

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

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Raleigh, North Carolina, USA

Lenovo Center

Duke Blue Devils

Jon Scheyer

Cooper Flagg

Tyrese Proctor

Media Conference

Duke - 89, Baylor - 66

THE MODERATOR: We are now ready to go ahead and begin the Duke portion of the press conference.

If we could start with an opening statement from Coach Scheyer, please.

JON SCHEYER: For us, the preparation for this game started with great respect for Scott Drew, his program, how good of a coach he is, his coaching staff, their players. They have really good talent.

So for us to win by this margin, I think speaks to the level of killer instinct that our guys have, the competitiveness, and the connectivity. I thought guys did a great job last two games, if my math is right, we have 38-to-8 assist-to-turnovers. That's a big deal. I may be off by one, if I am. Tell me.

Am I off? I'm off by one, I think. 39, even better.

I thought, again, Cooper back these last couple games. He's had a great way about him. Tyrese, look, it's obviously the shots, big-time shot-making, but I think he's just been competitive and a great leader, setting the tone every day with what we're doing.

So really proud of this win. Sweet 16 sounds great. We know it's a quick turnaround, but we're going to enjoy this one tonight and get back to it.

Q. Cooper, how do you describe what you saw from Tyrese tonight in these last few games?



COOPER FLAGG: I think when Tyrese plays with the type of confidence he's been playing with, really this whole second half of the season is really good for our team. Such a talented player, such a weapon for us when he's being confident looking for his shot.

Q. Tyrese, this question is for you. Just talk about that killer instinct. This is the most three-pointers since 2001. That team won a national championship also. Just speak on that killer instinct you have and just coming out with the dog mentality.

TYRESE PROCTOR: I think it's just my preparation, just behind the scenes putting in the work and trusting myself. When I'm on the court, just playing free and just having fun out there, just trying to cherish every moment I get with these guys and just having fun.

Q. I know your first couple years at Duke you've had some ups and downs. Just curious sort of how you maintained your level of commitment to the program, maybe not wanting to try something else and just going all in with this group and having the belief that it was going to click for you at this level.

TYRESE PROCTOR: I think from a young age I've never been a person to sort of jump off a ship in a sense. Just trusting myself, obviously trusting Coach Scheyer and the program here.

Everyone's on a different journey, whether it's one year, two years, three years, four years, just making sure I'm level-headed and always trying to get better every day.

Q. Tyrese, according to NCAA stats, you joined some rare company with Coach Scheyer. You're the first Duke player to shoot a --

JON SCHEYER: Could you say that one more time?

Q. First Duke player to make five-plus 3-pointers in back-to-back NCAA Tournament games since 2010.

TYRESE PROCTOR: What was the question? I wasn't listening.



Q. How does that make you feel?

TYRESE PROCTOR: It's great. Everyone has been calling him "White Mike" for the past two weeks.

No, I'm just really proud of our group and proud of the way we came out and responded in the second half.

Q. It's a 35-30 game with about three, four minutes to go in the first half, and you guys close on a 12-0 run. What kicked into gear there to get you guys some separation?

TYRESE PROCTOR: Definitely the things we spoke about pregame, just rebounding and playing defense. When we stick to our defense, stick to our habits, we're a really hard team to score on.

Once we started getting loose balls and rebounds, we could push in transition and play our offense.

Q. This is for you, Tyrese. You were 0 for 10 your first two games in the ACC Tournament from 3. I'm curious, when you were shooting in those games, did it feel good at the time? Did you have to tweak anything, like a reminder of something foundational with your shot? Or is this just sometimes the way it gets going?

TYRESE PROCTOR: Yeah, it's just the way it goes. Obviously it was 0 of 10, like you said. Just sticking with it, putting in the work. Just trusting myself is the big thing.

Q. Cooper, first off, how's your eye? Secondly, it seemed like, particularly the first half, a very physical first half, and you guys got to the line a lot. Was that part of the strategic game plan coming in to try and get to the line and make some points there?

COOPER FLAGG: Yeah, I'm all good. My eye feels pretty good right now. I think just getting downhill, getting in the paint is when good things happen all around. So whether it's kicking out for 3s or getting fouled.

That's definitely something we emphasize going into every game, just getting in the paint and trying to make plays.

Q. Cooper, you went up against your old high school teammate Robert Wright. He was guarding you a couple of times coming up the court. What was that like to see your old buddy?

COOPER FLAGG: It's just a cool moment, cool experience. We spent a year together winning high school national championship together, going undefeated last

year. It was really cool to see him on this stage and see how well he's doing. Just a great experience.

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

Gentlemen, you're excused. Thank you very much and congratulations.

Q. Coach Scheyer, right before halftime, I believe you guys were up 17. You made the infamous Duke run where you pretty much put your foot on the gas. What was the message going into halftime, not letting your foot off the gas, trying to keep that lead going into the second half?

JON SCHEYER: It's a position you want to be in obviously where you have a lead, but for us we've been in it enough where we've had an 18-point lead against Notre Dame with a few minutes to go away. We were just up 21 at the half against Carolina in the ACC Tournament.

For us, you have one season with this group, you try to use the experiences we've had. I'll reference it. I'll reference those games at halftime just to make sure we know how precious it is.

I thought our guys did a good job, probably gave up too many second-chance points and opportunities in the second half, but overall I thought we just did a great job weathering the storm and staying with it.

Q. A lot of conversation about roster construction in terms of talent and fit. I was curious about the way the personalities of this team fit together. What were you expecting when you got the team together, and what have you seen, especially here in the tournament?

JON SCHEYER: I think it's going even better than we could have imagined in terms of the personalities. We really tried to identify guys in the transfer portal that understood it wasn't going to be about them scoring all the points or shooting all the shots, but it was about the fit. And with the fit, they could be really successful as well.

So Maliq, Mason, Sion, they're so unselfish. I think they're mature. Having six freshmen, it's great to see Mason and Sion every day, they have a routine they do. They're pros. So to see them with how they operate, how they go about their business, I think it's important for the young guys.

Then Maliq is just the ultimate team guy. Obviously we want him to play, but even still he's cheering everybody on.

So I think that's a big thing. Just understanding that it's not

about shots and points. It's about the fit and being part of a winning team.

Q. Jon, as a guy we have documented here today you've made a few 3-pointers. Do you have a feel for what it's like to be on a heater the way Tyrese is on right now? The other thing is did you have a chance to say anything to Jeremy in the handshake line?

JON SCHEYER: One, just with Jeremy, I told him I love him in the handshake line. I said this the other day, but he's been -- we'll look back on his four years at Duke as such a key moment. I think selfishly for me I feel that way because of the transition. He was the only returning player to come back when I took over. It meant a lot to me.

I've been through a lot with him. It was strange seeing him in green. I had to do a double take today even though I knew he wasn't on our team.

But I told him I love him. That's all I said to him.

With Tyrese, I think the cool part is somebody asked him the question of how he went 0 for 10 in the first two ACC games. So just to have that toughness about him, I think he's had six, six, and seven the last three games. Actually, you ask me about my shooting days, I think I couldn't make a shot my first two tournament games my senior year. Then finally against Purdue, I got a few to go down.

Really proud of him for his work ethic and his disciplined shooting.

Q. Coach, it took a few minutes for Khaman and Pat to get going in this game. But can you talk about the lift Pat gave you the first half and a little about his competitiveness. It seems he has a sly grin that gets under his opponent's skin?

JON SCHEYER: Sly grin is a good way to put it. Pat is a quiet competitor. He's got great feel. There's not really any moment that's too big for him. He's really, really smart, and he understands the game well, but he's physical and competitive.

For us to have two freshmen big guys playing in a round of 32 game to go to a Sweet 16 against a great player in Omier and just to have the physicality. I think that's the hardest part, to be physical without fouling.

Pat came in. He made six free throws. He played good defense. You trust him with the ball. He's just been such a solid guy for us, and I'm really proud of him for what he's done.

Q. Jon, you've had a lot of great prospects at Duke who showed what they could do relatively quickly. With Tyrese as a coach, how do you handle when somebody, their first couple years, maybe doesn't live up to the expectations and all the things that go with that, especially in this era?

JON SCHEYER: I think it's what I'm most proud of, or as proud as anything, with the journey Tyrese and I have been on because it's harder to go through those journeys now.

Tyrese -- I took over in April, and Tyrese and I had a call May 31st to come a year early. (Crying). Sorry. I think we knew there would be some rough patches reclassifying, but there were his first year.

But he had some big-time moments. Like he came on strong down the stretch, and he could have made a decision to go pro even after his freshman year, a year early.

I think he and his family and his mom and dad, they had such maturity to understand it's more important to be ready than just be drafted. So he doubles down, comes back, huge expectations. Me and Tyrese both would say his sophomore year didn't go the way he wanted, and that's where it's easy to split.

I was not in a convincing mode I think after that season. I was just matter of fact, where I saw it for him and the opportunity. We had honest conversations like we always do. But I think the difference is for a guy in that position to take it, as opposed to making excuses or running away from it, I think that's the special part.

So for this to happen for Tyrese, to be -- hit seven 3s and be our key guy and all that after going through all these moments -- like if I'm an NBA team, I'm going after him because you have to handle adversity. I think that speaks a lot to his character.

And obviously our relationship. I think in this era, you guys cover this, you understand the challenges and NIL and transfer portal and all that, still to have the relationships you can build with a guy for three years and go through a lot, I'm obviously really proud of him.

THE MODERATOR: That's all the time we have.

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