

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Duke vs Ohio State

Sunday, March 24, 2024

Columbus, Ohio, USA

Value City Arena

**Ohio State Buckeyes**

**Kevin McGuff**

**Jacy Sheldon**

**Cotie McMahon**

Media Conference

Duke - 75, Ohio State - 63

THE MODERATOR: We'll just open it up to questions.

**Q. I just want to ask, at one point you had a 16-point lead. Where do you think the breakdown of this game happened and what just what happened overall?**

KEVIN MCGUFF: I think two things. One, we were really generating good shots early in the game in the first quarter and we were rebounding the ball with energy and discipline. Then as the game wore on, we really got out of sync on offense and Duke was playing really good defense, so they had a hand in that.

Then we really broke down with our rebounding. So I think our offensive execution, our rebounding, were the keys today in us not being able to win. They played better. They deserved to win. We didn't play well today.

**Q. Can you talk to me about how you felt on the court and why you were struggling despite opportunities to score.**

JACY SHELDON: Yeah, they were really aggressive and in the passing lanes a lot.

I didn't play very well. We didn't play very well as a team. That starts with me. So I think being aggressive even when they are being really aggressive was my issue. But we'll learn from this.

**Q. Three-point shooting until like end of the fourth quarter. There was only eight threes taken all game.**



Going to the paint and getting fouls was really working up until that last quarter. When did the adjustment come in to say, okay, now we need to just spread it out?

KEVIN MCGUFF: Yeah, I think they were obviously keying on the three-point line, so our counter to that is to kind of spread 'em out and attack. I think that was working for awhile. Then when we did get some opportunities at the three-point line, we weren't connecting. So we got a few late, but overall, I think that was part of their strategy to kind of chase us off the three-point line, and it worked for awhile in terms of us attacking and getting to the free-throw line, but like everything on offense, we just didn't sustain it for four quarters.

**Q. What was your message to the players in the locker room after the game, especially those players whose careers are now over?**

KEVIN MCGUFF: Yeah, it's tough. We've got some kids who invested. Like, Jacy's invested so much in our program and been such an incredible representative of Ohio State women's basketball, so it's really hard to see them go out this way. I think there's lessons for people like Jacy who won't get a chance to play here again and there's lessons for the ones coming back that, you know -- when the season ends, it really only ends the right way for one team, but you do want to walk out of the locker room on that last game like, man, we played great, we gave it our all, they were just a little bit better.

We can't really say that. Duke deserved to win the. Game, they played significantly better than we did. I just wish we would have put our best foot forward and we didn't today.

**Q. Jacy, you've been pretty selfless for four years. How do you want to be remembered in this program?**

JACY SHELDON: Oh, I would just say someone that gave it their all to this university and represented it well. It's a pleasure, all of us had the pleasure of playing here, so I think just representing it right and always giving it our all every game, which we do and they're going to continue to do. That's what we do here at Ohio State.



**Q. Cotie, what do you take away from not just last year's run, but this year's run? You've been to the Elite 8, you've been knocked out earlier than you guys expected, and how do you move forward as one of the leaders of the team moving forward?**

COTIE McMAHON: Yeah, I mean, March is nothing to play with. You're one and done. So it's either you take it serious or you're going home. You give it your all or you're going home. I feel like we're leaving here with a lot of regrets and that's not what we wanted to do. So I feel like my biggest takeaway in moving forward, especially going into March in the future, would just be to emphasize do what we practice, do what we do, and play the game that we play and leave it all out there. That's really all I can say.

**Q. Another great season. Coach Lawson said that she would prefer for you guys to go inside as opposed to shoot threes. Do you think that you kind of fell in love with that a little bit today and wasn't able to kind of switch back to the team that y'all -- you know, that you kind of play like normally?**

KEVIN MCGUFF: Yeah, we're usually at our best when we're really balanced with what we're doing, throwing the ball inside, driving it, getting to the free-throw line, and getting threes. We just didn't get enough balance in what we were doing today. So I thought we had some effectiveness around the rim, for sure, but we usually -- when we're at our best, there's a lot more balance in the shots we're getting from the location, and also, the scoring is kind of spread out. We just didn't generate enough quality looks at the three-point line or take advantage of 'em when we got 'em.

**Q. Cotie, you had a monster game. But as it got later in the game it felt like they were just kind of throwing it to you every time. Like we just talked about with Coach, do you think maybe not having the three ball hurt y'all a little bit today?**

COTIE McMAHON: Honestly, yeah, I feel like we didn't have many ways we were able to score today. Like he said, we were getting the looks, we just weren't connecting them. So I feel like, yeah, it kind of hurt us not having our three-point shooters. Jacy is usually hitting, Celeste, she can shoot the three, Rikki, Madison, so, yeah, I feel like it hurt us a little bit.

**Q. Jacy, great career, one of the great point guards. Today they just ran you off the three-point line. They weren't going to let you attack them from the three. I know you probably saw a lot of different things in the**

**game to kind of show that, but incredible career.**

JACY SHELDON: Thank you.

**Q. Yesterday you mentioned -- we were asking you about Duke's youth, and you said you think maybe at times they don't even know how young they are. When young players are out there, they just go. You get up 16, did you see -- it just seemed like they were just like, okay, we're just going to go, and you didn't see that youth phase them at all?**

KEVIN MCGUFF: No, they kind of kept playing their game and chipping away at it. The things that -- one big way to get back in the game when you're down is offensive rebound. So they got a lot of offensive rebounds, which also allowed them to get to the line significantly more than they normally do because they're rebounding the ball around the basket. So, I think they just, their young kids, they just played really hard. They made mistakes, but they kept playing hard, and they're very athletic and they made enough plays to win the game.

**Q. If it felt like there was just a lack of height today, a lack of height depth. So when you're struggling on the boards and you're struggling to get those stops by the basket, how much did it hurt that you guys didn't really have someone else besides maybe Ty once in a while to go to to give Rebecca a little bit of a break?**

KEVIN MCGUFF: They had some big baskets around the rim. Not just on offensive rebounds, but throwing it into Brown late in the game, and that hurt. She was getting really deep, good position. So our post defense kind of broke down there in the second half.

**Q. There were some times that you guys missed some key free throw, how much did that hurt just you're getting free points in a close game that you guys aren't able to hit those free throws?**

KEVIN MCGUFF: Yeah, I mean, you know, they shot 82 percent and we shot 66. That's, in a close game, obviously that matters. So I thought we got to the free-throw line enough, we could have capitalized a little bit more, and then we needed to keep them off the line by blocking them out. But, yeah, in a game like this, it all matters, for sure.

**Q. How much did it hurt that Celeste fouled out so early in the fourth quarter?**

KEVIN MCGUFF: It was tough. Obviously we rely on her, both ends of the floor, and so when she went out of the game that was certainly a significant moment and unfortunate.

**Q. Jacy, you said after Senior Day that this hasn't really hit you yet that you're leaving the program. What's going through your head right now?**

JACY SHELDON: It still hasn't hit me. Just like Cotic kind of said, it's just disappointing because I feel like we have a lot of regret, didn't play our best game, Duke played a great game, but I think it hurts a little more that we didn't go out there and play our best game today.

THE MODERATOR: All right, thank you.

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