

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 9, 2021

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

Notre Dame Fighting Irish

Cormac Ryan

Postgame Press Conference



Notre Dame 80, Wake Forest 77

Q. What was the injury? Did it limit you when you came back in? It looked like going after that first loose ball you could still feel whatever happened there on the collision?

CORMAC RYAN: Yeah, we're still looking at what happened.

Q. You got kicked when you went up for that lay-up.

CORMAC RYAN: Yeah, it was kind of like a bang bang play. I kind of twisted and it was kind of in my hip area. It was kind of like a hit and a twist at the same time. But I mean, yeah, look, adrenaline was rushing. I knew I had to get back in there for the guys, and made it happen. Credit to our training staff who's the best, and yeah, pretty much it.

Q. Run us through those last five, six seconds there starting with the defensive stop that you made there on the defensive end.

CORMAC RYAN: Yeah, I mean, we were guarding really well down the stretch. We had great team energy, and I was feeding off the guys, honestly, and then got the switch. I'm very confident in what I can do defensively. I think all year I've been real confident in my defense, and yeah, just stayed in front, showed my hands, got the block. And then Trey was yelling at me from my right and dished it off, and you know what happens next.

Q. How soon after Trey let it go did you know that that thing was going in?

CORMAC RYAN: We knew it was good. We watched that film. We were in the corner. We were walking off the court already.

Q. From a mental standpoint to even contest that shot in the closing seconds, what's going through your mind? How do you balance being aggressive and attempting to block the shot versus not risking a foul in that situation?

CORMAC RYAN: For sure. You know, just staying solid, trusting my instinct and my principles, and yeah, I think I had a clean look. I wasn't even planning on going up to block it, it was just there, and it was kind of an instinct play, and yeah, got the stop, and yeah.

Q. Just what you can say -- I know you said you knew that that was going in and you were walking off and whatnot. But what you can say about the momentum swing not just on that shot at the end but everything that your team did to pull this one out? Down by double digits late in the game and just keeping with it and maybe if there was a moment or two where you felt that momentum shift initially.

CORMAC RYAN: Yeah, we run on defense, and that's kind of what we do. When we go on our runs and we play our best basketball, it's when we're getting stops, and that's pretty much what made the difference. We'll talk about the offense, great drives, great extra passes, a couple big shots, obviously the big shot. But that game was won on the defensive end, and that's how we got down in the first half. We weren't guarding, and that's how we came back is we started guarding.

Q. What changed just defensively those last seven minutes where it was -- I think you were down 12, you finish on a 17-2 run. Was it just a collective commitment, like we've got to get some stops if we want to play tomorrow night?

CORMAC RYAN: Yeah, absolutely. You know, our back was against the wall. We've got hungry guys in this locker room and we've got a bunch of fighters, and we weren't going to go down without a fight, and that's exactly what we did, we fought back and we got it done.

Q. You mentioned the whole team kind of digging in there for that 17-2 run to end the game. How do you carry it over? Obviously you can't rely on 17-2 runs against North Carolina tomorrow night.

CORMAC RYAN: Absolutely. I think we have to start the game better. We're capable of doing that. We know how good of a team we can be offensively and defensively, and we've got to put a full 40 minutes together, and that's the thing we've shown time and time again this year is we can do it, and yeah, we just get our legs under us, get rest, get ready and come out hungry.

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