

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Texas A&M vs Michigan

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Denver, Colorado, USA

Ball Arena

Texas A&M Aggies Coach Buzz Williams

Media Conference

Michigan 91, Texas A&M 79

Q. What was the locker room like afterward when you guys were able to meet and maybe just the emotions and time that y'all had back there before you came up here to the podium?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Yeah, I'm sorry it took so long. We've done the same thing all 18 years that I've coached, and I'm not saying it's right, nor am I saying it's wrong. It's just how we go about things. Anybody who just played their last game, everybody in the organization puts their right hand on that person, and I pray over that person.

So if I violated the timing of all of it, it's just because we had eight of them in there. That's all. We don't address the game. I pray over them. Everybody in the organization knows that that's what's coming. When I say amen, I head this direction.

Q. What do you wish more people understood about this team and this group of seniors specifically?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Oh, respectfully, opinion of others doesn't impact me. But what has impacted me is the relationship with these guys. Obviously it's an emotional time. We wanted not only to win for the right reasons. We also just wanted to continue to stay together, and I know that sounds maybe like fluff. It's actually the truth.

I forgot your question. But I've quit looking at all of that stuff, and I know that it comes with it. So I'm not complaining, and I understand the exposure is part of why all of us are doing so well.

I'm not comparing my job to people who are saving lives and protecting our freedom in any sort of way, nor am I a simpleton in understanding how complex this industry has



become, like all industries, including yours.

But to have the lifelong relationships that have been created here over a long period of time is very rare, and so I'm honored and humbled and thankful.

Q. Pharrel had an incredible game with 26, but his last basket came at 9:59. What did they change in the last quarter of the game to stop him from scoring?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: I don't know what Coach said on your question on that. I thought Gochi did a good job. I don't think we finished at the rim at the rate we need to, and I think we fouled way too much.

We played with a low turnover rate, but for us, we are dependent on shooting more balls from the field and from the free-throw line. And so to get in the bonus, to allow them in the bonus so quickly both halves goes against us.

And then we are reliant completely on extra shots from offensive rebounds, and we are reliant and dependent on only allowing the opponent one shot. We did not do as well as our averages up until today from a defensive rebound perspective or an offensive rebound perspective.

Q. You said you pray for your players afterwards. Why is it important for you after the season to pray for them, and can you give us an example of how you pray over them afterwards?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Yes, sir, a part of that started when I was 33 years old. I didn't know what to say. Not because I'm overly spiritual, nor am I a good person. Sometimes even with my family when I don't know what to say, I just pray.

Being on a team is special. I wasn't ever a good player, but since I've been 12, I've always been on a team. It's taken me away, like all coaches, from some level of normalcy with my family, but my family has been so supportive of my career.

And this team, Team 113 for Texas A&M, it ended 45 minutes ago, and I don't think that there's -- I'm not smart enough to say anything that would solve that.



So that's what I've done every year. Every prayer is different because of my relationship with that young man and with their family. And so I just try to be precise, despite being overly emotional, in letting them know how much I love them, letting them know how much I care for them, and letting them know no matter where they go or where I go or who's the coach or where they play or if they don't play, none of that impacts the relationship and that I'll always be there to support them.

Q. What do you feel like is the outlook of this program with so many guys leaving, and how much work is there to do in the coming weeks to build another roster?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Yeah, I mean, that's just what this has become. Pick a team. I think they had four graduate transfers. Any team.

I think what we've tried to do is just -- because everything is happening at such a fast rate, is how can I be present in that moment and how can I help everyone within the organization to be present in that moment.

That's so hard to do. Sometimes it's emotionally hard to do, like now. Mentally, hey, I just missed that shot, or physically, I just messed up that ball screen coverage. We call it the red folder. How can we be present in real time in the red folder.

I'm incredibly proud of everyone, not just the players, the staff. I'm proud of our accomplishments throughout their tenure, including this year. I know you're familiar with all of the numbers. That would be egotistical for me to talk about it. But just as proud as I am of the accomplishments, I'm proud of the life change.

Every coach knows the portal starts officially Monday, and so I'm assuming we'll travel tomorrow. I would think that our staff is way ahead in regards to where I need to go and who I need to call and what I need to do.

That's just prevalent, regardless of program. Like any coach, you want to put together the best roster with the right people that you can per year and build for the future sort of thing. I don't know how much that applies, but I think our staff has been good, and each year I think we've been a little better in how we've assimilated our roster.

Q. From your perspective, what do you think caused the struggle in that part of the game when Michigan made that run to take the lead that y'all weren't able to come back from?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: My brain is completely fried, but I do

think at the 8-ish-minute time-out, I don't know if he called it, I called it, or it was the media, I think we had 70 points. And you've watched, I think, nearly all of our games. We were doing really well. We averaged 71 points in SEC play, and we had eight and a half minutes to go with 70.

We didn't finish at the rim. We got them into the bonus too much. We didn't shoot enough balls. And I didn't think that we protected the rim as well as we have. I thought we did a good job relative to the threes and the prowess that they have, but in that run, we were not getting stops. I think we had three turkeys in the first half and got a turkey to start the first four minutes of the second half. I haven't talked to Bubba since the game has been over. I don't know that we got another one.

It was too often we weren't scoring, but arguably the more important thing, we weren't getting stops.

Q. You've always touched on the long-term relationships the sport has allowed you to make. What does it mean to have that connection and to continue to have that connection with this group of players long after their playing careers are over?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Yeah, I have, like, four friends. My wife would be No. 1 on the list. I try not to count my children as friends. But I only have three other friends other than my wife. I know this comes across the wrong way. I hired two of them because I'm so friendless.

But I do think the transformational relationships, the true love in our program means no agenda. We haven't had an agenda. We want to help them be better players, but we want our program to be total development.

I think the development that these long-tenured guys have had has been life changing. And I do think they're better players, and our teams have continued to improve. But someday they're going to be old and can't play, and someday I'm going to be old and can't coach.

But I think that the relationships were built on faith, hope and love is really cool.

Not to sound condescending maybe, but at some point I think you have to be accountable to those relationships, regardless of anything else, results, opinions. Yeah, I'm just very thankful and honored that, like I told H, we'll be friends forever, and now you can come to my house and we can watch a game and eat queso together. Nobody will say anything. Nobody will tweet about it. I'm honored.

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