

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 14, 2024

Washington, D.C., USA

Capital One Arena

Duke Blue Devils

Coach Jon Scheyer

Kyle Filipowski

Mark Mitchell

Postgame Press Conference

NC State 74, Duke 69

JON SCHEYER: Well, obviously, look, it's disappointing. It's a disappointing loss for us. We wanted to make a run at this thing. Coming off of Saturday, we've been able to spend a lot of time on ourselves for the first time. That didn't translate fully, clearly.

NC State is playing the best basketball they've played probably, and you give them credit. They're talented. When you're playing in the postseason, teams don't want to go away. You have to make them go away.

Overall, look, I can go through the details of the game. I think for us, though, it's about the competitive fire you need to have in the postseason. I told these guys, one, I think both these guys were big-time competitors today. They almost willed us to win the game. They were playing a lot of minutes. Combined, they have 46 and 22. But I just thought they had the will to win, which is what you need.

But we didn't have that collectively overall. For us, we have to go get back to it and work. The biggest postseason is ahead of us, and we're going to be in the tournament. We're excited about that. I don't know where we're going to go, what seed we're going to be. But my thing is all about getting ready and focused for that.

Obviously I'll answer any questions these guys want to answer, but it's disappointing, and we're going to get back to work. Bottom line, going to get back to work and figure this out.

Q. Coach, there seemed to be some confusion coming



from both benches at the sequence where they called the technical but not the basket interference. What was the explanation that you got from the officials on that?

JON SCHEYER: The officials did their job. The rule needs to be changed. The rule is it's -- basically it's a dead ball play. So it goes possession. It doesn't go to our possession. It's a strange play because I told them, I don't want the tech then. Give us the better. It's better to have the ball, get a chance to score. We're going to score two or three or have the opportunity to.

But the officials did their job. It's a rule that should be changed. But they did what they were supposed to do.

Q. I spoke to DJ Burns. He had high regard for you, spoke glowingly of you. How fun was that competition today? Just your thoughts on that?

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Yeah, I mean, DJ Burns is a one of one type of player. Just the way he plays is very unique. You've got to always be prepared for something he throws at you.

I mean, credit to him because, like I said, he's one hell of a player, as well, and it's always a battle going up against him, too.

Q. Kyle and Mark, how do you use a loss like this for motivation moving forward, and what did you learn about yourselves going into the NCAA Tournament?

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Yeah, for me at least it's even more of a wake-up call because we could have just had more one game left to the season now, and you may have high expectations just with winning the ACC and things like that, but you've got to really see the reality of it and see that every team is really fighting for their lives, and we just have to want it more than any other team that we play against.

MARK MITCHELL: Yeah, obviously it hurts to lose a game like this, but I think we've just got to use it as motivation and just go back to the drawing board. Obviously we're going to have some time to really work on some things,

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look ourselves in the mirror and see what we can do better, and hopefully next week we can start our run in the tournament.

Q. With this loss that you had and since you are going into the tournament, how will you prepare your team mentally for the NCAA Tournament?

JON SCHEYER: Well, one, you have to digest the loss still and think about -- you want to watch the film and digest it, think about where our team is at.

But it would be a real problem if you didn't believe in the team. I think it starts there, do you believe in the group you have, do you believe in the team, and the answer is emphatically 100 percent yes. It starts there for me.

Then it's a matter of all these guys, obviously us as a staff, too, taking responsibility. You have to take responsibility for what we didn't do tonight because I've told these guys, like after the game Saturday I mentioned my belief, but also it's what you can control.

I don't feel we handled what we could control tonight. No doubt in my mind. If we want that feeling a week from now where you lose or you exit the tournament where you didn't control what you could control, that would be a real shame.

I'm not going down that way. I know these guys aren't going down that way.

For us, it's back to work. You're not going to be prepared if you don't work. But it starts with the belief in the responsibility for me.

Q. Coach, Jared's deal kind of seemed like a bad omen in pregame warmups. When were you made aware of that, and given the eight points he put up, do you think it bothered him during the game?

JON SCHEYER: Jared wasn't himself, no doubt. Jared will say he's fine because he doesn't make excuses. That was a strange thing that happened in warmups. He just banged heads, him and Jaylen, and he needed some stitches before the game. He didn't have the same pop like he normally does.

Those are the kinds of things that can happen, though. You hope it -- hopefully we don't bang heads before the next game we play, but some stuff like that can happen.

But I thought Jared wasn't his normal self. He's been as consistent and as dependable as anybody. Again, he was fine tonight, but he wasn't the way he normally is. I do think that played a part.

Q. Coach, on Saturday you talked a little bit about how Carolina came out and hit you first, and that adjustment wasn't really something that came to fruition tonight. Can you talk about what you need to do to get your team ready to come out strong moving into the tournament?

JON SCHEYER: Yeah, it's happened three games in a row. That's a concern. That's a big concern. Even the start of the second half was the same way. So as a coach, we have to -- I'll have to figure out how to get that message across better or differently.

These guys, we talk about it a lot, we work on it a lot, but there's -- each part of the season you have different levels to it, so you have non-conference play and then you have ACC play, and then you have the ACC Tournament, which goes up, and then you have the NCAA Tournament. You can't do the same thing. You have to keep raising your level.

That's the thing we didn't do tonight. But we're going to fix it, bottom line. You have to figure out a way, get back to work, watch the film, learn, practice, and be ready to do it wherever we play and whenever we play.

Q. You were a great guard in this league and in this tournament. Your guards just 10 days ago were central to you beating the Wolfpack by 10 points in Raleigh. What changed, and what's your message to those guys after this?

JON SCHEYER: Well, those guys, we need them to be better. We rely on them to do so much for us. It's not the scoring. It's everything else. It's the poise. It's the rebounding. It's the guarding. It's everything else that comes with it.

I've seen all of them do it, have it at different points. But we need it every game. We don't have a team where we're not wearing you down with our depth necessarily, so we need those five guys that start, we need them to come out with such force right away.

Clearly we didn't have that tonight. I wish I had the answer for you. I can't tell you why. But is Jeremy Roach important to our team? Absolutely. Tyrese, Jared, we need those guys to play at a high level, like they have for a majority of the year. That's the bottom line.

Q. For Kyle and Mark, you guys have been to the postseason before, you've been through ups and downs. What's the message to your teammates the next few days in terms of not getting too down,

knowing there's still big goals ahead of you?

KYLE FILIPOWSKI: Yeah, especially just with how the end of the season went last year with winning the ACC but losing in the first weekend, it's just -- just knowing that there's not many opportunities left and you've got to make the most of them. Just really got to embrace it, be all in with each other.

That's really the most important thing, just playing for each other, knowing that you've got to put it on the line with one another because it can be gone just like that, and you can look back and regret some things, but we don't want to be that team. We want to go to Phoenix. We've had those ambitions since the beginning of the season.

Still, we got a good shot in that we put ourselves in a good enough position, and there's no excuses moving forward for that.

MARK MITCHELL: Yeah, I think I would just tell the guys just to cherish the moments. Obviously not like in a sentimental way but on the court, every time we get to play just appreciate it. I think if we do that, we'll go all out for it.

At times our team this season, I think we've just expected things to come. I remember last year how sudden it ended, and obviously it was a different path with how sudden it was. And I think if we just cherish what we have each and every day and win each and every day going forward, I think we'll do something special.

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