

NCAA Men's Frozen Four Finals: St. Cloud State vs Massachusetts

Saturday, April 10, 2021

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

PPG Paints Arena

Massachusetts Minutemen Philip Lagunov

Jake Gaudet

Postgame Media Conference



Massachusetts - 5, St. Cloud State - 0

Q. Philip, just take us through that short-handed goal and just the move you pulled on Perbix and then going five-hole?

PHILIP LAGUNOV: It happened really fast. I kind of blacked out. The guy was diving down towards me so I used my space to try to beat him. So, it all happened really fast.

Q. Both of you guys came in after that five-win season and kind of turned the program around. What does it mean to kind of finally get this program to this point after four years?

JAKE GAUDET: It just feels so surreal. We were here two years ago and didn't have the result we wanted. When that happens, you're not sure you'll get back to this level. But to be here to seal the deal, especially senior year, so proud of the guys. We played so hard all year, especially to get to this moment. It's huge. Words can't describe.

PHILIP LAGUNOV: Jake said it best, but I think it's worth mentioning all the sacrifices we've had to make like this whole season with COVID. Just so proud of the guys -- four years, finishing off on a high note. It's amazing.

Q. You didn't have Bobby the last time. Did you see him really trying to make an impact and really making his presence felt in this game?

JAKE GAUDET: Yeah, I think so. Bobby's a phenomenal player. He's got a fire inside him. He competes really hard whenever he's out there. It's a 5-0 game, four minutes left and he's blocking shots. That says a lot about him. I know

he was motivated to get a second chance; he missed out on the first one. I'm so happy for him that he had this moment.

Q. Jake, you kind of talked about it a little bit already. But what's been the biggest to get the program up to this point? What was the vision and does this feel like the culmination of that vision?

JAKE GAUDET: Yeah, I think for a lot of us that came in and were recruited by Carvel, when the team had five wins he had a dream to bring it to the national level or competing at a national level and building a culture of really good kids that work really hard and are high character. And I think the rest has taken care of itself. We work our asses off, pardon. And, yeah, I mean we're here now and just to get back and seal the deal is amazing.

Q. Phil, to ask you about the goal, is that all instinct when you get a puck in that situation, you get around the guys with those moves that you use often or just kind of whatever you see in front of you and you're reacting fast?

PHILIP LAGUNOV: Yeah, maybe that move I brought over from the Pavel Datsyuk Hockey School Camp back home from Yekaterinburg. We talked a lot about five full goals and trying to spread the goalie open over the past few months. In terms of putting it in, that was put in practice.

Q. For both of you, Philly and Matt have a nice relationship, one is hot and the other one sits. Can you talk about how strong that bond is and what it means to you guys as a team to see them get along so well?

JAKE GAUDET: Yeah, we're really lucky to have two starting goalies. Philly has played outstanding this year and it's been tough for Mur to sit in the back seat a bit. But he's a great teammate. He works extremely hard in practice. And you see that when he got a chance in the semifinals against Duluth. He's outstanding and a large reason why we're playing in this game tonight.

PHILIP LAGUNOV: It shows how deep our team is, from forwards, defense and goalies. When somebody is out somebody else can step up, just like Mur did in the semis, yes.

Q. Jake, when you think about what all this means, you were the captain of the team at UMass that did this, that the banner is going to be, there's going to be a banner going up. There's going to be pictures and things and you'll be the guy in the C. Like, what does it mean -- how does that hit you, that you were part of that in this way that you were the guy that they chose to lead it?

JAKE GAUDET: Yeah, I mean, I can't say a lot to describe it. The feeling's unbelievable. To be here four years, the guys that have come through this program and worked really hard, to wear a letter and help lead our team to the biggest national stage is one of my proudest achievements and it's something I'll never forget.

Q. Jake, you mentioned a little bit already when you agreed to come here, the five-win season. Carv had a vision and all that. What is it about Carvel that kind of drives home that vision and has taken you guys so quick to being a national champion just a few years in?

JAKE GAUDET: He's unbelievable at having a vision in the whole program. You can see it throughout the four years he's. He's really intense with our team. He pushes us to be the best we can be. But he also understands how to manage our team effectively.

And I think he's built a culture of like-minded people that work really hard and they're willing to push themselves and learn from mistakes and try and put the best product of hockey on the ice and in the community in Amherst.

PHILIP LAGUNOV: I think it all stems from the recruiting. I think all the guys in the locker room are really close, high-character kids. And Carv does a really good job having a single vision and single purpose and setting the high standards so we know what to do no matter what.

Q. Jake, what was going through your mind as the clock was winding down? And as the final horn sounded, what was going through your mind knowing you were a national champion?

JAKE GAUDET: It still doesn't feel real, honestly. To have a game like that, with five minutes left we met up and Carvy is telling us we're national champions. It's an unbelievable feeling. Just to get here again and seal the deal is -- I can't even describe it.

PHILIP LAGUNOV: Yeah, it's surreal. Having it on the senior year, it's unbelievable experience. I'm so proud of the team. Last minutes ticking down, -it hasn't settled in yet.

Q. Jake, I don't know if this was you, but we got to hear a hint of what was said in your pregame huddle around the net. And it seemed like you guys were not interested in wasting this opportunity. So I'm curious what the attitude was as a collective whole this time around compared to two years ago?

JAKE GAUDET: I think the collective message was that we've been to this stage before. We know how disappointing it is to get to this stage and lose. And I think the upperclassmen, the juniors and seniors that have been there before, we just weren't going to let that happen. We were going to do everything we could to come home with some hardware.

PHILIP LAGUNOV: Same as Jake.

Q. A lot has been made of the depth on this team. What is it like to see guys like Aaron Bohlinger and Reed Leebster score those first couple of goals to get you guys on the board?

JAKE GAUDET: I thought they -- our depth has been a huge reason why we made it to the game tonight. I'm so happy for these guys to put pucks in the net; they completely deserve it. We wouldn't be here without a solid four-line team and we have six great D that play outstanding and a great goalie.

And I think that's the difference between their team this year and our team two years ago is we can roll four lines be successful. So proud of the guys. So happy and, yeah, what a feeling.

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