

NCAA Men's Frozen Four: Denver vs Boston U.

Thursday, April 11, 2024

St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

Xcel Energy Center

Denver Pioneers

Coach David Carle

Massimo Rizzo

Tristan Broz

Matt Davis

Semifinal Postgame Media Conference

Denver - 2, Boston University - 1 (OT)

DAVID CARLE: Another battle of a hockey game for us. I thought BU started excellent. I thought we were a little bit on our heels to start. I thought we'd have more time and space but as the game went on I thought our guys became more comfortable with the pace of the game, started winning races, able to put them on their heels a little bit in the second and third.

Just a great hockey game. A lot of respect for BU and congratulations to them on a great year. We've been in three of these 2-1 games and they can go either way.

I think Matty Davis sitting here was excellent for us, especially he's the best player in the first period and overtime. And Broz, Tristan finds a way to get one in the back of the net.

Really proud of our guys, the effort, the resilience. And we're staring 10 in the mirror Saturday. Really excited for that opportunity and can't wait for that moment.

Q. Tristan, be honest, when you came to this building as a kid did you have a dream of a moment like this?

TRISTAN BROZ: I think that's what every kid dreams of, to do something like that for your team, so definitely.

Q. How much do you owe to Matty there for getting you through that first period?

MASSIMO RIZZO: He's been unbelievable. He showed up when we needed him the most. We're super proud of



him.

TRISTAN BROZ: I was going to say, big-time performance by him. Three straight games. It was awesome stuff.

Q. Tristan, can you take us through your goal, what happened on there, what did you see and how did you get the pass and everything?

TRISTAN BROZ: I just remember back-checking and I kind of got turned over to Behrens at the left faceoff dot. He made a nice pass to me in the middle. I knew it was a kind of 2-on-1. Riz had a little bit of a step on the guy. We ran that drill yesterday doing 2-on-1s and few times I scored, just kind of no-look, trying to shoot five-hole. And just kind of blacked out in that moment and happened to go in.

Q. One of the three huge saves that Caron made, was that something that your team said, we've got to keep shooting, keep getting pucks on that, one will go in?

TRISTAN BROZ: Absolutely. Just like Coach Carle said, these 2-1 games can go either way and there's bounces that happen throughout the game, and you just have to stick with it and keep playing because those bounces happen. But you're still in the tight hockey game.

Q. Massimo, how did it feel to be back out there? What was it like kind of seeing this team go through the journey of the regionals and not being able to be out there?

MASSIMO RIZZO: It was awesome to be back out there. I missed it. Great game to jump back into. The boys have been unbelievable. A lot of people stepped up. It's been really cool to see different guys play different roles and the success our team has.

Q. Matt, do you guys feel like you were prepared for a game like this after the last two games? You guys seemed battle tested for those two games. Did you feel more prepared, maybe more than BU felt?

MATT DAVIS: We were 100% battle tested. And I don't



know how BU came in. They had a tough regional as well, but we were just confident in all aspects of our game coming in.

We had to win in different ways throughout the regional. And today we were able to showcase a little bit more skill than we were in Springfield. So we're just extremely confident and feel battle tested.

Q. Tristan, obviously you came to Denver through the transfer portal. What has this program meant for your development to get you to this point today?

TRISTAN BROZ: That's a good question. It's obviously meant a lot. I came in here, didn't necessarily have the best freshman year. But this coaching staff, all the guys in the room, from the moment I got here, just took me into their arms and allowed me to just grow and gain confidence. And it just meant pretty much everything to me to find a place like this. Coming through the transfer portal, it's certainly a blessing.

Q. (Indiscernible) penalties in a Frozen Four game, what was that something coaching staff that you guys said to the guys? Or was that within the room, or it just, don't take one?

DAVID CARLE: I don't know. We did it two years ago against Michigan. We didn't take a penalty in the semifinal. I thought that was a big part of our success. And tonight I thought the same.

We spent the better part of three practices talking about Celebrini and Hutson on the power play and how to defend that, and to not have to see that I think was a big factor in the victory.

They have really good players on the power play, and I thought our guys' discipline, like I said, was a huge part of our win.

And every time we got a power play, a lot of our message on the bench was don't make an easy call for the refs, keep our six on the ice, stay above them, angle, don't put the game in the refs hands to make a call going back the other way. I thought the guys did an excellent job with their discipline tonight.

Q. On the first goal, was that Tristan's first shift of the game? And just maybe if it wasn't, what his impact as a 13th forward in this.

DAVID CARLE: No, he was good. It was not his first shift, I don't believe. He got shift in the first for sure. But he comes in tonight as our 13th forward. He's been a big part

of why we went 12-1-1 without Rizzo in the lineup. He's been really good for us. He's been fighting through an injury of his own, putting his body on the line for the guys and for the team.

And really happy for him that he was able to get rewarded, scoring that goal. He's done everything right. This year hasn't always had the most opportunity, but a total team-first guy. And, again, couldn't be happier for him.

Q. Obviously your offense has been held in check these last three games but you've been able to find ways to get it done. How have you been able to do it? What's been key for you guys these three games?

DAVID CARLE: Goaltending, a big part of it. And we're also facing really good teams, very good defensively. I thought BU checked extremely well especially in the first period. And he made some ridiculous saves as well, the save on Thompson, the save on Devine on the power play.

He's a battler, competitor. Thought he made it hard on us. Made saves through traffic that we thought had chances to go in. So you tip your hat to him.

And I thought both goaltenders were the teams' two best players tonight. Our guy happened to make one more save than theirs. That's these games this time of year sometimes.

Q. Looked like you had trouble matching their intensity early on. And then Sean Behrens had that hit on Celebrini. I don't know if that had anything to do with kind of waking you guys up a bit, but talk about his evolution as a defensive player, someone who can make those kind of plays.

DAVID CARLE: It was a great angle. Making Macklin come through him on that play. He kept his shoulder down, and it was obviously a big hit. Is that what sparked us? I'd have to think back, and I don't remember the exact time of when that happened, but obviously made mention of it.

They started quicker than we did. I think maybe a little bit in our head we felt like there was going to be a little bit more time in space based on what we played last weekend, what we watched in the Sioux Falls regional of them.

And I give them credit, they were winning all the 50/50 races to the walls. I thought in the second period we started to win some of those. When you win the first one, it's easier to win the second and third one in the offensive zone. And that led to some of our possession time that we

were able to generate.

And Sean, to answer the other part of your question, has been a really good defender for us, I think, from day one. But it's hard to do it at sub-6 at this level and even harder at the next level. But his intensity, his angling, the habits and details of his game certainly give him a chance to do that at the next level and he's excelling at our level.

Q. I think you've talked about in the past, how well your team communicates on the bench, how well it communicates in the locker room. How well do the guys communicate when they're on the ice? The tying goal seemed to be a good example of their communication out there.

DAVID CARLE: Yeah, I don't know, it's important at all levels but it seems like the higher you get, communication on the ice is more and more critical. We're fortunate in Denver to have a lot of NHL teams come into the city. They use our facility to practice.

Seems like we have a team at least every month during the season, and our guys get to observe NHL players in practice. And one of the things that we make them aware of is how much the guys talk, even in practice.

There's nobody in the building so you can hear it. It's a habit. It's a learned skill. I think it's an inconsistent thing with players at our level. But when it's on, it certainly makes the game a lot easier when they're talking to each other out there.

And there's no doubt Tristan was calling for that puck from Miko. I thought our talk got better as the game went on. We talked about winning races, but I thought our communication got better as the game went on, too.

We were panicking a little bit with the puck in the first period. A lot of that is talk and guys away from the puck trying to help the puck carrier out, and that got better as the game went on.

Q. Other than scoring crucial overtime goals, what do you like about what Tristan brings to this Denver team?

DAVID CARLE: I think he's fully bought into being a Pioneer. He's two feet in. He's a great teammate. He's stepped up in a big-time way when Rizzo went down. And really got an opportunity to play a little bit bigger role in the middle of the rink. I think that keeps him involved more.

You can just tell his care, the way he's practiced the last month and a half, two months, the pace and energy that

he's bringing to the rink every day. Doesn't go unnoticed by us or his teammates. And then it's obviously leading to the results for him on the ice.

And that's all players. The better you practice, the better you play. And that's where we've seen him probably take the biggest growth and his play in games has become more consistent because of that.

Q. What did you think of Massimo tonight? And sort of what lift did he give to coming back?

DAVID CARLE: I thought he was good. If you tracked our lines tonight, there was a lot of different combinations. We knew it would be that way before we kind of hopefully settled on something. And I thought we did that probably midway through the second, and I thought our team game took off a little bit.

After that, I thought to Massimo specifically, a little bit rusty in the first period. The speed is not the same in games as it is in practice fully. And so it's been -- you could see the rust from taking 14, being out for 14 games.

But in the second period I thought he was our guy who was possessing pucks, attacking on the inside, better than anybody else, drawing two, three guys to him, opening up the weak side when he was attacking.

That was expected. And as he got better, he got more ice, he started playing with Broz and Devine where he started the game with King and Caponi. I thought there was a lot to like and I would expect him to be even better on Sunday.

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