

NCAA Men's 1st and 2nd

Rounds: Greenville

Friday, March 17, 2017

Greenville, South Carolina



Mike Krzyzewski

Grayson Allen

Jayson Tatum

Duke Blue Devils

Duke - 87, Troy - 65

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Duke, coach Mike Krzyzewski and student-athletes Jayson Tatum and Grayson Allen.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, we beat a good team. I thought they had their team well prepared. All these teams that win championships, they got really hot at the end of the year in a very close-knit conference. And they can score the ball. They have -- all their kids can score and they're very well coached.

I thought we did a good job of defending the 3, which that's what they do. And that was going to be a key to the game. I thought our guys played hard and well. And one thing about March is everybody believes they can win, and they were not going to go away. Our guys did some things in the second half with the defensive rebounding.

Jayson was just terrific on the defensive boards -- nine defensive rebounds. And G was terrific. He gave us a huge lift at -- the three at the end of the half. But seemed like whenever we needed a bucket, he got it. And his passing was good.

We played well. We had to play well or else we would have gotten beat. Because they played well. And their coach can talk about it, but I was pleased with that first performance of ours.

Q. Grayson, toward the end of the season you've had great success coming off the bench. What do you bring to the team, and how has it worked for you coming off the bench?

GRAYSON ALLEN: Well, coming off the bench doesn't really change the player that you are, necessarily. It's just when you come in, my job is to give energy.

And most of the times when I'm coming in it's kind of right after that first media. And it's just to give the team that extra boost.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: And score points.

GRAYSON ALLEN: And score some points. But just come in and bring energy. And just I'm coming in with fresh legs right off the bench. So I'm just coming in to explode, really.

Q. Jayson, the fan reaction, when you touched the ball, does it motivate you at all? Do you hear it? What's your reaction when it goes on?

JAYSON TATUM: Well, it's something that I don't hear anymore. But we like playing in buildings where it's loud. So we hear the noise, and when there's noise in the crowd, it gives everyone on the court energy. And so we use that energy and play with it.

Q. Grayson, do you feel like coming off the bench, did it actually gives you a chance to see some things that maybe the guys on the court don't see, that when you come in you can contribute in a different way?

GRAYSON ALLEN: Yeah, when I'm on the sidelines to start the game I can definitely see how the game's going, what's open, what the defense is doing, what we need to do on offense and what's being successful for the other team.

And so when I come in -- while I'm watching the bench, make sure that I'm into the game, and so that I don't feel like I'm just slowly getting into it.

And so I know what's going on and I can go in and make some reads and maybe tell some of the guys what I see.

Q. Jayson, Coach mentioned your nine defensive boards, but you also had four steals and four blocks. Can you just talk about your effort tonight on that end of the court?

JAYSON TATUM: Yeah, we all played great on the defensive end. Not early but towards the second half. We were just talking more. That's what Coach emphasized the first half. Guys weren't talking on the defensive end. And we really paid attention to that in the second half, guys were talking. And I was just fortunate enough to come up with some loose balls.

Q. Is there room for improvement going into

Sunday?

GRAYSON ALLEN: There's always room for improvement for us. That's why with the short turnaround you don't have much time to watch what you just did. You need to learn from it. And that's the goal here now that you're in the tournament is learn from winning and keep improving, because we know in the next round whoever it is we're going to play, they're going to be a really good team. And we need to show up a better team than we were tonight.

JAYSON TATUM: Just to piggyback off what he said, we can just learn from what we did today. And it's just a short turnaround. And it gets tougher each and every round. We know we're going to play a great team Sunday. And we're looking forward to it.

Q. Grayson, Jayson came out and made that first 3 to kind of start the game, and then you guys were able to hit a lot of 3s tonight. How key was that shot for you guys?

GRAYSON ALLEN: It was big. I thought it really started our offense off. And really started the game off for us. And for us to see the first shot go in, and kind of loosens it up for everyone else.

And then I thought we did a really good job of moving the ball around. And we did a good job kicking it and moving the ball fast, so when the ball's moving like that, the shots tend to go in.

Q. Both guys, talk about Frank Jackson and what he really has brought to the table the last couple of weeks. And what was Javin's shot? What was going on at the end of the game there?

GRAYSON ALLEN: Frank's done a great job. He keeps improving and getting better. He's like a running back at the point guard position -- he just goes and he's so strong that when he drives the ball he can finish. And he's playing great defensively.

And he just plays so hard and it really just -- I think it goes throughout the other guys on the team, just lifts everyone up. And I know Javin wanted to dunk that one at the end, but he'll take those two.

Q. I know defensive numbers are often a function of what's going on with the offense, especially a explosive offense like Duke's. Can you speak to the evolution of Duke's defense during the course of the year?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Yeah, I think we're a good defensive team. I don't think we're a great defensive team. I think we're a better offensive team than defensive team. And I think sometimes when you have guys who can score a lot, they're only going to be so good defensively, because at the end of the day they

believe they can outscore you. Not that they're thinking about that while it's going on. But it just works out that way.

But we're a good defensive team. And we're switching up a little bit in the ACC Tournament, and this game we did a little bit of zone and what we call 32, it's a 2-2-1 press. And I thought that helped us.

It stopped their driving and kind of stood them up for a little bit. And we're just -- because they had good momentum. They had good momentum. They cut it to single digits. And they had really good momentum. And we kind of came back and then I thought that helped us.

Q. You coached a lot of first-round NCAA games over the years?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: 33, yeah.

Q. Some of them have been tight and difficult. Some have been fairly easy. Can you read anything into these games?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I think there are more good teams. And there's not the so-called great teams and the poor teams or whatever.

I don't know if there are any great teams. There are teams that may be the best this year. But the difference between them and a team from the Sun Belt that wins, in Troy, is not -- it's not as big a difference.

And especially when you're playing the championship team, the championship team, because that means they've come off something really good. But they're champions. And that's how these kids played tonight.

I was really impressed with Troy and how they prepared for us. I thought they did a really good job -- I thought we played well. It's a 20-point game, but it was a hard, hard 20-point game because they played so well.

Q. You've done 33 of these, as you've said. I imagine some teams have more energy going into the tournament than others. And coming off four straight games last week, Coach, the energy level of your team tonight, are you happy with it?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Yeah, I thought we had good energy. I thought we started great. We've done some things in the week in between to get our guys rested and they prepared well. They warmed up well.

If you guys wouldn't do stuff to the court where we have to wait, I don't know who did that. One of you probably dropped a camera or did something. And we'd of had even better momentum until that

happened. No, I'm just screwing around.

But, no, we were ready. Our guys were ready and they're fresh. And they just played well against us. We had to play well to win tonight.

Q. Are you going to watch this game as a fan or --
COACH KRZYZEWSKI: No, no, no.

Q. Are you going to be pulling for Wojo?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I'm just going to -- I can't think of it being Steve. He's like my son. And so I hope they do great. And we gotta play whoever. And so I'll watch from -- I don't like to go out on the court and watch. And I'll watch from behind the first half and then we're going to leave at halftime and then watch the rest of the game and prepare.

And whoever it is, you know, I think both teams -- they're different. One is a great defensive team in South Carolina. And they're coached by a good friend.

And Steve's team is an outstanding offensive team. They're the leading team in the country, 3-point shooting. So I'm just proud that he's brought his team there, just as I'm proud of Chris for what he's done at Northwestern. And I wish we weren't in the same pod, in the same bracket. But we are.

Q. Harry Giles was a huge reason for your ACC Tournament run. He didn't get a lot of minutes today. Was there anything behind that?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Yeah, he didn't play well. Did you watch the game? I mean, he fouled right away. And he has played well. And I thought the fouls affected him. He played -- he was young tonight, where when he got those two fouls and then when he had a chance to come in, he couldn't get rid of those two fouls.

And that's part of the experience he hasn't been able to get. But we have confidence and he'll play Sunday. And Antonio Vrankovich came in and gave us a few minutes that were really, really important. But we have confidence in Harry. He's still a young guy.

Q. Obviously the Jayson-in-the-right-block post area's become an increasing part of your offense. Are there more wrinkles you can do with him now that he's got that one down? Can you start to add more things like that?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I wish he would have had that one down a little bit better, where we scored on it. But yeah, we have other things in there.

And then one of the main things is that he can't -- he can't get down when he misses. And tonight he had

that one finish where he should have just tried to dunk it instead of -- because he can hit free throws. The kid is really a good player. And he's getting better and better. And we'll use him, we'll go as many ways as we can.

The thing tonight to show that, you know -- nine defensive boards, 12 boards, four blocks, four steals -- that block he had right at the end of the half was sensational.

And he had a dunk attempt in the first half where I thought he got hit. Otherwise that would have been, like, the spectacular play of the game, besides Javin's. All right. Okay. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship
First Round - No. 15 Troy / No. 2 Duke
March 17, 2017

Duke Locker Room Quotes

#15 Frank Jackson, Fr., G

On messages in timeouts to pull away

"We just had to pick it up. We knew that they we're going to come at us -- they we're going to give it all they had. [Inaudible]. We had to lock in and get stops defensively."

On competition getting harder

"We're excited to keep playing games -- that's what we want to do. We want to keep playing throughout the week. Just to stay positive, get our bodies right, and come ready to play on Sunday."

On why Duke started clicking as a team

"Every game you learn something new. I think that over time we play better together and that's like any other team. But I think with our guys, we really bought into what coach has told us -- it has really been immersed in us. We're getting the job done, so I can hope we can keep learning and progressing from here."

On "Duke Wins" and sharing the ball

"Yeah, we try to share the ball as much as we can. You know, make the right plays, but it really starts on the defensive end. When we come together defensively and make plays, it all matures into our offense and that's what we try to do."

#21 Amile Jefferson, Gr., F

On getting the first NCAA Tournament win:

"Give Troy credit, we got on them early but they hung around. Grayson (Allen) and Jayson (Tatum) played a great game, and we got better defensively as the game went on. We have to view this as we have eight starters, that's how we have to look at things."

On Duke's offense when shooting nearly 50% from behind the arc:

“It helps us with confidence, and opens up the entire floor. When we are hitting like that, we are really dangerous, but we have to keep playing defense. We won that game because of defense.”

On Grayson Allen’s performance:

“He got hot early, and he gained confidence. He took “Duke shots” and that’s what we need him to do, as well as our entire team.”

#13 Matt Jones, Sr., G

On the team’s play right now versus the beginning of the year:

“It’s definitely a different team. Our younger guys are older now, they have more experience under their belt. What we did last week (winning ACC Tournament) was a good feeling and we want to experience that again. We are all on the same page now.”

On Duke’s offense when hitting the three pointer at a high rate:

“It really opens the floor a lot. But when we hit shots it usually gives us energy of the defensive end. We can score at a high rate and not too many teams can match that, so it usually gives us the lead.”