's just -- it's there. So what do you do with that energy in terms of a team concept, I think they do a great job just pulling for one another and supporting each other. I was happy to see all 15 guys play.

Q. If a kid wants to come, wanted to go to an HBCU, what would you tell them about NC Central?

ERIC BOONE: I would tell them it's a great experience. You've got a good coach. There's good people around you. And I love it. So I always tell them, do it.

RANDY MILLER JR.: I would say it's a great experience. And people around you that make you feel like it's home. And sports-wise, especially basketball-wise, we always are competing at the highest level and competing against great teams.

Q. (Off microphone)?

COACH MOTON: Still a learning process. So many



phases of it. We have to enjoy this for 24 hours and put it behind us and move on. And that's how basketball is and we've got to prepare for a tough -- I don't know who we play next -- I think it's UTEP or somebody. They're going to be a tough basketball team, a Conference USA team. So we've got to filter this out and prepare focus ahead.

I'm going to let them enjoy this thing for 24 hours because they earned that. They did it with the bright lights on, on TNT. He broke his record for this year in assists. He broke his record for (indiscernible). So they're young men. They need to enjoy all of that.

They need to go out there and see Dr. J and Michael B. Jordan and Taylor Rooks and (indiscernible) and TNT and what's the podcast? And Desus and Mero. Shout out to Desus and Mero. I love that podcast.

They need to go see all those things and enjoy. That's why we arranged the game, organized the game. We'll give them 24 hours. And then it's over. And we are on our way to Texas. Hopefully we'll get home from the holidays, enjoy our family and get back and prepare for conference.

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