

March 22, 2013



Indiana – 83
James Madison – 62

An interview with:



THE MODERATOR: We'll now be joined by the head coach of Indiana, Tom Crean, as well as Indiana student-athletes Yogi Ferrell, Will Sheehey, and Remy Abell.

We'll start with an opening statement by Coach Crean, and after that, we'll open the floor for questions for our student-athletes.

COACH CREAN: We prepared very hard in a short period of time. The coaches, led by Kenny Johnson, did a great job. We started the preparation on Sunday night for James Madison, and we tried to add a few things we thought we could see from them the last -- the first couple days of practice.

But our guys got ready for them in a very short period of time, and I think it showed in the way that we played as they treated it like it's any other game we played this year, especially in the Big Ten.

The preparation was high level. They dove into what we wanted to do, notwithstanding a couple of the buckets that were made later in the game after we were way up and we started to sub more.

We knew we were playing against a really good team, an experienced team, a team that had the fifth-year guys but also had outstanding freshmen. I think the key to the game for us is we did a great job on the older guys, on Moore, on

Goins, on Davis, and we had a lot of respect for Nation. He made some tough plays, and he's an excellent player.

But we had great respect for the coaching, great respect for the talent, for the fact that they were conference champions, and our players played that way. And Yogi certainly got us going in a great direction with the way that he moved the ball, and then he was able to find some great areas to attack from because the ball was in movement.

To have six guys have 9 or more, to have Remy with 7, to be able to play as many people as we did was a big deal today. A couple highlights for me were the fact that Yogi had eight rebounds in this game, which means that our break is at another level when he does that. And the fact that we only turned it over, I believe, nine times, was key.

And the other big thing was we kept them off the foul line because they're a very good foul shooting team, and when you have that kind of ability to get to the rim and play at the post, you're going to get fouled, and we did a very good job of not allowing that to happen.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. For any one of you guys, did you catch the Southern-Gonzaga game, and if so, did that open your eyes to what's possible if you're not prepared?

YOGI FERRELL: We know that anything can happen in the NCAA Tournament. We've already seen some pretty crazy things happen. So going into this game, we were not going to take this team lightly. We know that they won their conference and we knew that they were one of the high-level teams.

We felt they were one of the better 16 seed teams, so we were definitely not going to take this team lightly. And even looking at the Southern-Gonzaga game.

Q. Yogi, just talk about the beginning sequences and those first three drives and what specifically you saw.

YOGI FERRELL: I was just trying to push the ball in transition really and find openings. The lane kind of just opened up for me, and I just kept attacking at the beginning. When they closed it up, I'd just kick out. So those first early drives really helped us.

Q. Will, was there anything that you were able to bring forward from last year's tournament experience to help you guys hit the ground running this year?

WILL SHEEHEY: Just to make sure you don't take any team lightly. Our freshmen did a great job not overlooking our opponent. We did a fantastic job with our scouting report.

Coach said earlier Coach Kenny Johnson did a fantastic job. We were really locked in from the start, and I think that helped us in this game.

Q. Yogi, Coach referred to it a second ago. How did the Big Ten prepare you guys for this tournament?

YOGI FERRELL: The Big Ten prepared us just to play against some of the high-level guys. This team had a lot of high-level players. They had Nation, Moore, Davis, and each Big Ten team has always high-level scorers.

So going up and playing against some of those guys prepared us against this team because they're a great team. You know, it just prepares us to go out there and play physical because the Big Ten is a very physical conference, so we wanted to go out there and be physical as well.

Q. Remy, if you could, I know that you haven't had a lot of chance to see anything, but did you get a chance to see any of Temple, and what do you know about that?

REMY ABELL: They're a great team. Like I say, they have a lot of great players. Like I said, we're not going to take anybody lightly, like we didn't do with this team. So prepare excellent and be ready to play.

Q. Yogi, can you talk about just the feeling about playing your first NCAA Tournament game and then coming out of the gates the way that you did.

YOGI FERRELL: It was definitely a lot of fun. I mean, just running up the court, just running the breaks is just a lot of fun, especially to get this

win, our first win, especially my first win, my first game.

But just to be out there and play with these guys was just a lot of fun.

THE MODERATOR: Yogi, Will, and Remy, thank you for your time. Good luck Sunday. Questions for Coach Crean.

Q. I know they wound up with 62 points, but with ten minutes to go they only had 31. I was curious how you evaluate how you played defensively this afternoon.

COACH CREAN: I think we played excellent. We let our guard down a little bit late, and we didn't make many adjustments at that point. We didn't switch our defenses, which we would have if we felt it would have warranted it at that point.

But I was also trying to make sure that I was conscious enough getting people out of the game, and we tried to do some of that at the end of the first half. So I would think for the first 30, 32 minutes, whatever it was, we were really, really at a high level. We had a ton of deflections.

We weren't giving them easy baskets. There was a couple here and there, but we were challenging our guys. We were talking about the pick-and-roll coverage, really, really locked into personnel. I can't stress enough how proud I am of the way that they did that because they do that all year long.

You don't want them to catch a break now. You want them to understand that, hey, this really works, and you've got to be -- it's not just about getting ready for play X and play Y, it's about really getting ready for individuals and what they do inside of that and how cohesive they are.

So our players were really, really good with that, and they never took their foot off the pedal there those first 30 minutes with our game plan defensively.

Q. Is there anything you saw or heard the last couple of days that suggested to you that your team was not overlooking this group, that you were ready to play at a high level?

COACH CREAN: Oh, I never worried about it. I do -- my only concern that, if we didn't play well, we were going to be underworked and we weren't going to be overworked, because we really did try to flip the switch at the end after the Wisconsin game.

There's no question that the gauntlet and the grind of the season had caught up with us some. It was so important to make sure that we got -- that this was really with a fresh-mind approach, I think. I saw it come alive. I knew we'd get their legs right, but they were really able to get away and make that changeover, that transition from the high-level games and the high-level preps night after night that never end, take a couple days to make themselves better before they jump right back into that preparation.

With that being said, there was never a drop-off when we went to the preparation. Our first walk-through Wednesday night, after the game was over in the ballroom at the hotel, there was no question they were ready to go and talking it and communicating it and seeing these things on film and bringing them to life in our walk-through. So I never worried about that with them.

I mean, you always worry because that's human nature, but there's nothing I ever saw from them that concerned me whatsoever.

Q. Coach, Yogi has shown maturity beyond his years all season, but just to come out as hot as he did but never get out of the offensive flow, what does that say about him?

COACH CREAN: He's just a very mature young man that's got an extremely short memory. He just plays, and he moves on, and he moves right on from it. I didn't even realize that he had six assists, one turnover inside of that time, and we got him some good rest too.

So the eight rebounds was big because we need more guard rebounds, and when he rebounds the ball, we're much better because that break starts so fast. And the same thing with Jordan Hulls. So that's a very, very positive thing, but he had great confidence shooting the ball.

He's worked so hard to continue to get extra reps in his shooting, and if there's one thing -- we've shot a lot all week long, but there really weren't a lot of opportunities for these guys to go -- we weren't in Cook Hall. So we couldn't go back and get those extra reps. I felt really good about the way we shot the ball in here yesterday with the 40-minute workout, and he was one of the key guys with that. So I know it had to help his confidence level.

Q. Coach, have you seen Temple play at all or have any impressions about them?

COACH CREAN: Oh, absolutely. We're fully ready to start going over them here in a short

period of time with our guys because Steve McClain has been on the scout since Sunday night.

Fran Dunphy is a phenomenal coach, and it starts with him. I mean, he has been a great basketball coach for a long period of time, and they play in a highly respected league, a tough league, a league that it's got a little bit of everything.

They're going to deal with pressure. They're going to deal with zones. They're going to deal with tempo, all those types of things. What they do is he really utilizes in my mind -- I don't know any of his players, but he takes these tough, athletic guys, gets them to really move the basketball. They know what they want early in the clock. They know what they want late in the clock.

Wyatt is a tremendous player, but he's far from being a one-man team. He does so many different things. They do so many different things to get shots. So they're going to be an extremely difficult matchup.

I didn't see any -- well, I saw maybe two minutes of this game. I'm going to go watch that now. But for them to come in here and win -- the thing that got my attention is when I saw one of the articles where they basically missed -- I could be wrong on this, but they basically missed the Selection Show because they were still in a meeting going over what had happened in their last game.

That's a serious team. That's a team not to be taken lightly.

Q. Tom, you alluded to this a couple of minutes ago. Were you worried at one point that the Big Ten was going to batter you guys to the point you weren't going to be ready for the tournament?

COACH CREAN: It goes through your head. I'd be lying to say it didn't. You don't want to put that in your players' minds, but, again, I wasn't worried about -- we really backed off our practices much earlier than we ever had to prepare for a long season.

But there's no way around it. You're in that league, and it's possession by possession, and it's so physical and taxing. Again, the people that know us saw it. The people that don't know us, our guys prepare every game, and we've had a couple of tough games.

But our guys prepare every game the same way, and I haven't always had teams -- they

know when they're playing this team or that team, but they never, ever differentiate in their preparation, and that goes a lot into it too with how they got -- you win the Big Ten. You win the league like that, that takes a lot out of you.

So I'm really glad we had a little transition time and that we utilized it the right way to help them get their minds around this and get their bodies back.

Q. Tom, can you talk about the role that Kenny played in getting your team prepared for this game.

COACH CREAN: Kenny -- you never -- for me, and I was fortunate when I got a start that no one ever pigeonholed me into a position. When you coach, you coach, you recruit, you administrate, you teach, you scout, you do it all. That's exactly what Kenny Johnson has come here and done. He's gotten a lot of notoriety for the recruiting he's done in a short time, and rightfully so, but he's a basketball coach.

When he leaves us, it won't be for anything in front of his title other than head coach. He's going to be that good. We've got two other head coaches in there, and he comes in, and he's got a great personality.

He was very, very forceful and demonstrative in this scout, which showed his maturing as a coach. He knew this team because of being in the league, and he did a phenomenal job of getting it across. He had the details down, but he made sure, we all made sure, that our players understood, okay, this is what they want. This is how they want to get it, and he did a phenomenal job with it.

THE MODERATOR: Tom, good luck on Sunday.

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