

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - High Point vs Purdue

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Providence, Rhode Island, USA  
Amica Mutual Pavilion

## Purdue Boilermakers Coach Matt Painter Braden Smith Trey Kaufman-Renn Media Conference

Purdue 75, High Point 63

MATT PAINTER: I thought it was a hard-played game. Anytime you play somebody that wins their league and tournament and is on a 14-game winning streak, you know they're going to have a high competitive spirit, so I thought High Point really played hard. I thought we did a good job defensively. I thought our guys really gave a great effort on the defensive end, but I thought the game was won just in the possession battles. We had so many more possessions than they did. Our guys were great on the glass. We've been inconsistent this year in rebounding. We'll kind of come in and out of it. We'll have a game where it's pretty good and the next game it's not. You look at it from a personnel standpoint sometimes, but I thought our ability to rebound and have 19 offensive rebounds probably ends up being the defense.

We like the shots we're getting. Didn't make as many as we would like to make. But I liked our effort, I thought we got great production from our bench. Everybody that came in off of our bench gave us something and helped us win the game. Gicarri Harris didn't play much and came in and got a double double. Will Berg finishes with a basket and did some good things defensively. Myles Colvin was solid. He had couple good looks not go down that normally do. We have some young guys who have been there, some guys who have played a lot of games. I was just impressed with our effort and ability to hit the glass.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for that, Coach. We'll have questions for Trey and Braden.

**Q. They cut into your lead 59-56. Did you feel like the**



**momentum shifted back in your favor after these two possessions?**

BRADEN SMITH: I mean, yeah, that was an incredible shot and we were lucky that went down. They're a great team and they were here for a reason and they showed why. And the game was so back and forth the entire time and I think me and Trey and all these other guys who have been through it, we understand how to keep our composure and stay with the game. It's going to be ups and downs. I think we just made some good plays down the stretch.

**Q. Trey, getting a team outside the Big Ten, different style and everything, from prep to execution, did it feel like another game to you or did it feel like this was a different flavor over what we have been going up against over the last two, two and a half months?**

TREY KAUFMAN-RENN: I don't think it was that different. They still ran a lot of ball screens. We have been dealing with a lot more ball screens lately. Look at USC, so, no, I don't think it was that different. They're a super physical team. They play really hard and that's why they won their conference, so, yeah.

**Q. Question is for Braden. He mentioned that the rebounding and the defense, when you dominate a team physically like that, does it give you any momentum heading into the round of 32 and beyond?**

BRADEN SMITH: Yeah, it gives us more opportunities, like he said, the offensive rebounds kick out threes, we had one possession really early where we had four or five shots. None of them went, but getting those extra possessions was big-time for us. Limiting turnovers and winning that turnover battle is huge as well.

**Q. I have one quick one for Trey and one for Braden. How often do you work on that fadeaway shot that you made look very easy there in the second half?**

TREY KAUFMAN-RENN: All the time. It's the first thing I do when I step on the floor in warmup, so I'm glad my hard work's paying off.

**Q. Braden, you were nodding, as Coach said -- great**



**answer, Trey. You were nodding as Coach said, the complementary pieces, stepping up. As you two are the leaders of this team, how encouraging is it to start this tournament getting that type of performance from the others?**

BRADEN SMITH: It's big time. There are a lot of guys on the team and it's our dream to be here. They did a great job doing their job and sticking with that. They rebounded their butts off. We're obviously very happy for that and it's huge for us and our program.

**Q. Trey, you guys rebounded at 21, 19 offensive rebounds and such, but ten from Cam, eight from Myles. How much has it helped the total team effort of rebounding for you guys?**

TREY KAUFMAN-RENN: Like Coach Paint said, it's the difference in the game. That's what won us the game. I think we have done a better job lately on rebounding, put more of an emphasis on it from a player standpoint and we got to keep that up if we want to keep winning.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, fellas. Thanks for your time.

Questions for Coach Painter?

**Q. I got a two-part question. One, being a coach and person, playing in the tournament this early, one, is that what you prefer, players ready to go?**

MATT PAINTER: Yes.

**Q. And then two, this felt like one of your more connected defensive performances over the past two months. If that's not the case, feel free to correct me, but I'm curious on that.**

MATT PAINTER: Yeah, it's definitely better to play early. If you have that late game, it's torture, yeah, for everybody. If you haven't been through it, I think it would be hard to understand that statement, but if you ask any coach just sitting there all day and you wake up early and you got a 10:10 start, it's the damnest thing in the world because you have done everything in your power to lead up to this. You start in June and now you get here and you sit there all day. I love the early games, period.

What was the second part of the question?

**Q. Your defensive activities...**

MATT PAINTER: Yeah, it was better contained in the dribble. I think that's where we were better tonight. When

you talk with Giffa and you talk with Bobby Pettiford and their ability to break you down, and we wanted to be in gaps and help them but then they have great shooters in Benham and Johnson and the kid from Texas tack, D'Maurian Williams and they come to jump stops and they cut off of that. And now, Benham is a late kicker and you can't get close, you have to stop. You don't have contact right there so it makes it a very difficult guard. That stood out for us. We rebounded well but our ability to forward the basketball was much better. We've been inconsistent in that area this more.

THE MODERATOR: Time for one or two more for Coach.

**Q. In that moment, the second half when the lead is up to three, do you have to say to anything to Braden or Trey, like hey, we need you to make a play or do you know they have experience?**

MATT PAINTER: We talked more in terms of the execution of what we're running or what we're trying to stop, hey, just keep your poise and stay with it. Braden gets worked up when people foul him and they don't call it. Just stay with it, win the game. Like nothing else matters besides winning that competition and winning that drill. The game is no different. No matter what happens, execute, do your job and they understand that. You get into trouble when you don't move into the next play. We all do. We all get caught into it. The crowd gets into it or it gets to be a close game, you can still do your job. You can feel however the hell you want to feel. You can be depressed or sad or anxious. Do your job, anxious, sad, however the hell you feel, who cares. Do your job.

That's where people lose the rules. You have rules to what you're doing defensively and you have things to execute what you run. Continue to do your job and play hard. Don't worry about anything else. Once you get into all that, you're done, you're cooked. I think that experience that we have we're able to move to the next play and it helps when he hits a turnaround fadeaway, right? That part helps too.

**Q. Purdue, with the NCAA format of Saturday and a quick turnaround, how much of a benefit of these guys having played so many tournament games and been through that last year help quickly flip the switch down?**

MATT PAINTER: I think it helps both ways, right? Because we've had some tough breaks and we got beat and I had to go home and sit in it for a long time to get to the next year's tournament and that's no fun but that's part of this tournament, right? It's not the best out of three or the best out of five.

We have felt pretty good in some games about getting to that, maybe outside of a couple of people, but the experiences that they've had and really helping out our younger guys and making sure they understand about how the tournament is and how it's different. They get to feel that.

A lot of times you get to feel it and you don't move on, right? When you're able to move on from one game, you hope to use those experiences in the past but I think this is really good to help them get to that next game and feel comfortable.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your time, Coach.  
Good luck Saturday.

MATT PAINTER: Thank you.

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