

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Saturday, March 13, 2021

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets

Michael Devoe

Postgame Press Conference



For us, we just came out with that high energy, and we're a hard team to beat when everybody is connected.

Georgia Tech 80, Florida State 75

Q. Who was going through your mind as Jose steals and you put the lay-up that obviously put the game away. What were the flood of emotions after that ball goes in the basket?

MICHAEL DEVOE: There's a lot of emotions, joy, happiness, everything. This goes down in history for us. It's been a journey for us as a team, me individually, everything. For us to win this and people counted us out and just staying down and staying as a brotherhood, it's so surreal for me.

Q. Do you think that this stretch run you guys went on had a lot to do with you guys finally learning how to play the full 40 minutes?

MICHAEL DEVOE: For sure. For us, I feel like every game we get better. We learn new things when we watch film and just see what type of playing style we need to play like, our energy level certain games or not, where we need to be. For every game I feel like we get better. We've just got to continue that. Right now it's not the end of our story that we're writing, and we've just got to continue it.

Q. Michael, I thought that the way you guys defended and created turnovers was such a huge part of it. I know you guys did really well with that the second game, but kind of describe what you guys were like getting so many balls?

MICHAEL DEVOE: For us it was just coming out with tons of energy. This is a championship game. It's once in a lifetime opportunity, so for us we came out with everything. We wanted to force them for turnovers, we wanted them to play like the way we wanted them to play, so for us it was a great team that we beat. We give credit to them, as well.

Q. Michael, how does it feel being named the MVP of the ACC Tournament? I know you talked about the team as a whole, but just personally how does it feel just with everything you've gone through your whole career at Georgia Tech?

MICHAEL DEVOE: It's huge for me. It's truly a blessing. I feel like I've been disrespected for the last two years on the ACC selections, but for me it's just something I use as motivation and to play with a little chip on my shoulder. This is huge for me. It's definitely -- all the work has definitely paid off and just continue to keep doing that and keeping my head down and staying focused, so for this, it's huge for me.

Q. I was wondering if you could remember what the feeling was like around the team after the first two games of the season.

MICHAEL DEVOE: It was like the world was ending. For us we thought that we were going to be better than what we were the first two games of the season. Losing to Mercer and Georgia State were two tough losses that we did not want. For us it was the end of the world, but for us we needed to realize we had to get better. We used it as motivation and Coach kept talking about that every game saying, you don't want to feel like the first two games of the season. For us we just have to come out every game with the energy level and just look back on those things and it's a learning lesson.

Q. Do you remember him saying anything to you guys after that second game or the next day at all?

MICHAEL DEVOE: Same thing I just said. He thought the world was ending, as well. He just said, we have to stay in the gym, we have to get better, and don't count us out.

Q. What was the conversation like on the court, the celebration piece of this like for you guys?

MICHAEL DEVOE: It was amazing. From all the guys, coaching staff, it was something we talked about in the beginning of the season, that's what we wanted. We wanted the ACC championship, and we felt like we were good enough to do it with the guys that we have, the veterans that we have. It was a great group, and especially the new guys that have joined our team, as well. They played a huge part.

For us it's a goal that we had in mind, but like I said, it's not the end. So for us we've got to continue this play that we've been playing for the last stretch right here and continue it as we go to Indiana.

Q. You hit the nail on the head when you talked about communication. It was up there. You don't force these turnovers against a good team like this unless you have great communication. Is that something you personally took upon yourself and defensively this entire unit?

MICHAEL DEVOE: For us, we've got leadership on this team that -- coming from me, Jose, those type of guys. So for us we emphasized that we need to get stops. This is a great team and if we stop them and get in transition, it's hard for us to lose to that.

They have a really good defensive team, so for us we wanted to get them out in transition and score for those and get easy buckets from that. That's the thing that we just told the guys and we emphasized the whole game.

Q. Take us to the tag end of this game, you're nursing a lead, you're playing Florida State, Barnes and M.J. Walker both can hit the three. And here comes Jose with that last steal, he floats that pass to you. What were your feelings at that particular moment as you were about to clinch the game for Georgia Tech?

MICHAEL DEVOE: To be honest with you, man, it was a lot of emotions. It was, hey, this is something that they didn't believe that we would do. It's something that a lot of people counted us out. It was a lot of joy. It was a lot of, hey, man, all the hard work has definitely paid off. It was tons of emotions in my head, and I know it was a ton of emotions for the whole team.

We've been through a lot through this whole year. It's been COVID and all the other things that we've gone through. For this, it was so surreal. It was a lot of emotions.

Q. Can you describe Jose's leadership today? Obviously when you talk about energy, he's the guy that kind of starts it, particularly on the defensive end

with all the balls he was getting his hands on?

MICHAEL DEVOE: I mean, it starts with Jose. For us, his energy level that he brings, you can't ask anything better than that. For him, he played an outstanding game. He led us, he did what he was supposed to do, and he's an amazing player. I'm glad that I chose this school when I was in high school and I chose to come here and play alongside Jose. I've learned a lot from him, how hard he plays and his grit and all the type of stuff that he does. I'm so proud of him, and we've just got to continue this.

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