

NCAA Men's 1st and 2nd

Rounds: Greenville

Sunday, March 19, 2017

Greenville, South Carolina



Mike Anderson

Manuale Watkins

Daryl Macon

Moses Kingsley

Arkansas Razorbacks

North Carolina - 72, Arkansas - 65

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Arkansas.

COACH ANDERSON: We came to dance, not to do the one step. We wanted to bust up some brackets here today. Close -- you don't get -- close don't get it done. But congratulations to North Carolina. They made the plays they had to. They got to the free-throw line an awful lot of times.

But at the end of the day, I just thought they made more plays than we did. I thought we had some bad-decision making going down the stretch. And you can credit that to their defense, but you can also credit it to our guys just making the wrong decision.

I just thought we ran out of time. Heck of a ballgame. Again, a lot of people had us even dead and buried in this game here. But these guys here, they're hurting right now and they're hurting for the right reason. They came in here to win and move on in the NCAA Tournament. We're disappointed in that.

But I'm so proud of these guys and what they've done this year. Even as we've come to the conclusion of some of our guys' careers -- Moses, Dusty Hannahs and of course Manuale Watkins. Those guys have meant a whole lot to our program. These two guys here, they've been here -- for the two times we've been in the tournament to play North Carolina. It was a distinct difference than it was the last time we played. It was a big-time difference.

So congratulations to them. And, but I'm telling these guys here -- Daryl, the whole team -- I'm real proud of these guys and what they came out and accomplished this year.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Daryl, looked like you were cramping up. What was the problem and how frustrating was that because you obviously had it going? Then you had to sit out for a while. I assume you weren't 100 percent when you came back in?

DARYL MACON: It happens. I don't know how I started cramping. It just happened. I wish I was out there helping my team win. It hurts losing like this, but it is what it is.

COACH ANDERSON: He played hard. That's why. He played hard. He left his heart out on the floor. I think that's what causes cramping. We saw a lot of our guys, they left it out on the floor.

Q. All three guys, you had them 65-60. Did you think you've got them? And what did you think happened those last about three and a half minutes that turned it?

MANUALE WATKINS: I don't think we thought we had them. We just didn't execute on offense down the stretch. We turned the ball over a few times. And, I mean, like I said, we just really didn't execute when we had the lead and we made it, kind of played on our heels a little bit instead of attacking and trying to score. We just didn't execute down the stretch, and that's on us.

Q. If the other guys can talk about that, too. And Daryl, when you came back in, you got the ball but they were just swarming you. How tough a possession was that with about a minute something left? And if Moses could talk about the end of the game, too.

MOSES KINGSLEY: Just like Coach said, we didn't execute at the end of the game and we didn't get some stops that we needed. That's how they won the game.

Q. Daryl, you came back in, but they just swarmed you. You had to kind of heave up a 3 there with the shot clock running down. What was that possession like? Obviously a tough deal.

DARYL MACON: I just dribbled the ball and the shot clock ran down. And I just had to jack something up just to get it out of my hands. We didn't come out and execute that possession as well as we have been doing the entire game. So we have those type of plays. And I just had to get it out of my hands, so I shot it.

Q. Was Carolina's defense, was their intensity different the last four minutes of the game? Seemed like they kind of realized their season was there on the line there late.

DARYL MACON: Can you repeat that?

Q. Do you think Carolina's defense changed the last four, five minutes of the game? Seemed like they picked up the intensity, were doing things differently.

DARYL MACON: No.

MANUALE WATKINS: I mean, I just think it was on us. They're a great team. And their backs were against the wall. They made the plays to win the game. They're a 1 seed. They showed it.

But I just think it was we didn't execute. And I mean that's that. We had the game. We just didn't make the right plays down the stretch.

Q. Six minutes to go or so in the first half you guys were down by 14 or 15 points, I believe. And as Coach indicated, a few people I think were writing you off at that point. What kind of adjustments did you make midstream there to kind of get back into it and make a game of it?

MOSES KINGSLEY: We've been down before. We've been down several times during the season. We've been down the row, 15 in a row, 12 in a row.

So it doesn't matter. The way we play, we're going to get stops and we're going to score. I feel like that's what happened. Coach put some people out there that had some energy and we got in our press and we got some steals. And we had a run. We get some stops and we're going to score. And that's what we did.

MANUALE WATKINS: Like Mo said, we started playing our brand of basketball. We got down 16 or whatever it was, and we got some energy guys in there and started playing real Razorback basketball, real Hog basketball. That's what got us in the game. We went to what we've been doing all year. We never panic when we get down.

Q. Manny, two-parter, I thought Beard played his best game in a long time and Bailey played a lot of minutes. Can you comment on each one of those guys' contributions tonight?

MANUALE WATKINS: They came to play. Big stage, they weren't scared, obviously. They came, gave it all they had, played hard. And I mean that's all you can say. They just played hard and they're ready to play.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. Mike, if Daryl doesn't cramp up, do you think that there's a different outcome? And how much did that impact you guys when he had to come out there at crunch time?

COACH ANDERSON: I think he played so hard, he just cramped up. That means it's gotta be somebody else to step up for us. Should've, could've, would've, you could say it all you want to. But we had some guys out there that could have made the plays. And unfortunately we didn't make them.

Q. I'm guessing you probably notice that you didn't get in the bonus during the game.

COACH ANDERSON: We shot eight free throws. I noticed that. And I don't know if North Carolina plays good defense, they don't play great defense. They had three fouls. And we're an attacking team. We were attacking. There were some opportunities where we were in the fastbreak mode we were attacking, getting to the basket. But it was called that way and of course our guys gotta play through that.

Q. Okay. So you did get that far, I kind of figured you would, but what was your view of the Joel Berry play that ended up with Kennedy Meeks tipping the ball in?

COACH ANDERSON: I thought he ran over one of our guys. If he didn't, he traveled. I thought he did the one-step. I couldn't hardly see it.

But I know we had a guy that was in place there. And he tipped it in. I think that gave them a 3-point lead. I thought we played great defense at that time.

That wasn't the difference in the game. I just thought we had some bad turnovers at the wrong time or we didn't get a good shot.

And as you said, we didn't even get to the free-throw line -- we weren't even in 1-1. We had three fouls. And the first one was probably caused in the first minute of the second half.

So there's a lot of things you can look back and say that. But at the end of the day they survived and they advanced.

Q. Could you first talk about how you thought Beard played and maybe he helped with Daryl down a little bit. And then you played Adrio Bailey a lot of minutes. What went into that? He seemed like he handled it pretty well.

COACH ANDERSON: Those two guys came in -- and I think somebody was talking about what took place in that first half, we were down 14.

We put some energy guys in there who were focusing on the defense and really just disrupting. And we got our fastbreak going and deflecting passes. And all of a sudden the game sped up, and that's more to our liking. And Adrio was a part of that.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

So we started him off the second half as well. But I thought Beard looked like the old Beard that helped us out there after leading, calming guys down, making big plays, just getting dirty. I thought we got dirty. It's just unfortunate we didn't pull it off.

Q. I guess just you had a great season, tough ending, how would you sum up the season and maybe look ahead a little bit?

COACH ANDERSON: It's kind of hard to sum it up right now. I'm really kind of pissed, no -- I'm kind of not necessarily ticked off, but it's just one of those things, you had something in your hand and you let it get away.

But I thought these guys gave me everything they had. I mean, when you think about -- they had a special year. When you're talking about seven guys who have never donned a Razorback uniform, to come in, mesh in with five or six guys who were holdovers from last year and to win 26 games, I think the second-most in the last 20-some-odd years.

And not only that, took probably one of the top teams in the country, led them for the most part in a game in the NCAA Tournament to go to the Sweet 16. Playing good basketball.

I thought our defense -- offensively we probably weren't in sync. But I thought our defense in the second half in this game was outstanding, even the first half.

We had North Carolina on their heels for the most part. But they did what an experienced team do: They made the plays going down the stretch.

When you look at our team, we did some of the things that an inexperienced team does in this format. Because you've got to remember, this is a one-and-done. It's over with. It's different pressure than the SEC Tournament or a regular season game.

But these guys here, I'll tell you what, they're a special group. I think the Razorback Nation, and even the nation got a chance to see them. Because a lot of people didn't even think we had a chance to come here.

But I beg to differ. I know my guys. I know me. I like to win. So I'm proud of them for coming out and really just leaving it all on the floor. It was an up-and-down game. But we just came up a little short.