

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Friday March 10, 2017

Bryce Drew Riley LaChance Luke Kornet

Vanderbilt

Vanderbilt - 72, Florida - 62

THE MODERATOR: We're ready to begin with Vanderbilt. We'll ask Coach Drew for some opening thoughts on the game. And then we'll take your questions just for the two student-athletes and discuss them, and then we'll finish up can the Coach.

Coach Drew.

COACH DREW: What a great 40 minutes of resilience, I thought, from our basketball team tonight. Florida really came out with great intensity, were beating us to balls and rebounds, attacking the rim. We weren't getting much on offense. And, you know, I thought as we started to get more aggressive, we slowly got back in the game.

You know, great credit to these two sitting here, rest of our team. We could have folded three, four times in the game. They kept coming back and fighting through fatigue, went through some spells we didn't score too well, to give us a chance to win at the end.

Q. Luke, statistically this year when you're shooting the ball off the post upset, I think it's .85 points per possession, which isn't very good. You were really scoring off of them tonight. What was the difference for you, especially with how aggressive you were being in the post?

LUKE KORNET: We had a way of playing defense on the outside and trying to move the ball around on the perimeter. Tried to take advantage of them switching. And there's a couple times where I was able to get good position and really a couple times I kind of just shot too quick and worked my way all the way to the goal.

I think our guys did a great job of finding me inside and just kind of trying to take advantage of mismatches, and we did it from the inside. I mean, it wasn't always



the prettiest basketball, but we came together and made shots when it came down to it.

Q. Riley, in overtime when you make that 3 with about two minutes left, you didn't have to take it. I think there was still time on the shot clock, about 25 feet out. What's your thinking of why you took that one?

RILEY LACHANCE: They'd been switching ball screens the whole game. Got to switch on the ball screen and he was backing up a little bit and, yeah, just kind of let it go.

Q. For both guys, the game seven days ago or six days ago in Nashville, they got the ball with a chance to tie. They basically ran the same play as they ran here. Were you looking for that and what were your thoughts as he went to the basket?

THE MODERATOR: Luke.

LUKE KORNET: There's a couple different things. First KeVaughn Allen shot the 3 in the corner, which this time he hit. It felt like that's happened every single game we played against them. Having the guards come towards the goal. At the end of the regulation, I kind of like turned with it, got me turned a little bit. I just like kind of closed my eyes and jumped. I was in bad position but luckily didn't fall.

And I mean, those possessions like we've been able to kind of close it out towards the end the game recently, been huge for us to get stops and everyone is fighting as hard as they can. It's paid off.

RILEY LACHANCE: Yeah, we had a feeling they were going to go to the basket with the time to score. Luke made a great play, and Jeff had a huge rebound as well. Kind of cleared down, got a big rebound for us.

Q. Question's for either guy, but two years in a row in the SEC Tournament, the last two years you guys in a close game have lost both of them. This year close game, you guys go through the pressure. What changed or what have you guys learned from those experiences?

LUKE KORNET: I think like -- it feels like every single game for us like down the stretch here, we've had a couple times where it's just like we come down to a media timeout, it's a close game going into it. We've --

like I feel like our composure doesn't switch. We all still have the same focus.

It's come down to just like getting stops on defense. And at the beginning of the year, we failed to get those stops and went other way. Down the stretch here, we've all kind of focused in on what needs to be done to win those games.

I feel like we're all confident every single moment, whether we're down 10 or up 10, and continuing to just play good defense and try to win the game.

Q. Luke, when you hit 3 with your left hand tonight, when did that become part of your game?

LUKE KORNET: I feel like I've always kind of -- I use my left hand, especially in the beginning of the year I was using it a lot. I feel kind of like I go one way, and if they turn me, I feel comfortable being able to spin back and use it. It's something that like -- I guess from like a young age, I was kind of taught to use my left hand. So it's something that I'm comfortable doing, and it was just kind of more opportunities tonight where that was the right move to make.

Q. Riley, you looked more confident this season than any season I've seen you. What goes into that?

RILEY LACHANCE: I think just a lot of preparation. My teammates are also really confident in me. They do a good job of cheering me on and instilling confidence with me and our coaches as well. We have a free-flowing offense. Confidence is instilled in everybody. I think that's what goes into it.

Q. Riley, you talk about the job Willis did tonight and what did that do for you to be off the ball more?

RILEY LACHANCE: Yeah. I mean, Payton came in the first half and gave us outstanding minutes and the second half. He's a heck of a player. And he came in and hit some big 3s, had that big drive in the second half, and he just -- he made some plays for some other guys, too. He's a huge asset to our team.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks. You can excuse yourselves back to the locker room. We'll continue on with questions for Coach Drew.

Q. Coach, I just wanted to talk about being able to battle for it even on the glass, and they're very athletic and your guys were a little undersized. Also the huge play of Jeff Roberson. He was tremendous and made a lot of successful plays.

COACH DREW: We didn't rebound the ball well the first two minutes of the game. That was a big concern coming in. I thought Jeff kind of started with him. He

really picked up his intensity, you know, rebounding the basketball. Also really being physical down on the defensive end. I thought that kind of shifted our aggressiveness as a team.

He's been phenomenal for pretty much the whole year, especially this last stretch. He's been having some really big games and had another one tonight with 16 points, 8 rebounds.

Q. Bryce, the decision to use Payton more tonight, was that defensive foot speed, trying to get Riley more shots? What about late in the game, you had Matt in at the one time and then went back to Nolan after he had sat for a long time. What went into those decisions?

COACH DREW: With Payton there are a few things involved. First, he was playing really well in his minutes out there. Second, we weren't moving the ball as well, so we wanted to try two ball handlers to try to be out there to move it.

Then I thought Riley, you know, he was playing so hard with the pressure, I tried to get him some earlier breaks so Payton got in a little earlier at times. We played tremendous with Payton in the game and had great confidence.

With Matt, I thought Matt gave us some really good minutes in the second half, huge shot for us. Again, I think we wanted to try some fresh bodies to start overtime. Those guys had been out there for a long time. We wanted to try Nolan, who was fresh. And he came in and didn't miss a beat and hit a huge 3 to start that overtime.

Q. Bryce, they got the ball with 10 seconds left, the chance to win. What were you guys trying to accomplish?

COACH DREW: We've been in this position, they've been in this position. It's the third time that we played them, it's been a one-possession game. Our big thing was we just wanted to stick with our defensive principles and try to make them earn a shot, earn something over us and not get to the rim for a layup or a wide open shot.

Q. Luke mentioned that you guys are confident every single moment, he said. How did that develop over the season to get to this point of every single moment?

COACH DREW: You know, I think again, the credit goes to the guys. Anytime you have some change in your life, you can react different ways. And it's kind of been a progression throughout the year. When we practice, we try to practice focused. We try to get them fully engaged. And hopefully there's carryover in the

game and we go through -- like we've had some great practices these last few weeks and been great carryover with that same focus into the games.

THE MODERATOR: Hands up, other questions for Coach Drew?

Q. Bryce, what do you think it is? I mean, I know these games have all come down to one possession, but to win three in a row against that team that otherwise has lost what, five games the whole year?

COACH DREW: You know, we're very thankful they missed some shots. Obviously, our guys, they're excited to play Florida. They're ranked in the Top 25. They finished 2nd in our league, almost 1st. It was a great challenge, an opportunity for a chance to play them for a third time.

THE MODERATOR: Got time for maybe one more. Anyone? Last question. All right. Thank you.