

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Baylor vs Duke

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Raleigh, North Carolina, USA

Lenovo Center

Duke Blue Devils

Khaman Maluach

Patrick Ngongba II

Sion James

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: We're now ready to begin the Duke student-athlete press conference. We'll go ahead and open up for questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Pat or Khaman, Baylor isn't the tallest team you guys will play all year. I think Norchad Omier is like 6'7". What have you seen on the scout about how to make your height advantage count, especially down low?

KHAMAN MALUACH: They're an undersized team, so our size is our advantage whether it's on the glass or the defensive side or whether playing defense on staying down on pump fakes and crashing the boards. So our height, our size is our advantage.

THE MODERATOR: Patrick, do you have anything to add?

PATRICK NGONGBA II: Yeah, kind of like what Khaman said, our side is our advantage.

Q. Question is for Sion. If you were able to assess what you've been able to bring to this roster, what do you think are some of the qualities that have really helped since you arrived?

SION JAMES: The good thing about my role here is my role is to play with the best players in the country and try to help them shine a little bit. I feel like I have a really easy job with these two guys, plus all the other guys we have on our team.

My big role is to do whatever's needed, whether it's



scoring, oftentimes it's playmaking, getting these guys the ball in the best positions.

Q. I'm just curious as to what your first NCAA Tournament experience was like last night.

THE MODERATOR: Is there a particular player? Let's see, Patrick, could you go first this time.

PATRICK NGONGBA II II: It was definitely like a dream come true, just being able to watch the tournament growing up, and yesterday just being able to go out there and play with the March Madness on the court and the crowd and all that. It was just like a special moment.

THE MODERATOR: Sion, do you have anything to add?

SION JAMES: Yeah, largely the same. Looking at the court and seeing the big March Madness logo in the middle, looking around and knowing my family is there to support, and just knowing I've been watching these games since I was a kid and now being in this position is a really cool thing.

KHAMAN MALUACH: To me it was really exciting. It was really fun, especially doing it with a special group of guys and being able to step on the floor and do it with them made it more exciting.

Q. Sion, this question is for you. Their backcourt is really long. You've got Edgcombe and then Rob Wright. Plans for handling that, maybe one of the more athletic guard rooms you'll see this year.

SION JAMES: Very talented backcourt, those two specifically, plus all the other guys they got coming in, Roach and Nunn off the bench, Love out there as well.

These guys can do everything. They're very skilled, they're athletic in the paint, they can make shots. But like you said about size is going to be one of our advantages, just like speed is an advantage for them. So we'll try to negate what they do and high level what we do.

Q. Sion, you mentioned your role in helping others shine. Most athletes want themselves to shine. How did you come upon that selflessness? Is that



something that's marked your career throughout?

SION JAMES: It's something that I've kind of always leaned on as I've gone. Don't get me wrong, I want to look good, shine like everybody does, but I recognize one of the things that I'm best at is helping these other guys get their games off, get their games going.

You can call it selflessness, sure, but it's really just me doing kind of what I do best, just like everyone else on the floor is doing.

THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, you're excused. Thank you very much. Good luck tomorrow.

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