

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Saturday March 11, 2017

Bryce Drew Riley LaChance Joe Toye

Vanderbilt

Arkansas - 76, Vanderbilt - 62

THE MODERATOR: We're ready to continue on with Vanderbilt. We'll ask Coach Drew for some general thoughts on the game, take your questions for the two student-athletes. And then we'll finish up with the Coach. Coach, would you begin.

COACH DREW: Thought Arkansas was outstanding today. The best I've seen them all year. Mike has done a great job. They're on a great streak right now. Playing really, really good basketball.

You know, for us coming into the game we knew a lot of emotion had to be taken out of us from last night. We were kind of tired last night a little bit, but what a great opportunity to be in the semifinals of the SEC Tournament in our home town. I know our guys were excited for that opportunity. I thought the will was there. We were trying to make plays. We were trying to make things happen. Just seemed like Arkansas was a little faster to the ball, little faster to the rim. Shot a little bit better, did everything a little bit better than us night.

I was really proud of the last stretch from ten minutes to three minutes. We could have really been blown out, and the guys, Joe, Riley were two guys on the court, really made a nice run at the end and had a 3 to cut it to 11 at the two-minute mark. Really proud of the effort that they gave those last seven minutes and the effort they've given in the last few weeks.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take your questions for Riley or Joe. Questions for either.

Q. Riley, you played three games in three days. Looks like you guys hit a wall out there fairly early in the first half. Could you feel it in your body?

RILEY LACHANCE: Yeah. I think we're a little run down. You know, like Coach said, we got to give credit



to Arkansas. They played extremely well. When we didn't come out the way we wanted to, our fans kind of picked us up. They're great this whole week, and we were able to make it a game going into the half.

Q. I guess the same thing for you, Joe, how much was fatigue a factor today?

JOE TOYE: Fatigue was a big factor for us like emotionally, and just physically we're kind of tired from the past three days. But I think it was a good way to end the game. We didn't just give up. We kept fighting. I'm proud of the team and hopefully tomorrow we're very happy.

Q. Riley, their guards are really quick. They cross you over. Is it harder to guard a team like that when you're coming off two games including an overtime game last night? That would be one of the worse matchups you could get.

RILEY LACHANCE: Yeah, they're fast all the way down the line. They've got a lot of length. Definitely tough guarding them. Like I said, they're a little bit fresher than us. It's hard to guard them any night, but, you know, definitely a little bit more of a challenge today.

THE MODERATOR: Other questions for either Riley or Joe? Thank you, fellas. You can return to the locker room.

Questions for Coach Drew.

Q. Coach, what will be your plans for tomorrow with the tournament bracket coming out, when they announce the seedings, what will be going on at Vanderbilt?

COACH DREW: We'll get together as a team and watch the brackets. You know, it's been spectacular run by our guys the last couple weeks, been a lot of emotional games all packed into the last few weeks. And, you know, we're going tomorrow to watch the brackets and hopefully have a good celebration after.

Q. Coach, aside from fatigue, what type of role did your team's ability to not make open shots, like Luke missed five open 3s we normally see him make, especially?

COACH DREW: You know basketball, sometimes the ball goes in, sometimes it doesn't. We really liked the looks. Like you said, I thought all Luke's looks were

very clean. We want him to keep shooting those shots. You know, this is very uncharacteristic, 30 percent from the field, 25 from 3. But again, Arkansas really came at us defensively and did a really nice job. For to us win games, we have to shoot the ball much better than that.

Q. Bryce, you were subbing a little bit more in the first half. Was that because you were seeing the fatigue out there or also kind of thinking about the possibility of a fourth and having to spread those minutes out?

COACH DREW: We've approached this whole tournament, you know, it was a one-game season against Texas A&M, it was a one-game season against Florida, and again it was a one-game season tonight against Arkansas. No thought of a fourth day. More trying to get our guys into position that hopefully in the second half we could play guys a lot more minutes and make a great run at it.

So we were really pleased at halftime only being down 4 because we thought we had rested some guys enough on the bench to be able to make a run in the second half.

Q. Coach, how would you describe your first year? There are still games to play. How would you describe your first year?

COACH DREW: The guys in the locker room have been fantastic. Two great seniors that have been outstanding for a first year coach that have really helped a group of guys that have really bought into what we're doing, bought into each other. So those are the guys that have won these games. They've played the part. I owe them a lot of credit for what they've done.

Q. Bryce, the Selection Committee looks at, did you lose players to games, have injuries. You didn't lose any games from guys, but you had three of your rotation guys have injuries early in the season that you didn't talk about a lot. Do you try to get that message to the Committee in some way?

COACH DREW: You know, hopefully the Committee, we've tried to relay some of that information. Hopefully it's gotten there. You know, Luke Kornet was a warrior. He injured his knee, and many people didn't know but his left hand was injured, and so that's why there's about a three-week stretch where he didn't shoot with his left hand around the basket. You can see last night, that's one of the best things he does in the paint.

So we've gone through some things. You know, obviously the Alabama trip we had some backs locking up with Matthew and Nolan. It's a credit to this team.

They've overcome adversity and injuries. The last couple weeks we feel as a team that we've done all that we can to hopefully have the Committee think good of us and put us somewhere good.

Q. Coach, now that you've -- you're near the end of your first year in the SEC, talk about this league as a whole and what your impressions are of it and hopefully looking to get five teams in the NCAA Tournament.

COACH DREW: It's a fantastic league, obviously. There's tremendous coaches all across the board, coaches that have won many games and championships, you know, in their careers. And I think as you look at the players we have in this league, we have some of the best underclassmen in the country and we have many good recruiting classes coming in for a lot of schools.

I'm really privileged to be part of the SEC that we think is a time where basketball is really going to be trending up and hopefully next year -- hopefully get five this year or six and hopefully get even more next year.

THE MODERATOR: Other questions for Coach Drew?

Q. Coach, a lot of your shots came up short, hit in front of the rim, things like that. What was your reaction on the bench watching that?

COACH DREW: We were definitely -- our legs were a little tired. That's a good sign when you're short and doesn't get to the rim. Then we also kept trying to probe, try different things and wanted to get the ball inside, try to get some baskets in the paint and wanted to try to drive the ball a little more, which we did really good in the last ten minutes to try to be able to get some different opportunities than just shooting 3s.

THE MODERATOR: One more question.

Q. Coach, now hopefully you're hoping to get into March Madness. You have all success as a player going to the Sweet 16. How is that going to help you with this team and also playing for your father and the success that he had?

COACH DREW: Well, you know, I don't know if that will relate to this team, but the NCAA Tournament, I think it's the best time of the sports season, obviously, coming up. It's awesome whenever you get to be a part of it. I think our guys have worked really, really hard to put themselves in that position to be part of it. And with the schedule we played this year, with the teams that we have some wins over, we feel like if we go and we play well, you know, hopefully we can stay there for a little while.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

