

NCAA Men's 1st and 2nd

Rounds: Orlando

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Orlando, Florida



Jonathan Isaac Dwayne Bacon Xavier Rathan-Mayes Michael Ojo

Florida State Seminoles

THE MODERATOR: If we could see any hands of anybody who would like to ask a question. If you would please address your question to a specific player or players.

Q. Dwayne, when do you start looking at Xavier? When you wake up this morning, is there stuff on an iPad? Are you having a film session? When does that start, that process?

DWAYNE BACON: It started last night after our game. We went back and had dinner, and started to talk about them and what they are going to do in the game.

Q. This is for any of the players: So many people talk about how talented this team is athletically, but it always comes with, "Well, you know, they're young. They make mistakes." How do you balance that? How do you find your game? Talented but they have droughts.

THE MODERATOR: Xavier, let's start with you.

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: I don't know. I think we do a good job of negating that. We feed off our defense. Coach Ham put in a great defensive system for us, and that's what we kind of rely on. We try to make our defense turn into our offense by putting pressure on people and being able to get out in transition.

When we can utilize our length and athleticism, I think we're at our best.

THE MODERATOR: Michael, your thoughts on that?

MICHAEL OJO: Like Xavier said, our coaches do a good job as well as the leaders, guys that have been around the program for a while, to be able to pass down the knowledge to the new guys. In different situations throughout the course of the game we're able to help out the young guys.

JONATHAN ISAAC: I would say there's a but to every team. We're athletic, but sometimes we don't execute, and sometimes we make mistakes, just like any other team out there.

THE MODERATOR: Dwayne, anything else?

DWAYNE BACON: I think they said it all.

Q. Xavier, the video staff and support staff, all the stuff they do, how valuable is that this time of year when it comes to preparing for an unfamiliar team on a quick turnaround?

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: Bobby and Coach Knight do an amazing job for us. By the time we got back to the hotel last night, they already had stuff on Xavier put into film, put into different segments for us. Like I said, they do such a great job of preparing us in the right ways and giving us all the right information that we need in order to be successful. Bobby's huge for us, and we're lucky to have a guy like that.

Q. Dwayne, I wonder if you could address last night's victory. There were some turnovers, and you guys didn't shoot very well on the three-point shot, missed some foul shots. So is there a recognition that you have to play a better than you did last night to advance?

DWAYNE BACON: I think last night's game is over. We've just got to come into practice today, work on free throws, work on executing, less turnovers, and get the game plan down for Xavier, and I think we'll be fine. We definitely got to play better, though.

Q. Maybe a follow up to Xavier: Does Xavier, their style, does it resemble anybody you've seen in the ACC at all?

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: Not too many in the ACC, but they kind of resemble a team we played earlier in the year, and that was Illinois and how physical they play. They like to run a lot of sets, and they're kind of methodical with the basketball and moving it around and looking for the right shots.

We've just got to do what we've been doing all year, play defense at a high level, pressure the basketball and take them out of their sweet spots. If we can do that, I think we can be successful tomorrow night.

Q. Michael, what was it like playing in your first NCAA Tournament game? And what was the biggest lesson you guys learned from last night that you can channel the rest of the way through?

MICHAEL OJO: It was awesome. I've been in college now five years, and I haven't had an opportunity. To play my first time, it was awesome.

One lesson I learned from yesterday is you can't underestimate any opponent in this tournament. These are the best 64 teams in the country. The game is never over till it's over. So you have to keep playing. Either you're down or you're out.

Q. Dwayne, same question for you: What is the biggest lesson you learned last night playing in the bright lights of the NCAA Tournament?

DWAYNE BACON: I think the biggest lesson for me is every team got here by being the best team they could be in their league. The team we played last night was a great team. Even though they were in a lower-level league than we are in, we had to come out and execute just like if it was an ACC team. I think we've just got to take no team for granted and come out and play the same way we would play if it was an ACC team.

Q. Jonathan, I know throughout the course of the year, Coach Ham and those guys talked to you about the idea of being more assertive and more aggressive. Do you feel like you did that last night, and were you pretty pleased with the results?

JONATHAN ISAAC: Yeah, I think I came out early trying to be aggressive. I just like to play the way I play. I try not to force too much. I just let the game come to me. And doing that, I think it helps our team win.

Q. Xavier, this is for you: The chant I heard last night when Xavier was playing Maryland is "Let's go X! Let's go X!" Is that going to have an effect on your game tomorrow?

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: I think -- no, I don't think it's going to have too much of an effect. I don't really -- when I'm out there, I don't really hear the crowd too much or the chants. I don't really focus on it too much.

It's pretty cool that we're playing Xavier, but we've got a game to win tomorrow, and that's all that counts.

Q. Dwayne, just a minute ago, Trevon Bluiett from Xavier is one of their guys, and I just wondered if you saw him play against Maryland and what are your impressions of the type of player he is.

DWAYNE BACON: I think he's a good player. I'm actually familiar with him because we kind of have the same workout guy. So we kind of go through some of the same stuff.

I'm very familiar with him. I know he's a great player. He can shoot very well, get to the basket. We've just got to come out and play him as if he was a tough ACC player, which we have a lot of those, and which we think is one of the best leagues in the country. We've just got to contain him like we would any other player.

THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, thank you very much.