

NCAA Men's 1st and 2nd

Rounds: Greenville

Sunday, March 19, 2017

Greenville, South Carolina



Mike Krzyzewski

Jayson Tatum

Grayson Allen

Duke Blue Devils

South Carolina - 88, Duke - 81

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Duke.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: The very first thing, I want to congratulate Frank and his team. They played a heck of a game. You know, it's the toughest defense we've played against all year. Very physical, actually the most physical game we've been in all year. But that's how hard they play and I thought our kids played hard, too.

And they played better. But not harder. And I'm proud of my guys. I've loved -- I've absolutely loved coaching this group. I've never had a year like this. With all the injuries, with everything, but never a problem with attitude. These kids have really grown in to be men.

And I wish I could coach them more. I'm glad they became champions last week. And they were a close-knit group. And they did a hell of a job for us. So I'm proud of them. I'm just disappointed that we couldn't go further.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Grayson, obviously you guys came into the season with high expectations, and it hasn't been easy. But what was going through your mind in the final five minutes there; you guys had so many comebacks in Brooklyn, what was your mentality there?

GRAYSON ALLEN: I felt like we could come back all the way to the very end of the game. We've done it so many times before. And so I know all it took was a few shots and a few stops. But South Carolina, they did a great job of knocking down their free throws down the stretch. And they kept the game away from us. And, you know, they didn't turn it over. So it made it tough to come back.

Q. Grayson, did you guys feel like at halftime that maybe you'd missed an opportunity because they

had shot so poorly and yet it was still a single digit game?

GRAYSON ALLEN: We thought we played good defense in the first half. But they did, too. They're a very good defensive team. So it's not an easy task to score on them. And that's what allowed them to keep the game closer in the first half. And that's what really opened it up in the second half for them, too, is their defense.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. In the second half, was it South Carolina making shots, or did you feel like you guys weren't contesting enough of them?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I thought we were playing our butts off. And it was a real, we got worn down. It's the most physical game we've been in all year. And then we were in a lot of foul trouble. So you just try and patch up, put -- I wish we had some of that tape that doesn't let water into the boat.

And just trying to do anything you can, because the game, the game was very complex in the second half with the fouls. Again, they had fouls too. I'm just saying we've played about seven guys and so you're juggling a little bit, just juggling a little bit.

Q. There's a lot of red eyes in the locker room. What do you say in the locker room after a stunner like that?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Before you were able to come in there, I told them I love these guys. I'm proud of them. I'm disappointed that we didn't win tonight. But at the end of the season I want my guys to either be crying because we've lost or crying because we've just won.

And it shows that if you're not doing one of those, that means you never really became a team. It was never really that important. And for these guys, they were a really good team. This is one of the most proud teams for me because all the stuff.

You all keep talking about expectations. I mean, look, a lot of these kids were just hurt at the start of the year and whatever. And they never used it as an excuse. And they became close. And so I just told them -- I told them I love them and I'm proud of them. I wish I could

keep coaching them this year. But that's not going to happen.

Q. What makes South Carolina so tough defensively? And I guess just what did they do to you guys on that end that was so hard to deal with?

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, first of all, they're well-coached. And they not only are good technique-wise, but they add heart. They add toughness. They add all the intangibles that go with great technique. And then they're all committed to it. And they played it at a high level, and the game was a very physical game. And they adapted well to it, and we adapted okay to it. Not as well as I would like.

But they're a terrific defensive team. Frank does a great job with his team. And whoever he brought in, they're committed to playing that end of the court. And because of their depth and their age, they're a little bit older, they put it out there. It's tough to play against, obviously. Tonight it was tough to play against. And we tried and came close, but we weren't good enough.

One last thing, I'd like to thank the organizing committee, the people of Greenville for hosting it. It was, wherever you went, people were pleasant. They were proud to have the NCAA Tournament here. All the volunteers, everyone greeted you with a smile. They were terrific. And we're very appreciative of that. And just to say thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

**NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship
First Round - No. 7 South Carolina / No. 2 Duke
March 19, 2017**

DUKE LOCKER ROOM QUOTES

#13 Matt Jones, Sr., G

On falling behind late in game

"We've been in that position before this season, so we believed we could come back. We'd found ways to win in the past, but tonight we couldn't muster the energy. They hit their shots in the second half, and our shots didn't fall. They're a good team. It was a real physical game, and they came out on top.

On the crowd and atmosphere

"It felt like a road game at times, but it wasn't anything we didn't expect. It wasn't really any different from situations we've been in before. They were just the better team tonight.

On South Carolina's strong shooting in second half

"They seemed to come out more aggressive in the second half. They were taking it to the basket more, and a couple of shots went their way while they didn't go our way. But that's basketball. Their shots started falling, and they found their rhythm. That's happened for us in the past -- we've been there before,

#15 Frank Jackson, Fr., G

On South Carolina's defensive pressure

"They played really tough D. They did a really good job tonight. They came with a lot of energy. It was a physical game, but that's part of basketball. Two good teams went at it, and they came out on top.

On South Carolina rallying from a 10-point first-half deficit

"They never gave up. You might expect a team to be down after getting behind like that, but they came back with full energy. They got going in the second half and we had a few turnovers. They were able to make plays and catch up.

On the crowd and atmosphere

"I don't think it bothered us. We've played in difficult environments all year, so we were used to it. I know their school is only about an hour and a half from here, so maybe it was a home away from home for them, but it didn't really bother us.

#1 Harry Giles, Fr., F

On South Carolina's play

"The play hard, they're a great team. They wanted it. It was a hard fought game. Definitely hard the home crowd. It helped them keep going throughout the game.

On long stretches without a field goal

"That was tough. They played solid defense. We can't get our shots off. But at the same time we can't hit our shots, too. So we were just trying to find the right thing and makes things work. So, that was it."

On turnovers

"They played good defense. But at the same time, it is hard to win with 18 turnovers."

On getting sped up by South Carolina

"I wouldn't say that. I think we sped ourselves up. We can't let the other team control the pace, we are supposed to control the pace."

On dominating the 2nd half, just as they did against Marquette:

"They just fought through it. Once again, they are a great team. Obviously we are sad to not be going to the Sweet 16, best of luck to them."

#5 Luke Kennard, So., G

On the loss

"We played 40 minutes. Some things didn't go our way tonight. We just got beat. They got some great players. They have players that made a lot of plays, especially in the second half. They were able to get under us and they capitalized on those. Overall their physicality got to us a little bit. They just beat us."

On not playing as well as in the ACC Tournament

Well, we won one and they just outscored us so we just got beat.

On getting sped up by South Carolina's defense

"Yeah I mean, we knew they were a physical team and it was a physical game. Something didn't go our way. They hit shots as well, make plays, get stops, turned us over and got momentum off those turnovers."

On the environment

"We have been in a lot of atmospheres like today. We have won games like that. They fed off the crowd I think and it gave them a lot of energy. They're a good team."

On turnovers:

"They were able to cause some turnovers and get some easy buckets. [Sindarius] Thornwell's a great player [that] made some big plays. We weren't able to hit some shots. Their physicality took over a little bit."

On the end of the season:

"It's tough. We are ashamed of the result. It was a successful season. We won the ACC Championship. That was a huge accomplishment. Nobody expected it to happen. We have been through alot this year. I know Coach [Kryzewski] is proud of us and the season we had. It's tough to know the season is over."