

GEICO Players Era Men's Championship

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

MGM Grand Garden Arena

Notre Dame Fighting Irish Micah Shrewsberry

Postgame Press Conference

Houston 66, Notre Dame 56

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: I did some stuff with him. Seeing him a bunch earlier, three days, four days, however long we've been here, but his culture, his program, how they respond, three games in three days is tough.

But the way their culture is and the way he coaches them and the way they respond, it's like it was Game 1 for them.

I'm proud of our effort, but I'm not proud of how we started the game. I thought we were too anxious, too jittery, and I thought they set the tone. They set the tone of the game, and then we were playing catch-up the whole time.

Q. Micah, I'm curious if you can remember when either you or your staff actually found out, around when you knew it would be Houston, and then from a coaching prep standpoint, what that actually looks like for you guys, figuring out who you're going to play and then oh, it's Houston and here's what we've got to do over the next X number of hours?

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah. Kudos to (assistant coach) Mike Farrelly for trying to figure things out throughout the day, throughout the entire week before we got here. He actually had the Houston stuff done and came over and watched them play Syracuse. He watched them play Syracuse, then came and watched the Tennessee game. So he actually had the scout ready and prepared.

We have a great staff of managers that want to work in the NBA and do analytics, so they were going through this thing.

I watched their game, Houston-Tennessee, in my room, watched a half of both, because Coach Farrelly was like, I think we'll play the loser of this game, so try to prepare,



watch the half.

But then still, we had dinner, we sent our guys away. We had maybe like a snack at 9:00, and it was right as those guys were coming back in for scout, so maybe 8:45, 8:50, something like that, we found out the matchup.

Luckily Coach Farrelly had it done so we could watch personnel right there, walk through some actions, then go up and try and prepare the rest of the night and then get up this morning, walk through a couple things.

It's tricky, but everybody has to do it. But we knew it. You don't know who you're playing but you know you're playing day 3, so you're just got to prepare the right way and trust your system.

Q. You mentioned the start by Houston. Yesterday obviously you guys had the early lead against Rutgers and then they battled back and made it a game. How do you take maybe the second half of this game and the first half of yesterday and kind of jumble that into 40 minutes of consistent basketball?

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah, you know, it's a challenge for us, right. We have some guys that have been together and have played for us, but we have some guys that are still young. So they're still experiencing some things for the first time.

That's the part of it, of trying to be more consistent in what we do. I thought our plan was the right plan. I didn't think we adjusted the right way. I thought they set the tone. They set the tone from the jump ball. The ball got tipped and it's on the floor, and we didn't run through it and they got it. That was the epitome of the first 15 minutes.

Then we found something there late to be able to come back.

That's a challenge for our group, to really do it consistently over a long stretch of time. I like our guys. I love the fight that we have. We just -- sometimes you've got to just stay in it the right way. If we can do that, I like where we can go.

Q. Micah, obviously there's different personnel on Houston's side, but having faced them last year and

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this year, any differences? What do you see from them in terms of having back to back years?

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah, I just said it to our guys; those guys were very close to winning a National Championship last year, with three guys starting coming back, with one of the greatest coaches that has ever coached our game leading them.

So they just plug in two five-star dudes. They're a really good team. They're well-coached. They execute. There's no selfishness to what they do.

You look, and it's 15 assists on 20 made field goals. They play. They share it. They compete at max effort. They really guard you.

It looks like the same ol' Houston to me.

I am going to petition to never, ever see them again (laughter). This is what, though, for us -- like I said, we've got young guys. If you have aspirations of playing real basketball in March, this is what it looks like. This is what it looks like. Every loose ball you've got to run through it. You've got to run through people. That's what March looks like.

Until you start to get that, until you start to do it every possession, you'll always be a step slow or a step short. So yeah, I don't enjoy playing Houston. I don't think anybody does. But you need games like this for your program. You need it. Like we have young guys that need to see this up close and personal and say, like, this is what championship-level basketball looks like.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the switch-up to start the second half and then specifically Ryder Frost with his extended minutes? What has he done to earn that in the second half?

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah, even before the game, as we were preparing last night, knowing how you try and attack them in different ways, I thought him getting to some pick-and-pops or helping us space the floor, even though we were giving up an advantage on the glass a little bit, I thought maybe that could counteract or give us a little bit of space.

He was 1 of 7 from three, but it's hard to make shots, especially as a freshman, with inconsistent minutes. I think the more he plays, the better he'll get for us and be able to help us. And now the space that it helps to give Marcus is big.

Like we didn't shoot the ball well here on really any -- I

guess we shot it okay last night. But we didn't shoot the ball well in the first game and third game. We've got to make shots to give ourselves a chance, and I think he helps us do that.

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