

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Spectrum Center

Syracuse Orange

Adrian Autry

Eddie Lampkin

Jaquan Carlos

Postgame Press Conference



good pressure on the boys. We were real hard pressed to get it inside. It disrupted our offense being, their defense being tougher their our offense. We just didn't handle the pressure well.

Q. This is your only season at Syracuse, and tonight was your last game. I was wondering if you could sum up your Syracuse experiences.

EDDIE LAMPKIN JR: I'd say it was a blessing to come here. It's an amazing school, amazing program. We've got a good coach. But we've got amazing teammates, and I'd just say it was a blessing. I wouldn't want be nowhere else. We didn't play our best during the season, but these are my brothers I'll remember for the rest of my life. We've got good relationships, and that's all you can ask for.

It's Syracuse, so I loved it.

JAQUAN CARLOS: Definitely, I feel like we didn't play the way we wanted, but if I could do it all again, I wouldn't choose nowhere else. Coach Red, we wanted to do it all for him. We know all the pressure we've been handling all season. We've been doubted all year.

I just think this really brought us together as a family, and we showed the brotherhood. Nobody really turned on each other, pointing fingers. We all tried to stick together and get it done. So the experience of being here just watching Syracuse growing up is always a dream, and just being a part of it and saying that I could play with this name across my chest, was something very big, and I just tried to go my hardest every time.

Q. Specifically, what's the hardest part about addressing the team in the locker room after the season?

ADRIAN AUTRY: You know, when a season is over with, these are all young men, and you try to -- it's emotional. These guys, the coaching staff, a season is over with. That's what you work for. You work all summer, and you get ready for the season, and when it's finally over with, it's an emotional thing.

SMU 73, Syracuse 53

ADRIAN AUTRY: I thought SMU did a really good job in the second half defensively of making us work. They made it tough for us. I thought that was the difference in the game. We couldn't really get the ball inside to Eddie like we usually do, and he's a big part of what we do, and when we can't get the ball into him, he struggle.

Offensively, I thought we -- I thought the offense today, giving credit to SMU's defense was the difference in the game. They were physical. They pushed us out. They made our catches hard, and they pressured us, and we didn't handle the pressures as well as we needed to, and I thought that was the difference.

Q. Eddie, you only had two shots and, obviously, they were doing a lot during the game, doubling and making sure they got the ball out of your hands. But when you're in the game, does it feel like when you're taking less shots, that you've got to try to force the issue or are you just trying to play in the flow of the game?

EDDIE LAMPKIN JR: Really, I was just trying to play the flow of the game. I never try to force anything. I tried to read what they give me, and they was just everywhere, they were sending three people at me. It's been like that the whole season, so I'd just say it was just another game.

Q. In terms of the offense in the second half what did SMU do that made it tough for you guys?

JAQUAN CARLOS: I think like Coach said, they put real



But these guys, it was hard for these guys because it was just a long year, and every year is long, but obviously, there was a lot of noise surrounding these guys.

Again, we spent a lot of time together, and just trying to keep these guys with their head up, and that's why ending like this is really awful for me and for this team.

Q. When you were talking about keeping their heads up throughout this difficult season, was that made even tougher, given that you had so many one-year transfers, guys who had just gotten here and were only going to be here the one season?

ADRIAN AUTRY: You know, I'm sure it was for those guys. As you go through the process of recruiting and selling your school and selling your program and selling everything about your program to fans, the community and all that stuff, when you have -- you get excited, and when you have a season the way we had, it's hard. It's hard. These guys, they work -- J.C., he worked his way up to this level, so for his first year to be at this level -- Eddie, he's been a Power Five guy for a while, but he wanted to come somewhere and step into a new role.

It's hard for those guys. I'm sure it was. But it was challenging. It was exciting for those guys, and they really attacked it the right way. They really did.

I think a couple of guys went through some ups and downs, but for the most part, most of the guys that transferred in, they really kind of were more mature than most people.

Q. I'm curious, did you think you had maybe a different kind of team before the season started, and how did you sort of sort through who you actually had and how you were going to use those guys?

ADRIAN AUTRY: You know, I think everyone thinks when you're in the summer what kind of team you may have, but you really don't know until you kind of get into it.

I think that going into this season, did we think we had some things that we could shore up? Yeah. But I think the biggest thing that was really disruptive for us was not being able to play with J.J. and Donnie for extended periods of time, and I thought that was really kind of -- that kind of threw us off a little bit, and the dynamics kind of changed. Different people had to step into different roles and step up, and I'm not sure if they were kind of ready for that at that time.

But we had to adjust. I think every coach could tell you, you think you have something until you start the season,

and once the season gets rolling, you've got to make adjustments and try to address whatever it is and make the changes you can as the season goes along.

Q. Coach, can you try to describe, I guess, Eddie and J.C., Jyáre, the senior leadership, how they kept the team together even through the tough times this year?

ADRIAN AUTRY: Just the way they attacked practice, the way they were with the team, always encouraging. They had a lot of experience and you could tell that. They never came in heads down. They were always upbeat. They never -- they did everything we asked them to do and more.

I thought the senior leadership was huge. Again, the way they handled it, I was impressed. I was very impressed. They really came in every day to work, and just watching them interact with their teammates, constantly uplifting them, smiling, talking to them, that was pretty -- I thought that was the reason why we were able to -- you talk to all of these guys, and obviously you talk about the record, the record is the record, but through them experiencing what we did this year, staying together, I think that was very impactful, and those guys had a lot to do with it.

Q. Coach, in terms of year two, what was the most difficult part for year two for you as a coach as opposed to year one?

ADRIAN AUTRY: You know, I think the difficult part was trying to get these guys to compete -- not to say compete, but to try to win games and to try to figure the team out, and really dealing with injuries. It was the first year -- I dealt with one injury last year. When I first took over this year, dealing with multiple injuries and dealing with multiple guys that were kind of being asked to be in new roles, trying to figure that out with these guys and with the team.

But I'm sure it's more things as the season is over with and I start to reflect, but those are the couple of things that come to mind when you ask me that question.

Q. Adrian, coming into the season, did you ever expect to have to put so much offensively on J.J., and even tonight, he didn't look right physically part of the night. It looked like he was getting treatment, and yet he plays more minutes than anybody else and he leads you in scoring?

ADRIAN AUTRY: I think when you started the season that we had, we thought obviously J.J. would be a big part of it. But his usage was a little bit more than what we would have wanted.

But I think he had prepared for that all summer long. I thought we would be able to get through a little bit more round. I think we did at times, it just wasn't consistent.

I think the biggest thing when you talk about this year's team is the consistency piece. I think that was what was -- that was really kind of trying to get everybody to be consistent at one time.

Q. Adrian, you're an SU alum, you played there, you coached for a while, and now you're the head coach. How emotionally difficult was this for you this year, to have a year where you had such a struggle to win games?

ADRIAN AUTRY: You know, I can't answer that question, because obviously disappointment. I think any coach is disappointed, but like you said, an alum, played there, coached here and did a lot of things, it was a little disappointing, to be honest with you, going through some tough times.

I just think I'll learn a lot from that. I have learned a lot from that. I'll just leave it at that. It was disappointing, to be honest with you. Not to say that you've got to be happy, but I just think as an alum, you're disappointed in yourself that you can't get your team to play well, as a coach and all that stuff.

But the way the team was covered was a little disappointing, and that obviously is struggling, but I thought a little bit -- some of it was a little bit too much.

Q. I know you said you still need time to reflect on the season that just ended, but what is maybe a takeaway that you learned in your second year as a head coach that you can take into year three and something that you learned throughout the course of a season that you can use to your advantage now that you had to deal with different kinds of hardship?

ADRIAN AUTRY: You know, that's a really good question. I'm not sure I can really answer that right now. As of right now, I'm sure I'll be able to answer that question in depth because that's a layered question and it's a lot of things that I could say and a lot of things that I know that I've learned. But to be able to kind of talk about it right now, I wouldn't be able to give you a really good answer.

Q. All the disappointments aside, out of all of the players coming back next season, what are some things of growth that you've seen from them, and how can you build on that heading into next season?

ADRIAN AUTRY: I'm not -- the way everything is right

now, you just don't know who is coming back. That's just an honest answer.

But the guys that have eligibility, I thought all those guys, they played, they got better.

But that's a question that we have to wait and see.

Q. As we've discussed, the loss is a lot to process at the moment, but Syracuse has a loyal fan base that sticks with the team through the highs and the lows of this season and just throughout the program's history. What is the message that you'd like to give to the fan base as you look ahead to next season?

ADRIAN AUTRY: I can answer that question at another time. Right now I just choose not to answer that question.

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