

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Regional Semifinal - Duke vs Houston

Friday, March 29, 2024

Dallas, Texas, USA

American Airlines Arena

Duke Blue Devils

Jon Scheyer

Tyrese Proctor

Jeremy Roach

Kyle Filipowski

Sweet 16 Postgame Media Conference

Duke 54, Houston 51

THE MODERATOR: We have the Duke Blue Devils.
Opening question for Coach.

Q. I have to ask you how the ACC continues to prepare teams to win games like this. The talk is it's been down a couple of years, and here you are again, 3 of 8 teams. You're part of ACC history. What can you say about the league coming out with 3 of 8 here?

JON SCHEYER: I think the ACC prepares you with the amount of different opponents you see. Like, that's a big thing. I just want to start off, first of all, I'm really proud of these guys. I'm proud of the game tonight.

That was a big-time college basketball game. The respect we have for Houston, for Coach Sampson, their players is at the highest level. You hate to see a guy shed -- you know, you hate to see that happen during the game. They just came off a game. They won a game where four of their starters fouled out. Their culture, their toughness I think showed throughout the whole game.

For us to respond to not getting off to the best start probably, but to respond to that was a big deal. You asked me about 3 of the 8 teams or Clemson, NC State, I'm not surprised. We've had battles against those guys the whole year, and hopefully this is reflected with moving forward besides just the analytics and all that stuff.

Again, for me, I'm just focused with our team and the win



tonight and getting ready for Sunday.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for our student-athletes.

Q. Last year after the Tennessee game, a lot was made of this team's toughness or maybe lack of toughness. How much does tonight show the growth of this group and how tough was this game?

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: I mean, just going back to last year real quick and the second round against Tennessee, this game right here was that same type of game. Just a great, gritty team and their culture. Just seeing the togetherness, how we didn't quit out there tonight, that really show the growth from last year. We remember how upset we were from last year, and we didn't want to repeat that again. We know we have a great team. We've been through so much this year. We just stuck together, and that was the most important thing.

TYRESE PROCTOR: Sort of similar to what Flip said. We came back to be in this position. It's crazy because we were in the exact same situation as last year. I thought like Flip said, just our togetherness and how we competed by getting back at the start and sticking together and just coming out with the win.

JEREMY ROACH: They basically all said it all. Last year, Tennessee game was pretty much very unacceptable. Obviously Coach, he would remind us in practice throughout the whole season about that, but this game we just kind of took it to heart and didn't want that to happen again, so ...

JON SCHEYER: Can I just say about that, by the way, you don't have to apologize for losing in the tournament. Every team loses except one. For these guys, look, we started four freshmen last year, and this year these guys -- Jeremy obviously has been through it -- this is only their second time.

I think for us some of the criticism about toughness or whatever, try being at Duke as a freshman and sophomore and battling your ass off in the tournament and then talk to me about being tough. For me, these guys have shown

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every step of the way how tough they are mentally, physically.

I know it's not my question. I know it's for these guys, but I just have to say that because they've repeatedly shown me what they're made of in the two years that I've been the head coach and obviously for Jeremy before that.

Q. This is for Tyrese. How much pride do you take in your defense not just overall, but at the end of kind of a slugfest rock fight type game like that one was?

TYRESE PROCTOR: I take a lot of pride in my defense. I think I set the tone last year. I thought I started off the season not at the same level I was last year, and obviously watched a lot of film and just got back to work.

I mean, it's all about preparation and how we are in practice, how I am mentally in practice, and just taking pride when the game is on the line. The game is going to be won on defense. All the 50/50 balls we came up with towards the end of the game really helped us. That's all it really is just pride, like you said.

Q. This question is for Jeremy. What do you think gave your team the edge tonight over Houston?

JEREMY ROACH: Just that fight. I told the team if we just come out and compete and play hard, everything will take care of itself. I've been saying that pretty much all tournament. I mean, I think we have the best talent in the country, but if we play hard and compete, I think we can compete with anybody, yeah.

Q. Kyle, can you talk about Matt Giles Blue Devil country. Can you talk about the lift Ryan Young gave you off the bench? It seemed like a crucial time he came in and played with so much grit and passion that it really gave you all a lift.

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: We wouldn't have won that game without Ryan. We wouldn't have won that game without anyone. We all got roles on this team, and we execute them so well. I mean, Ryan came in. He was ready. He knows what to do. He knows his job so well, and it's so good for us.

I mean, you can see on the stat sheet, he didn't even take -- he took two shots, but he had plus-18, and the rest of us were -- he did, yeah.

But, I mean, just that lift from Ryan coming off the bench, it's huge. There's been so much talk about him and not doing enough for us this year and how much he can really do, but I mean, Ryan has been through this longer than

any of us. He comes through when it matters the most. Just shout-out to him.

Q. Any of you guys, how much did this game change when Jamal Shead left because of his ankle?

JEREMY ROACH: Obviously he's a great player. He's the heart and soul of the team, but obviously it changed a little bit, but our mindset didn't change at all. We came in to get a win, get to the Elite Eight, and obviously he's a big part of the team. But like Coach said, they won their last game without him, so without four of their starters, so I didn't think it really changed.

TYRESE PROCTOR: I agree with Jeremy.

THE MODERATOR: We'll let our student-athletes go.

Questions for Coach, please.

Q. You called a time-out with about five minutes to go, I think, and got Flip a shot right there in the lane. Is that what you drew up and what you wanted in that spot?

JON SCHEYER: It was there. They make it so hard on you, both ends, but I mean on defense. We're just generating shots, generating good looks downhill. Flip and Jeremy especially, but they were able to get downhill and get in the paint. So Flip, I thought he had a strong drive. They executed. You have to do that in a game where you only score 54 points, and I don't know how many points we had at the time, but that was a huge play.

We couldn't quite get separation, and that finish was big-time.

Q. Could you just talk about your message to your team after that first time-out you took and how they really responded and battled back and settled down on the offensive end?

JON SCHEYER: It's funny. It was like deja vu two years ago when we played Texas Tech. We just came out, and I wish I knew exactly why or what happened. Jeremy was obviously the only guy that was playing in that game. Well, Jaylen too.

I just told them just settle in, man. Just settle in. We're doing things we haven't done before. We're turning the ball over like crazy. First play -- we talk about rebounding all week. The shot goes up. We just stand and watch, and they get two points.

Just tried to reinforce, it's all self-inflicted. It's one thing if

they hit shots, which they did, but the first couple of possessions there I thought it was just us not coming out the way that we needed to.

So let's just regroup and come back, and I thought Flip's three just to get us going there. You just need to see one go through. It was a big play just to start the momentum.

Q. To keep you on the deja vu track, how much did Jeremy hitting clutch mid-range shots late against an elite defensive team in the Sweet 16 remind you of that Texas Tech game?

JON SCHEYER: A lot. A lot. He's done it. He's been there. It's funny. He even said after the game some of his turnovers early was like Texas Tech.

His play-making, and even in the first half when we weren't converting, he was the one guy that was getting downhill and getting in the paint. He's got such a quick burst.

I just thought his reads weren't the way it normally is, and in the second half, he just settled in. His poise and maturity was so important for us, but yeah, it definitely reminded me of those moments.

Q. How much did your game plan change when Jamal Shead went out knowing how important he is to their offense and defense? They went zone a couple of times, and the focus of their offense changed. How much did it change on your end?

JON SCHEYER: Look, Shead is the ultimate competitor and winner, and I saw it firsthand. We scrimmaged Houston last year, and just seeing what he does for their team and watching them on film, there's no replacement for him.

But, to be honest with you, your game plan can't change because you need to step your foot on the gas even more because when a guy like that goes out, you know, Cryer is going to do more and Sharp is going to look to go, and Roberts. I thought Walker hit a big three for them to cut it to three.

So for us, it didn't change. It was we have to keep defending. We had to keep trying to figure out ways to generate shots. That thing went down to the wire. You can't let up at all.

Q. Before Shead went out, your team did respond after falling behind 8-0. What was so special about the way they rallied after falling behind early, and how did Coach K prepare you for moments like this?

JON SCHEYER: Coach K has prepared me for moments like this, one, because we've been in so many games like this together, starting when I was a player for four years, but then being on staff with him for 10 or 11 years. I think the closest comparison -- I don't know if it was 10 or 11. I think it was 11.

I compare it to the Texas Tech game, and I don't know how early he called a time-out in that game, but it was early. Just you have to show great poise in these moments. You know your team wants it really badly, but I'm fortunate -- I'm beyond fortunate to have learned from him as a player and as a coach just the amount of situations you're in together. I could go on and on. Being down in a game, being up, just learning how to win, that's the biggest thing I've learned from him.

Then for our team, that was just a different game, so to start out that way and just claw our way back. I think any questions about their mental toughness or any questions about their heart, I think they answered that tonight. Obviously we have to respond quickly and get ready for a quick turnaround on Sunday, but I'm just really proud of them.

I know it's the last question. I just want to make sure two guys I thought were special tonight. Ryan, those guys talked about Ryan and the minutes that he had, but his defense, his physicality to match what they do I thought was a big difference in the game.

Then Tyrese didn't have -- he has nine points and four assists, which was key. He was just so steady for us, but his defense was off the charts, off the charts.

On the ball guarding, but also off the ball, and those two plays -- he is guarding Cryer and gets the steal late and then he is guarding Sharp at the end when we're down three -- or they're down three. I'm just proud of those two guys with what they did.

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