

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Second Round - McNeese vs Purdue

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Providence, Rhode Island, USA  
Amica Mutual Pavilion

## McNeese Cowboys Coach Will Wade Christian Shumate Javohn Garcia Sincere Parker Media Conference



THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us, thoughts on today's game.

WILL WADE: Yeah, Purdue was more aggressive from the start. We couldn't get stops. They had us spread out. We were switching too low and they made us pay for it. We weren't as crisp as we were on Thursday from the start of the game and they had a lot to do with that. They were more aggressive and they out-rebounded us. That's why they shot a lot more free throws than we did. They were tougher and more aggressive than we were and we thought we were on Thursday. We couldn't carry that over. We couldn't fill our tanks back up quick enough to bring that again. They're a great team, really well-coached, great players. Smith is great. I thought we did a good job in the second half kind of speeding him up. They shot it well from three. All the things you need to make an upset, we didn't do. We didn't make enough free throws or threes. We were able to survive that the other day. Couldn't overcome it today but proud of our guys, proud of our season. Proud of everybody.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach. Appreciate it.

**Q. Christian, for you, talk about the emotion, what's going through your mind right now?**

CHRISTIAN SHUMATE: It's just a lot. For the most part, I know we lost but I'm happy to be here with my brothers and I'm happy to put out a decent showing for our community and it's just very emotional right now. We would have liked to win the game but the win and loss

doesn't define all the emotion. This is one of the last times with all my guys and everything we have been through the whole season and just being together and everything that we did. Even for me, I have been here four years and it's just been a crazy ride. To be here now and just be in this moment is just crazy from when I started and I'm just really appreciative of all of that. I'm just soaking it all in.

**Q. Javohn, for you, same kind of question. Just talk about uncertainty, obviously, with your future with where you are next year, but right now what's going through your mind and this season as a whole?**

JAVOHN GARCIA: Just a lot of defeat. We knew what type of game they were coming in and like Christian said, I was just glad to be there with these guys, we have been through a lot from the start. We just kept fighting and kept fighting and it's sad to see the season end like this.

**Q. Sincere, I wanted to ask you a question. Reflect on the season, what you did a couple days ago obviously was huge for your university. What does this season mean to you to play for the guys on your left and your coach.**

SINCERE PARKER: Means everything. Just knowing where I was eight months ago. I honestly never thought I could be right here in this position, be here with such a great group of guys, great coach and everybody is very -- we gel together really close and it just kind of sucks right now it's coming to an end but looking back, we did accomplish a lot of great things and something that coach says a lot of times, you don't get a chance to be first in a lot of things and we made history a few times this year and I'm just glad I was able to be a part of what these two and a few others started. It's just honestly a great opportunity.

THE MODERATOR: Any further questions for the student-athletes?

**Q. For you guys, what was the difference in the shots tonight and not falling early and how much did getting behind change what you guys had to do?**

SINCERE PARKER: Honestly, I feel like from the start of the game they kind of imposed their will on us kind of early and we tried to fight back a little bit, too late towards the



end, but to their credit, they made shots and we missed shots. The times we did get stops, we didn't get to execute and score, but okay.

**Q. You came out at halftime, Javohn, and hit that three. How did it feel to try to come back on that 11-0 run. Talk about the start of that half and what changed in the locker room.**

JAVOHN GARCIA: We just talked about chipping away into the lead and keep fighting. We have to find different ways to try to knock them off their game because they were in a good rhythm and I just kept playing and fighting until the end, until the last buzzer we're going to keep fighting.

THE MODERATOR: Appreciate your time. Thank you very much. You guys can head back to the locker room. Questions for Coach Wade?

**Q. On a personal note, before you got to McNeese, were you a believer in second chances? And now having gotten one and succeeding in it, what does that feel like for you?**

WILL WADE: Yeah, I'm a believer in second chances. A lot of people in our program are second chances... myself, the players. That's kind of why we're close. We got a lot of stuff that bonds us together and so I'm a big believer in it and hopefully we did right by the people who gave us a second chance.

**Q. Obviously very emotional walking off the court and right now as well. Just talk about these past two years and this season and this week.**

WILL WADE: I mean, incredible. (Tearfully) Today's tough. We went 40-2 in the league. I don't care what league you are in, that's hard to do. 58-11 in two years. That's these guys. To be able to win a game, it just took so much out of us. We didn't have the pop today. I'm not making excuses. Purdue had a lot of pop and they played us well. Just to see our guys come together, see our guys represent our school, represent our area so well. It's just been phenomenal but it's just been, I mean, 40-2 in the league is tough to do. Never lost a home game in the league. Great fans. Most of the time you lose a tournament, fans are ready to fire you. Our people were -- lobbed us. Awesome.

**Q. Will, what are the next steps with North Carolina State?**

WILL WADE: I'll worry about that tomorrow. Look, I'm an honest guy but today I want to put a bow on everything

with McNeese if we can. That'll be up to whatever else happens. Now I want to worry about McNeese. Not to try to give out a canned answer, Pat, but this is about our players and McNeese now. We're not flying back until tomorrow morning. We'll enjoy this here and when we get back, we'll figure out next steps. But I do want to say whatever happens, our program at McNeese is in great shape. We have tremendous leadership. We're not dumb. We have a plan to keep this program rolling, whoever is at the helm, and this program is going to keep moving in the right direction. This program is going to keep winning and I really believe we're just getting started.

**Q. Coach, we talked a lot about this place and how much has the town meant to you, not the basketball but the town. How much will you always be a part of the basketball program?**

WILL WADE: Well, hopefully I'll be part of the program. You know, the town, everybody, just incredible. Incredible. I think I needed somewhere that was going to embrace me and the town needed somebody to embrace them. It just worked. I can't explain how. I guess the winning helps, but it worked. Just unforgettable. The town embraced our players. Most of you guys haven't been there, but our players are all over billboards all over town. It's like a little NBA team in our town. It's crazy how the town has embraced our guys and it's changed our university. It's going to change our university. It's changed it already. It's going to continue to do that but the program, we have great leadership. The program is in good hands. It's going to keep moving forward and hopefully when they remember us, we're the people who kind of got it kick started. When you think about it, we were one of the 30 worst teams in the country and we're in the round of 32. Pretty good job by a lot of people to do that in two years. Most importantly, our players.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, one more in front.

**Q. If you could, just talk about specifically Christian Shumate and Javohn Garcia, what they mean to you personally and to the McNeese State program.**

WILL WADE: It's hard to have perspective on that. Shu was here four years through the lowest of the lows and the highest of the highs. Just incredible. He believed in us and came back. It's not like we -- he believed in us and came back and Garcia has been so steady for the two years with us and hopefully he's going to get a third. We have to look at how the ruling works with the JUCO stuff. I believe he's in line for another year. I'm hopeful he's in line for another year but we have to look at all that and help him. Shu is everything you want. He transferred in from Tulsa after his freshman year but how many kids stay at

the same school for four years now? That's a rare deal. Him and Garcia and Parker came in on the second year, but him and Garcia believed in us when there wasn't a whole lot to believe in. We were selling a vision that this is what we can do. This is what we can be, but if you listen to us and you didn't know us, you think, yeah, those guys are morons. Like all y'all thought when I said we were going to win 23 games. (Inaudible) is here today. He tapped me on the shoulder and said you realize you're McNeese now after I said that in the press conference. Garcia and Shumate, they believed in us when there was no proof in concept. It was easier for some of the other guys to jump on board but there was no proof of concept when they jumped on board and believed in us, so just forever appreciative of those guys and I think our community is certainly appreciative of them as well.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thanks for your candor. Congrats on a great year.

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