

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - McNeese vs Clemson

Thursday, March 20, 2025
Providence, Rhode Island, USA
Amica Mutual Pavilion

Clemson Tigers
Coach Brad Brownell
Ian Schieffelin
Chase Hunter

Media Conference

McNeese 69, Clemson 67

THE MODERATOR: Coach, once you're settled, just thoughts on today's game.

BRAD BROWNELL: Thank you. Congratulations to McNeese. They played very well. We picked a tough day to not play our best. Certainly they had a lot to do with that. I didn't do a very good job with my guys and we weren't really prepared for the zone to man. Haven't seen a lot of that this year, maybe a little bit with Stanford and it bothered us. I thought their athleticism inside and their quickness certainly was a factor. The offensive rebounds they got, extra possessions really helped them. We had a hard time getting any rhythm and I think that's what's disappointing for me. I couldn't help my guys get into any rhythm in the game.

I'm super proud of these guys and the kind of season we had. Obviously 27 wins and the way these guys do it, the way they carry themselves as men, they're just terrific people and leaders and so it's been a privilege to coach two guys like this and I hate that it had to end the way it did today.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach. Let's gear our questions towards Chase and Ian first.

Q. Chase and Ian both, from your perspective, what was happening in that first half? 13 points is obviously not what you want. What were they doing specifically that bothered you?

CHASE HUNTER: They were playing good defense but I



think we missed a lot of open shots. We had a lot of open looks that we usually make. A few of those go in, it's a whole different ball game. So at the end of the day, I think we got a lot of open looks that we just missed and that's the game of basketball.

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: I agree with Chase. They disrupted our flow a little bit and we got a little too antsy a little bit. We got some open shots that didn't fall and we kind of didn't have that flow that we usually have.

Q. For both you guys, just ended the season but thinking about this year as a whole. Set a season record but it just ended early like this. How are you going to think about this year specifically?

CHASE HUNTER: This hurts. We wanted to do some big things to end the year, but I'm proud of this team and the whole season, like you said. We did great. We had 27 wins, set school records, but it's going to sting to know that we didn't finish the right way. I think that's something that, you know, will probably hurt us for the rest of our lives but we still did some great things this year. It definitely hurts to end this way.

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: I agree with Chase. It's good for the underclassmen to experience this and me and Chase didn't want to go out losing the first game, but we had a great year and hopefully the underclassmen can build off this.

Q. For Ian, McNeese was able to out-rebound you guys on offense and defensive glass. What caused that and how did their athleticism affect you guys on the floor?

IAN SCHIEFFELIN: Yeah, they're a very physical team. If you didn't box them out, they were going to make you pay. Sometimes they wanted the ball more and sometimes the ball bounces the other way. Sometimes it bounces your way. They were more physical and just wanted the ball more.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions for Chase or Ian?

All right. You can head back.

Q. What was your message to the team at halftime and can you remember a half like that in your coaching history?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, you have halves like that. You don't like having them in this setting. I was trying to get them to relax. We haven't shot the ball very well the last two weeks. I don't know why that is. We did a bunch of extra shooting this week and we're 1-15 at halftime and you can almost see our guys pressing and just trying hard and shooting is not a good concept.

We were trying as a staff to figure out how to get better shots and keep better flow and is there a way to get a few easies? We were decent tonight minus the extra possessions. The 18 offensive rebounds and whatnot, I mean, that's 18 second-chance opportunities. That's just too many. We talked about this was an excellent offensive rebounding team and a team that really tried to create turnovers in their athleticism and speed was a factor.

Q. Coach, a lot of people are going to talk about 13 points in the first half. How much are you going to lean on talking to your team moving forward about 54 points in the second half and never giving up?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, well, this team has shown that the last two games we didn't play as well against Louisville either at times, and a similar team. Very athletic and physical and they bothered us as well. We cut it to one possession in both games.

We have a great group of guys. They're unbelievable. These two guys are phenomenal leaders and we don't win as many games as we won this year without these guys being great players and great leaders. We're proud of all that. We're disappointed that, in this setting, after what we accomplished last year that we didn't play better.

THE MODERATOR: Anything else out there? One more in the front here.

Q. What did you see on Viktor's technical? That whole sequence there?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, I'm disappointed in that. I just talked to my guys and I made a big deal to our team about not getting involved in any woofing today, and that was very disappointing. I think the second guy got caught. Obviously it was a very inopportune time for that call. Disappointed but, you know, things happen.

Q. Coach, can you reflect on this team and especially the seniors, a group that helped you, how does this impact you and the Clemson program?

BRAD BROWNELL: Yeah, just joy to coach those two guys, especially because they're such great players, competitors, and where they came from. Ian was not heavily recruited and has had an unbelievable year. I think very few people thought he would play as well as he did at our level.

Chase was heavily recruited but had injuries as a young player and struggled to overcome all that and to show the grit that we talk about. That's what this is really all about as a coach, helping young men become better on and off the floor. We have a bunch of other guys. I have three senior walk-ons. In this day and age of the transfer portal, your walk-ons become more valuable because they're there and part of your culture and what they do. They're terrific young men who gave a lot and I'm grateful for them and our program is in a very good place right now.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your time, Coach. Congrats on a great season.

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