

# Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Spectrum Center

## Notre Dame Fighting Irish Micah Shrewsberry Markus Burton

Postgame Press Conference

North Carolina 76, Notre Dame 56

**Q. What did North Carolina do that made it tough on you today?**

MARKUS BURTON: I mean, it's honestly just been a tough week for me, honestly. I feel like both Pitt and North Carolina done -- they did a really good job of guarding me and keeping me out of the paint and just denying me. So credit to them. But it is what it is. You just move on and become better.

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: I'm just proud of our guys. We've battled adversity all year as a group and really just stayed with it and kept fighting. You know, we finally just ran out of gas, I guess. But it's not anything for lack of effort.

These two guys here, like, what they've done to battle through injury, battle back from injury, keep playing while we've been shorthanded, it's been a pleasure being around them.

**Q. Carolina tied for fourth place in the ACC standings. In this league we're not used to seeing a fourth-place team described as a bubble team. Describe the challenge of facing the Tar Heels and how you view them in that broader sense?**

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: I just think they were a pretty desperate team coming down the stretch but a pretty old team. RJ Davis has been there for a really long time and done things. Jae'Lyn Withers played in this league for a few years now. Now Cadeau and other guys with their years, they know this has to be their moment.



I think they were pretty desperate coming in, but they've been playing well down the stretch, as well.

Yeah, I thought they played really well tonight.

**Q. For most of your time in college basketball on a day like this, we'd be able to look at your underclassmen and your signees and be incredibly optimistic about next season. It may be hard after your season ended to answer this, but can you still feel that way in today's environment with the unpredictability of the portal and so many other things?**

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah. You know, I feel like -- I think for us, we have to be a little bit different than everybody else in college basketball in how we go about things.

The university that we represent says a lot about these guys when they finish. You get a chance to put this Notre Dame jersey on. You go through the grind academically of what they go through, and when you finish, like, it means something.

At the end of the day when you look at the diploma on the wall and you see Notre Dame, it's like, man, I've put a lot of time into this, and this is special. We want guys that feel that way. So we're going to recruit to that.

Nothing is ever guaranteed right now in this world. People are free to leave whenever they want to.

But for us, we have to recruit kids that want to be great basketball players. We've only got to recruit kids that that Notre Dame degree means something to them. I think we have a great group of that. I'm excited about our guys. I'm excited about the young guys that we had and how they've played. You don't get to March and start building relationships with players; it's a year-long process.

They're not just guys on our team. These guys are literally -- this is our family. But they have choices. But it's going to be a hard choice because of how we treat them on a daily basis, because of the degree that we have and



because of how much better they can get as basketball players.

The ones that stay, good things are ahead for them.

**Q. Coach, the ACC spent a lot of time in the off-season talking about what it would take to get more teams in the NCAA Tournament, and it looks like you might actually get fewer in the NCAA Tournament.**

Is there something the league can do from your perspective or each individual team can do to kind of change that moving forward? I know it's a big deal to the conference.

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah, I think it's -- I can't speak for the whole league and what we need to do, but individually we all have to do our own part. We've got to win games in the non-conference. We can't get waxed by the SEC in the league thing. We've got to win games in that.

We didn't do our part. Granted, our best player was hurt when we had opportunities. Rutgers, Houston, Creighton, Georgia, we played them all back-to-back-to-back-to-back without Markus Burton, but if you get one of those, you get a couple of those, that boosts your profile as a league. Now we've all got to go do it. We've all got to go do it.

Scheduling is important. Beating people is important. Now when you get out of the non-conference, now winning against each other means a lot.

I can only speak for Notre Dame. We've got to get better. We've got to get better, and we are going to get better. But we've got to win games. We've got to win games in the non-conference to boost your league up.

We stubbed our toe in that. We didn't do that as a league.

**Q. You talk about getting better. What are some of the things you're looking to improve in the off-season within the program that you want to see next season?**

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah, I didn't feel like I did a very good job defensively with this group. We were a really tough, gritty, nasty defensive team last year. We spent a lot of the off-season trying to be better offensively, and at times we lost that grittiness. We lost that toughness that we needed.

Our numbers defensively weren't very good. Our offensive numbers were pretty good for a while until we started losing people. When all of our shooting is sitting on the sideline in sweatsuits, our offensive numbers dropped.

But we were a top-50, the top-40 offensive team for a really long time, but we didn't have that same grittiness that we had last year defensively.

I think we need to build that back up with who we are. We need to keep getting better. We need to stay at that pace offensively. We need to become a better passing team. We need to add more shooting. Our decision making has got to go up.

This was probably one of the fewest assist teams I've ever been around, and a lot of that was the shot making. We've got to get back in the gym. We've got work.

**Q. When folks see that ugly record against the SEC head-to-head and then they see there's 10 guys starting in the SEC right now that came from the ACC and there just are not hardly any examples of the reverse, former SEC players starring for the ACC. And that leads to the theory that it's all about the moneyj. What is your reaction to that?**

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah, I don't know. You just said that about the people playing in the SEC that came from here. I'm worried about my own team. I'm worried about the guys in that Notre Dame uniform, who are we going to have help us get better, maybe who can we add to help us get better, our recruiting class to coming to help us get better. I can't focus on anybody else in the league, man. I've got three other kids at home I've got to worry about, too, and what they're doing.

If I get us right, we're going to help the league. Like, there's one more team that's helping the league that's giving you opportunities. That's what we need to do individually. As a group, we need to raise our level, one by one. Louisville did it, and they helped raise the league because they got better in their own way.

I felt like we had a group that could help the league until we got hurt in the non-conference. We went and beat Georgetown early on the road and boosted our stuff, but losing Markus in Vegas when we had a chance to make some noise really hurt our profile. So now we're not adding that value. Right now we're down in the hundreds in NET instead of being a Quad 1 opportunity for somebody.

I think when Carolina beat us, we were probably a Quad 1, I'm guessing, on the road when they came and beat us. But we're not now. We're not anymore.

So taking care of our business, so like I said, we've got to all do it in the non-conference. But yeah, I can't speak on the players. I don't know. I'm going to get Notre Dame



right.

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