

NCAA Men's Frozen Four: Michigan vs Boston College

Thursday, April 11, 2024

St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

Xcel Energy Center

Michigan Wolverines

Coach Brandon Naurato

Rutger McGroarty

Gavin Brindley

Semifinal Postgame Media Conference



GAVIN BRINDLEY: Just like Rut said, he's a hell of a goalie. And you have to get in front of him, especially in games like this. So, yeah, hell of a third period, but we could have used that all night.

Q. BC scores right away. Is it almost okay that it was that early? And it seemed like your team really dominated long section of the first period after that. Didn't seem like there was any real sag or anything. What did you think of the first period?

RUTGER MCGROARTY: It's been our team all year, man. I mean, we've battled day in, day out. There wasn't a doubt in our mind, I mean, even going into the third period, down three. I mean there wasn't a doubt in our mind.

We've been doing it all year. This team went through so much adversity. I mean, there was no quit in this team. I feel like we just couldn't buy one tonight.

Q. Brandon, what stands out to you about this team in particular? Having been a part of three of these Frozen Four runs in a row, what will you remember most about this group in particular?

BRANDON NAURATO: I feel like every year there's been adversity, a different type adversity this year with the injuries and then having to fight for it. I felt like we were in the playoffs since the Christmas break. And super proud of the guys for the run that they went on and what we put together.

I think -- trust me, these are not excuses, this is reality of what's going on -- but throughout a coaching change, throughout Luke Hughes and Samoskevich and Fantilli signing late and losing Erik Portillo, and then Ethan Edwards misses the first half of the season, and Jackson Hallum's out in November -- all of these guys stepped up.

And it's really cool to see, and that's what made them closer and everyone feels involved. So it's tough that this group is so tight and all the cliché lines of the closest teams are the ones who are going to be successful in the end.

Boston College - 4, Michigan - 0

BRANDON NAURATO: Super proud of this group. We have some special kids in that locker room, high-performing kids that will be elite NHL players one day and elite, high-performing people. That's what I'm most proud of.

Credit to Boston College for the win tonight, and good luck to them in the final. That will be a great final.

Q. Gavin, in the third period you're down by three but your team didn't look like there was any quit. Tell us about the third period, 17 shots and the push you made there?

GAVIN BRINDLEY: Fighting for your season, we know that any game we're in, no matter how many goals we're down, we're never out of it. Talking in the locker room and gave a good push here and just kind of see what happens. I'm extremely proud of the push we made. And unfortunately it didn't go our way. But it was a hell of a third period.

Q. In terms of shot attempts, possessions, seems like you did a lot of the things you wanted to do tonight. Can you speak to that and maybe the frustration that it didn't show up in goals?

RUTGER MCGROARTY: I don't know. We had a game plan going in. We knew Fowler was a great goalie. And kudos to him; he had a great game. But I don't think we took away his eyes enough. With a high angle like that, you have to get to the net, make his life hard. I just don't feel like we made it hard enough tonight.

They probably deserve more, but we lost to a really good Boston College team. I feel like we were good, we weren't great. What we did in the third is probably more what we are.

They have four elite, elite players, and their top guys scored four goals, and it's the first time all year we've been shut out.

So there's no secret into how they won the game. I talked about it in my press conference before, and I'm just being myself in talking, those guys broke the game open. What, did they have 20 shots?

If you look at the high dangers, it's 6, 9, 6, 6, 9, 9, 34, 19. Those guys are studs. Studs. All credit to their team. It's not taking credit away from anybody else. Those guys are special, and they won that game; they broke it open.

And I agree with Rut, I think we could have got to the net more on a really good goaltender. He is another one. He would be the fifth.

Q. You talked a lot about how close this team is and there's some guys that need to make decisions. How closely do you think this team will be -- how similar do you think this team will look next year?

BRANDON NAURATO: I don't want to talk out of turn. We'll deal with that when the time comes. We're planning on a lot of guys coming back. I'm sure as hard as this is right now that they'll have something to prove. But who knows.

Q. Your power play has been your bread and butter all season. How frustrating is it when you have those abbreviated 20-second, 30-second power plays and all of a sudden you're back to 4-on-4?

BRANDON NAURATO: Again, it's not an excuse or disclaimer, but the turning point in that game is one of their players trips over Dylan Duke's skate and now we go to 4-on-4 and they score two quick goals after that and now it's 3-0.

We really had two power plays, and we had extended possession both times and their guy made a ton of big-time saves.

Q. Just following up with that, obviously 4-on-4, having them with all on open ice, it's got to be a pretty dangerous moment for you guys. Maybe just in general I'll ask you about your special teams. I thought your penalty kill was pretty good. Seemed like the power play you never got going.

BRANDON NAURATO: I thought we got it going. It just didn't go into the net. When you create high-danger chances, that's getting it going. When you're in their zone the whole time, that's getting it going. We were 3-for-3 on the PK, but two of their power plays were 20, 30 seconds as well.

Q. You lose the game and their guy gets a shutout, but your guy might get on ESPN, your goalie, with a couple of those saves he made. How good was he tonight in a losing effort?

BRANDON NAURATO: He's been great all year. And just, again, the type of person that he is. And I've never seen a group of players go to bat for an individual and want him to do well as much as Jake Barczewski, which says a lot about his character and what he's all about. We need more people like that.

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