

2026 NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship

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Charlottesville, Virginia, USA
Scott Stadium

Notre Dame Fighting Irish

Kevin Corrigan

Shawn Lyght

Thomas Ricciardelli

Josh Yago

Semifinals Media Conference



a great position to make plays, and I've been fortunate enough to capitalize on them. We play such an unselfish brand of lacrosse, and this late in May it works because guys are tired, longer games. Possessions matter.

So when we get deeper into possessions and share the ball the way we do, most of our goals are assisted. So it's going to be hard to stop us just because of how well we move the ball.

Q. Josh, how telling was that extra man there at the end of the third period when you guys turn around and score three to open the fourth really to break it open?

JOSH YAGO: Yeah. I think lacrosse is a game of runs. We knew they were going to go on theirs, and they went on theirs right before that. So then we responded with ours. I think our man-up unit has been pretty good, especially in the playoffs, and so we just gotta keep it going.

Q. For both Thomas and Shawn, I wanted to ask you a little bit about Josh's impact on what you've been able to do this year coming in as a grad transfer. What have you made of what he's been able to do for you, and what kind of impact does he have?

THOMAS RICCIARDELLI: Just completely unselfish. He puts the team forward in every single aspect of just our lacrosse life, whether it's on the field or off the field. Not only is he a really good player, but he's a really good guy to have in the locker room and play video games with at home and stuff like that and kind of chill out with.

Josh has been uber impactful in that. So I couldn't be more appreciative of how he's meshed with the team. And I'm so glad for him making this impact, especially in May when it matters.

SHAWN LYGHT: Yeah, I would say I was fortunate enough to be the scrimmage on my freshman and sophomore year, and I knew the player he was. When I heard he was coming to Notre Dame, I was super excited I wasn't going to have to go against him in that preseason scrimmage.

Notre Dame 9, Syracuse 4

THE MODERATOR: All right. We're joined by victorious Notre Dame. We have head coach Kevin Corrigan, Shawn Lyght, Thomas Ricciardelli, and Josh Yago. We'll take an opening statement from Coach Corrigan and open it up for questions for the players and questions for Coach.

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I said to our team after the game, at this point in the year, I'm not sure who's going to show up, what area of the game is going to show up for us. But 15 games in now, or 14 games in, we know somebody is going to show up. Our guys keep showing up, and it's different guys, different games, different units.

For us to do what we did on man-up and man-down today is huge. I mean, it's probably the difference in the game, right? And especially in the first half when we were fouling a little too much, and we got away with it because our man-down played so well, and credit to these guys and to Thomas and to Cage.

That's kind of been who we've been all year. You're not sure who's going to show up, what part of the game we're going to show up in. Our guys worked really hard. They all really care, and we got great faith in each other that somebody is going to show up, and thankfully somebody did again today.

Q. Josh, this is your second consecutive seven-point performance. What's worked for you over the last two weeks?

JOSH YAGO: Yeah. I think my teammates just put me in



... when all is said, we're done.®

I knew he was going to be able to come to Notre Dame and step on the field and make a difference. He's really lived up to and exceeded all the expectations a lot of people had for him.

But coming in, I knew he was going to be a huge piece for us. He's just capitalized on it. It's great to get to know him and spend so much time with him, and just a great person all around.

Q. For Thomas and Shawn, last time you guys faced Syracuse, gave up a hat trick in the first half with Joey Spallina, and then shut him out in the second half and here today. What specifically have you all done to limit such a talented player, Tewaaron finalist like yourself?

SHAWN LYGHT: He's a great player. It's always fun going against him. You can't try to take everything away from him. You gotta try to limit whatever you can, and fortunately we were able to do that today. And that helped us build a lead and keep them to seven goals.

He's a great player. It's fun going against him. Got Thomas (indiscernible) to bail us out when I'm making mistakes, anyone else, and he stood on his head as he's done all year. So credit to Thomas.

THOMAS RICCIARDELLI: I mean, Shawn is never going to say that he absolutely shut him down, but he did. Shawn is just an absurdly humble guy, and the way he plays out there makes me so confident and comfortable in the net.

I try to do as much as I can to help Shawn out maybe if he does make a mistake, but those happen very rarely. All the support that he had just on our defensive side because Joey has such good vision. So everybody off ball along with Shawn is really good. On-ball defense helps out.

Q. Shawn, Thomas had 14 saves, 67 percent. When he makes those ridiculously acrobatic saves, what does that do for you guys as a defense?

SHAWN LYGHT: I know there was one in the fourth quarter and you see him stick his stick up and make the save and you're like, wow, he just saved that. All right, now, we gotta clear it.

He makes some saves, and it's unbelievable. He's been unreal for us all year, getting better each game. And I'm happy to see he's getting the recognition he deserves down the stretch. With him behind me, I got all the confidence in my game and our teammates' games that any mistake we're making, he's going to bail us out. Once

again, he stood on his head today.

Q. Thomas, anything in particular help you kind of lock in early? I think you're making four or five early saves in your offense, came down and scored after each one?

THOMAS RICCIARDELLI: Yeah. Just trying to do my best to get the offense the ball. And sometimes it comes to me and shots on net. But looking back at some games our defense is playing really well.

No, I would say just trying my best not to get the momentum shifting in the opposite direction early on. And, I mean, the saves obviously help, but just doing as much as I can in the clearing game and stuff like that just to give the offense the ball to give them the opportunity to kind of capitalize early on and get the momentum in our favor.

Q. Shawn, the two full time penalties that you guys killed off, how energizing was that since you got off to the good start and they kind of narrowed it back and gave you time to expand that lead again?

SHAWN LYGHT: Anytime we're able to kill opponent, especially when it's locked in or two minutes locked in, it's a ton of energy. One, you're not necessarily supposed to make that stop every time. And I think, honestly, all year our two-minute penalties have actually been pretty good, even though we've struggled with 30 seconds or other ones.

But since we've changed man-down, we've been really good, connected. When we're able to get that stop, it's given us all the confidence, kind of takes confidence away from them, sucks the energy them.

And fortunately we were able to get stops and get the ball to our offense, and I think we scored one or two when we were still man-down. It was great energy and a good swing.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach Corrigan.

Q. How much of a luxury is that for you to start the game like that when Thomas is making saves and you're playing that complementary lacrosse when your offense scores after each one.

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I mean, listen, I thought overall it was kind of a very balanced game by us. Every aspect at some point we kind of corrected, either started well or corrected to doing better. Face-offs, for instance, we were getting killed early, and then we did a better job with that as the game went on. But even with that, we never gave up any



transition or goals or anything. That aspect was good.

We weren't riding to get the ball back as much as we were riding to make sure we had the right personnel on the field and that they didn't get transitioned. And sometimes that comes at the cost of a couple possessions, but we think ultimately it helps us play better defense because we're 6 on 6. Our clearing was good and clean all day.

They came in mixing up what they were doing. They were mixing up a match ride with four middies or just a regular ride with three, and we recognized and made the appropriate plays in that aspect of the game. We talked about man-up and man-down. Our offense, 13 of the 15 goals were assisted today. That's just good offense. That's really good unselfish offense.

And then, again, we give up seven, and you're going to win a lot of games when you give up seven.

So I thought overall it was a good, balanced performance by us in kind of every aspect, even the ones that we maybe didn't get the best of the game but we did well enough that it didn't become a factor going the other direction.

Q. Coach, Josh Yago, 14 points in the last two games. Is this what you envisioned him being when you recruited him in the portal last year?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: Listen. I would love to take credit for Josh having 14 points in the last two games. I knew Josh could help us. Like I said before, my son was his offensive coach at Air Force last year, and between him and Shawn, who was telling me, "This kid is a tough cover, Coach, I've been playing him in these scrimmages, and he's really good. He's big, strong, fast, more explosive than you think he is and has skill," and Will was saying the same thing.

So we knew he was going to be able to contribute. You don't ever count on somebody going seven points back to back at this point in the year.

And again, he is the most humble kid you'd ever meet. But I don't think it's false humility when he says his teammates are putting him in good positions. When the ball is moving, he gets to pick and choose when he wants to really attack and go all in and when he wants to be more of a feeder and a ball mover.

And when you have that luxury and it's not on you to create something every time the ball comes around, then you can have successful games like this without even going out of your way to do it, if that makes sense. He didn't have to say like, oh, I gotta get seven points for us. He's in the right spots, and his teammates are doing the right things.

Q. May I ask if you were at the '77 and '82 title games here? A little bit different weather. And also what is it like being back on a college campus for this event?

A. In '77 we won the state championship at Alma High School that year. And I was here. Of course, I was here. Are you kidding me?

I think, if I'm not mistaken, I think my father and Frank Gifford did that game for the ABC's Wide World of Sports, believe it or not. My dad was the color commentator, and Frank Gifford was doing the play-by-play. I remember that very well. Two great teams. Great coaches. That was a terrific time in college lacrosse and a terrific game. So of course I remember that.

And being here, I can talk about memories from the early '60s when my dad was coaching lacrosse here and I was backing up the goal and playing against the Sandell brothers at halftime. We would get to go out on the field and play against the Sandell brothers, and the Corrigan brothers would go out and play halftime. I think we were the only kids in town with sticks just about at that time.

No, it's great to be back here, and my 96-year-old mother was at the game today, and that's pretty wonderful, right? So, yeah, pretty awesome to be here. Thank you.

Q. Kevin, you mentioned kind of the early penalties. I think discipline will be a story line coming away from this game. How do you rein in the fiery edge you want your players to have coming into a game versus -- did you talk to Thomas Porell at halftime?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I don't think it's fair to talk about the officials' discipline. That's a joke. That's a joke. Come on. You guys could laugh. They won't laugh but you could.

No, listen, we fouled too much. It's as simple as that. You have a good point. We're fired up, we're keyed up. We're making aggressive plays, and we fouled too much. And there was no question about that. I thought it was a well-officiated game. I don't agree with everything they do, but they don't agree with everything I do either, I don't think.

I thought, we just put ourselves in a bad situation, particularly in the first half. And we played with a little more poise and a little more discipline in the second half, but I don't think any less aggressiveness, which is good.

We've gotta rein that in. We know that. But again, we talked before the game and after the game. I don't want our guys making timid mistakes right now. I want them

making aggressive mistakes. And if we're going to go out, we're going to go out like warriors, fighting and kicking and screaming. We're not going to be timid and look back on this and go, man, if we had just played a little more aggressively, a little more confidently and all that.

Is that going to come with maybe some mistakes? You hope not, but you're willing to live with a few, maybe, in that situation.

Q. Kevin, by the way, I was at the '77 game also, which probably you would realize. Shawn alluded to you changing your man-down defense. What did you change to make it more effective?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I'm not going to get into the thing, but we just felt like what we were doing -- it's funny. We've done a little bit of everything over the years, right? And we just looked at it, and I talked with Ryan Wellner, who did a great job kind of implementing the changes that we wanted to make, and he recognized it, too.

And I just said, hey, this group just doesn't do that four-man that we were playing that we've been very good in for a number of years, and we're just like, you know what, I mean, the proof is in the pudding. We're just not that good at that this year. And so we've gotta do something else. If we're going to be bad, let's be bad trying to figure out a way to be better.

And it just didn't -- for whatever reason, what we were doing didn't fit the group that we had this year. So we said, well, let's not just stand pat on a bad hand. Let's keep trying new things.

And to our guys' credit, like even the first day we did it, and everybody wasn't great, like most things when you try something new. And so afterwards I'm like, hey, if you guys -- we're not trying to break your confidence here, if you don't like this. They're like, no, no, no, give us a couple days. We're willing to work at this and make the change.

So all credit goes to them and Ryan Wellner for digging in on that and just really working hard to get better at it.

Q. Max Busenkell has five goals on the seven. All of them have come against Syracuse. How do you explain that statistical quirk?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: I don't know. I'm hoping he sees orange out there on Monday and has another big day for us. It's weird. It's weird he only has five goals on the season. We watch Max every day, and he's a very productive midfielder for us.

And it's kind of one of those things where you're looking at it, and even as we were evaluating, we're not oblivious to the fact he didn't have any goals for a long time in the season, and we're not going to replace him because he's a good player. He does a lot of good things.

And he's the grease guy. He always shows up in the right place, always sets the good pick, all those other things. You're like we can't afford to not have those other things that he's doing well, but it'd be nice if he'd put a few in the back of the net. Good to see in these two Syracuse games that he's come that.

Q. Coach, Syracuse and Princeton in the '90s and the early 2000s were the cream of the crop in college lacrosse. Came to championship weekend five times before you hoisted a National Championship trophy. Back in Charlottesville on Monday you get the chance to win three out of four and cement a dynasty. Have you taken the time to think about that at all?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: No. Thank you.

Q. Who deserves credit for the challenge that ultimately led to the goal getting overturned, and how influential was that play?

KEVIN CORRIGAN: You know, we have one of our guys, Will Donovan's brother, Pete, is our guy, and it's funny. We actually said to him early in the year -- like he got hurt last year at one point and did it for us, was holding the iPad and getting the replays and things for us.

And we said to him at the beginning of this year, we said, hey, unfortunately, you're not going to play with your knee injury. But we really need you. Like you're going to travel to every game. You're really good at that and we need that. That's important, right. There could be an important advantage at some point gained or lost.

So our guys were going crazy that Pete was the guy to say, Coach, take a look at that. The other guy was in the crease, not the guy who scored. And so, yeah, all credit goes to him and our guys that work hard at doing those little things.

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