



Duke Press Conference Quotes

Duke Canada Tour vs. McGill



August 19, 2018 // Place Bell // Laval, Quebec

Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski

Opening Statement:

"First of all, I want just thank everyone here. This tour has been unbelievable for us to play against three very different teams that were all well-coached in their systems in packed venues, it's been classy the whole way and it's been fabulous. I wish we could spend a little bit more time in Montreal. We got here yesterday and we have to leave in the morning. You talk about two great cities, Toronto is great in its own way but Montreal has its own personality and feel. Just driving through, I'm a big tree guy. It's a beautiful city and the little bit that we've been driving around and you can see people that are vibrant. It's just pretty. It's my first time here and the crowd was great. I thought they (McGill) were really good. They actually came out the best of the three teams against us. They really played well. McGill played like they thought they were going to win. They played with verve and they played hard. They did smart stuff with the containment press. In the first half, when we beat it, we didn't beat it to score. We set up, and then they set up their defense and they plugged to where it looked like zone but it was man. Their coach does a really good job of that. In the second half, we didn't stop when we beat the press, we kept going and that helped. Also our defense was outstanding and we scored off of our defense. They tried to jam our rebounders after we got a defensive board and our guys were stronger with the ball in the second half, and that kind of gave us a numerical advantage. Zion (Williamson) and R.J. (Barrett) are a cut above everyone who's on the court. We have two really special players and we have a couple others that didn't play today who are hurt. The three kids who have been injured have given some of the kids who wouldn't get the minutes, a lot of minutes. Jack White in particular, has had a great tour. He's played like a junior and has been solid. I think he's probably averaged like 28 minutes a game, which is invaluable for us. Javin (DeLaurier) has solidified what we thought he would be. Joey Baker these last two ballgames, has really come alive. With Tre Jones being out, Jordan Goldwire, has also played probably 26-27 minutes a game to gain invaluable experience. The guys loved it. My players loved it, they didn't like it, they loved it. We're going to go out to eat tonight with the families and take off tomorrow. As good as we thought we'd feel about the whole experience, it's exponentially better. Thank you for that. The three coaches and their teams, they were fabulous in preparing and testing us. The score really wasn't indicative because in the second half, we just kind of pulled away."

On how the two teams matched up in this game:

We obviously have more talent, but we're young. R.J. and Zion are 18. Alex Paquin is 24, he's really good and he's a man. That's one of the things when we get to NCAA play, we have to beat teams that have juniors, seniors, or even graduate transfers. So that balances sometimes the talent aspect. Our guys didn't fall into that trap, I thought they shared the ball. R.J. had 10 assists. They share it. The first half, we really had to play well. In the second half, we pulled away. I thought we played team ball throughout and really kept up our defense."

On the team's score increasing each game:

"It did go up. We hit our free throws in the second half. We haven't been hitting free throws over these three games. We got a little bit more in transition in this game than we did in the other two. I think we got better, I think Ryerson is really good but they were very athletic and older, and it took us more than a half to adjust. Toronto plays a little bit slower and they try to make some passes. They run with no low post and that took a little bit more time off the clock. We can score a lot of points because we can. I think we just got better though. Our best half was that second half. I thought they were the equal of us in that first half as far as how well they played and we just happened to have a double-digit lead but we weren't playing necessarily better than they were, we just scored more than they did."

On R.J. Barrett:

"He's great in all aspects. When we recruit a kid, we look for talent, a good student and character. He's off the charts in all three. He comes from a family that has amazing character. He's represented your country at different every level and he's done that with class, dignity and talent. He's way ahead. I've found him to be more of a competitor. He does not like to lose. He's an outstanding defender and he can lock you up. He's a leader and a great kid to be around. I love him. I loved him before this trip, but now that we've had nine practices and three games, we know our guys a little bit better. He's a stud in every way."

On what continues to motivate him to be a head coach:

"I'm doing what I wanted to do when I was 16. I wanted to be a coach and I am a coach. I never thought I would be the head coach at West Point, at Duke or with the U.S.A. National Team, and you live in the moment. The thing that I love the most, I love the game and I love working with kids, especially special players. You get in their moment. It keeps you young and it keeps you creative. It's terrific for me. It's not about numbers, it's about the quality of experience, and maybe we'll get another number. I'm not opposed to another number, I'm just saying that you get involved with these guys and develop. I love that. I'm healthier than I've been in a while, and I don't have the responsibilities of coaching the U.S.A. team now. I'm all in on my guys, and this is a great team to be all in on. We as a staff have loved every day with these guys. This trip has fortified the opinion that we already had about them."