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An Interview With:

**PROVIDENCE
COACH NATE LEAMAN
ROSS MAUERMANN
JON GILLIES
BRANDON TANEV**

MODERATOR: Let's start with some thoughts from Coach Leaman.

COACH LEAMAN: We beat a terrific opponent tonight. I think that's what makes it a little bit sweeter. That BU team is, they were terrific. They had us on our heels for a lot of that first and second period and we were just kind of hanging in there. Jonny held us in there.

And I thought it's kind of a little bit like our season. We started a little bit slow but we got better and better. And we played -- we played a pretty good third period, and obviously got a big bounce.

And we had a heck of a bounce, and I think that got our bench alive a little bit. And then Coach Miller drew up a heck of a faceoff play coming out of that TV timeout. And guys executed well on it. They were kicking our butts on faceoff a lot throughout the game and probably in the third period we did our best on faceoffs. And we held on. But, again, nothing but a tremendous round of respect for BU.

They have a terrific team. They've won just about everything this year, and it's a great game.

MODERATOR: We'll begin with your questions.

Q. Brandon, can you take us through the goal, the faceoff that was drawn up, the way you executed it?

BRANDON TANEV: Just a heck of a faceoff call by Coach Miller, and Kevin Rooney did a great job winning it back for me. Steven boxed the guys out and I was fortunate enough to get the puck up and get a clean shot off and happened to go over O'Connor's shoulder.

Q. Four weeks ago you were eliminated from the Hockey East quarterfinal, definitely a low point. But did you envision at that point coming back here four weeks later and doing what you did tonight?

ROSS MAUERMANN: It was a tough time for us because we wanted to win so bad, especially at home there. But we knew when we got our second chance we definitely would make the most of it. We fouled some hard teams there in the tournament and got the right bounce at the right time, key goals.

We won tonight with BU, they were all over us for the first period. Speed was a big factor. It's hard to keep up with them in the beginning, and I thought we stayed with our process and found a way to get out a win there.

Just unbelievable feeling and, like I said, that series it felt like when we got the chance we'd make the most of it.

Q. Jon, you saw what happened on the third goal. As a goaltender, can you relate to those fluke things that happened in the game and did it energize you?

JON GILLIES: As a goalie you feel for him. I know him personally. He's a wonderful goalie. He had a great year and he was fantastic throughout the tournament to get here.

And from a goaltending standpoint we've all had one of those, and you feel for him and I think that it energized our bench a lot. Got that belief because we were getting some chances, just weren't able to kind of bear down and put them home. And something like that happens, start to take on faith a little bit and start to believe even more. And then Danny had an unbelievable release on that shot. I don't think any goalie is

stopping on that. That was a good goal as well.

Q. Jon, how did the game evolve in front of you, especially after that first goal that squeaked in, how did you see the pace of the play come to you after that?

JON GILLIES: I mean, obviously that's one in a big game that you'd like to have back, but I think it's a testament to our team where they had my back 100 percent and didn't lose faith in me, thankfully, and I just tried to reset especially after that second goal, kind of a weird bounce, weird bounce that ended up right in front of our net and Danny O'Regan was able to put it home.

After those two things you take a deep breath and refocus and remember it's a long way to the game's end.

And I believe in these guys 100 percent all year that we were going to be able to come back and win that thing, and it's what happened.

Q. Coach, when you look at the way the season has gone with Boston University, they hadn't lost a game that they've been leading after two periods. And statistically it wasn't one of the stronger points for Providence this year, coming back from a two-period deficit. What was the adjustment that really helped you guys here in the third based off your previous experiences to overcome BU and eventually come back in those last ten minutes take the game?

COACH LEAMAN: They were killing us in the neutral zone. They were getting through the neutral zone with so much speed and we were kind of on our heels. We weren't able to hold the blue line real well. And because of that, you know, we felt like we were on our heels a little bit, because they were gaining so much speed through there.

We tried to adjust a little bit in the neutral zone. I don't know if that helped or not. I think really it was just more of the guys just saying, we've got 20 minutes left. We've got to lay it all on the line and get after it.

And I thought they did. I thought they -- I thought they just put it on the line every shift, every man.

Q. Brandon, talk about the atmosphere in the building?

BRANDON TANEV: The building was great. It was an unbelievable atmosphere. Can't say I've played in anything like that, have two teams from the New England area with us and BU,

it's a testament to how much the fans in this area appreciate college hockey and support both of our programs.

Q. Ross, was that fun out there, could you sense it?

ROSS MAUERMANN: Yes, it's hard to take it all in at a moment like that, trying to focus on one shift at a time. But it's a great opportunity for our program to take another step and just unbelievable showing by our fan base and just so happy for them and our goal and everyone involved with our program, everyone that's come before us, put a jersey on, just proud of it.

Q. Jon, last like couple waning minutes of that game, BU was throwing everything they've got at you. Is there anything going through your head at that point? And if there is, what is it?

JON GILLIES: You don't do anything different. You just know at that point in the game, first off, our wingers and our defensemen and everyone just were absolutely eating pucks and doing a phenomenal job of staying in shot lanes, forcing shots wide and forcing the BU guys to make a play that they didn't necessarily want to make. So it starts there.

And if it does get to me, just kind of play big. And there's a six on five, so there's a lot of traffic in front. You let the puck hit you. If it does squirt out or something at that point in game, you just try to get something in front of it and try and battle for the guys that are battling for you in front.

Q. For any of the players, there's so many upperclassmen leaders on this team. I'm wondering about the two freshmen that played big roles throughout this run for you, Walman and Pinho, if you could talk about them?

BRANDON TANEV: They're two fabulous players. We can all see that. They stepped into big roles, as you said, throughout the season. And I can't speak enough about both of them. They work hard on and off the ice. And tonight they both played really well for us. And we're thankful to have them as part of our program.

ROSS MAUERMANN: I think they're great kids off the ice. They're fun to be around. But they really matured as the season went on. They really played their best hockey at the end when we needed them the most, Jake playing big minutes

back there, and Pinho just playing simple, playing gritty, and playing his kind of hockey.

Proud of those guys and everyone on our team for believing in each other.

COACH LEAMAN: It's tough sometimes when that was a small recruiting class and it's been tough because we had such a big class of juniors. So those guys didn't come in and play huge roles. I'm not only talking about those two, I'm talking about some guys that were great teammates for this process like Niko Rufo and Alex Cromwell. We just -- it's tough for those guys and it's tough to explain to them that you're going to -- we know you're good players, we know you're going to be great players, but you've got to come in and play a role for us early.

Because of that, I think those two guys kept getting better and better and they both had great second halves for us.

Q. Across the board, maybe the other end of the question, the last three National Championship teams have been upperclass based. Could you make a comment about it seems to be the good way to go to commit to the program. Comment about commitment from each of you to get to this point?

COACH LEAMAN: I think that game could have gone either way tonight. We both know that. So the story tonight could be if a couple bounces go their way, the story tonight could be you can win with freshmen in the NCAA.

So, yeah, we're not a program that probably win with freshmen, but I mention this junior class, the challenge for them is all along has been to mature, mature because they came in, had such success as freshmen. A lot of times when that happens, you think it's just going to happen sometimes.

And that was one of our big challenges to get these guys mature. I think we had two unbelievable captains this year in Ross Mauermann and Noel Acciari. Not vocal guys but they led by example.

I think that class they did a good job, too, of growing and growing. And without a doubt we're a team that has a different guy every night, kind of seems to be our hero. I thought it was Janko in the semi and then tonight Tany coming up with the big goal, and Jonny.

I think that's just a testament to the type of leadership we have and with our captains.

Q. For any of the players, I know it's only a few minutes after since the game ended, but have you had a chance to speak with any of the '85 team players? And if not, what would you say to them when you do see them now that you have bragging rights?

BRANDON TANEV: We're going to be real careful with that. I can't say I spoke to any of them after the game. But I think we can both call ourselves national champions and share the amazing bond they had in '85 and now we have after today's win.

ROSS MAUERMANN: I haven't spoken with any of the guys from that team. But just -- all right (laughter). Got a tooth missing. No, I think it's just I'm excited for everyone in our program that's put the jersey on in the past. And like the '85 team that got to this point and just came up short, we were fortunate tonight to get the bounces when we needed them and we got it done. But I think it's just a tremendous step for our program and excited to be part of it.

JON GILLIES: I think we have not had a chance to speak with any of them. I'd like to talk to Chris Drury and talk to him how he felt after making 102 saves in a weekend. That's unbelievable. I can't imagine the zone he must have been in. And you walk around our campus and stuff like that and you see his work ethic was evident. And the role model that he was comes to the forefront when you talk about our culture and we talk about the history of this program.

So it's guys like that that make this program special and hopefully get to talk to them soon.

Q. Any texts chiming in on your phone, Nate?

COACH LEAMAN: Yeah.

Q. Feeling it buzzing right and left?

COACH LEAMAN: Yeah.

Q. Nate, this is the third straight year that a first-time champion has won here. Has college hockey changed where the old-time dynasty teams don't come in win year after year?

COACH LEAMAN: No, North Dakota and BU were here. I mean, North Dakota and BU were here. I think the early recruiting has really changed college hockey and the way the league has built

up, those are two things that have changed college hockey. I think with the early recruiting, it allows maybe nontraditional programs to get an advantage at times because it's so tough to recruit early. So tough to recruit freshmen and sophomores and not make mistakes.

So I think that's what's opened the door, but there's parity across college hockey. Remember, we were one hundredth of a point not making this tournament and I thought we had a great regular season. I thought we had a great nonconference record and I thought our league was terrific and we almost didn't make this tournament.

That speaks to the parity of college hockey. I think that's what you see the most with early recruiting it's really opened up the parity in college hockey and it's a special sport, too, because when you see it in the Stanley Cup Playoffs every year, too, it's how the teams come together and doing a lot of little things and being gritty, that can win in our sport along with great goaltending.

Q. Ross, can you imagine just sort of going back in history to being a walk-on the program for the first year to sitting as a national champion now?

ROSS MAUERMANN: I mean, everyone puts a big emphasis on that. But Coach, walked into a pretty good situation with Coach and just believing in me for the first day and it's amazing to see how far we've come just with support from our fans and the fan base and a rink that's got redone and now to finish off with the National Championship. It's pretty bittersweet for sure. It's a great feeling to go out this way. It's also hard because it's over.

But it's an unbelievable experience to come to Providence College and I'm just happy to be part of that.

Q. Do you remember what you told -- what you said to Matt O'Connor as you went through the line, looked like everybody was taking some time with him?

JON GILLIES: Like I said, I've played against Matt for the two years before I came here in the USHO, and I got to know him personally. And like I said before, as a goalie you feel for a bounce like that.

And you've been there, so you know the bottomless feeling that it presents and just told him how great of a season he had, how great of a

tournament he had, how great of a game he had. He made huge stops throughout the entire game.

You know that nothing you say right there can help, but just trying to get him lift his head up and realize he played an unbelievable year as a whole.

ROSS MAUERMANN: I don't have much. You know he'd like to have that one back but he had a great game, had a great season. And we're just fortunate to get her done tonight.

MODERATOR: Congratulations.
Questions for Coach.

Q. I thought Kevin Rooney and Brandon Tanev were really on the P.K., did a lot of the little things throughout the tournament. How fitting is it that they came up with the game-winning goal and what can you say about their work on the forecheck and on the P.K. besides just that goal?

COACH LEAMAN: I think they're two guys that skate very well and I think they're two guys again in that junior class that played nearly every game of their career and you win with guys that are gritty at this time of the year. And I just think they're two winners.

I think they're two guys that rise to the occasion. And I would agree with you, it's very fitting that they got the game winner because they've been great in these four games, good observation.

Q. Obviously this is kind of a legacy win, not only for the school but for the city of Providence. Do you think in the next couple of days you'll think about where this win ranks in terms of winning a championship for Providence, the first in the hockey program's history?

COACH LEAMAN: I don't know. I was thinking about it. I was getting some questions like that yesterday. And I just want it for the kids. They poured their hearts and souls out. There were a lot of times we could have gotten frustrated this year. I just wanted it for them.

I think it's a good representation of when you have your alumni, your administration, your school, everyone behind you, and that great things can happen.

And this is about a school coming together and winning a championship, because our president and our athletic director, you gotta have

support by these people if you're going to be successful. And we're fortunate enough to have support like that and we're fortunate enough to be a Catholic school where they say a lot of prayers.

Q. With locality being a big theme this weekend with the NCAA Tournament, you guys have eight New England natives on your team, BU has 14. Could you talk about the resurgence of local youth hockey in this area how that's affected the area so far?

COACH LEAMAN: I can tell you in Rhode Island, I have a five-year-old and a two-and-a-half-year-old and a one-year-old and we play knee hockey just about every night and the frustrating thing with me is they all want to be Jon Gillies. I don't want a goalie.

And you see that -- you see that around the rinks. You see so many kids I want to be Jon Gillies, I want to be Jon Gillies. It's the name you hear around a lot. What about Mauermann, you know what I mean? I think with Jack Eichel, he's a special player and Evan Rodrigues is a special player. And I'm sure the Boston area and Massachusetts there's a lot of kids running around saying they want to be Jack Eichel.

So I think that's what changes it and how those guys represent themselves. Jack Eichel, can you get a classier kid to have that much talent and that much ability. He represents our league and our sport so well that those are the people like him, and Jonny, those are the people that change it, get youth hockey involved.

And obviously having the championship here and a lot of people being able to watch it on TV, I think it will change it a lot also.

Q. Can you speak to Jon's resilience especially after that first and second goal and he ended up making a catch?

COACH LEAMAN: They were throwing everything at the net. Obviously Jonny, what did he have, 49 saves. They were throwing everything at the net. He had to make a lot of saves. Yeah, they squeaked one in but when they're throwing everything at the net, that's what they're trying to do.

And he was big time for us. He held the ship. I think it's very much like our season. He held us in there. He held us in there. And then we were able to kind of respond in the third period there. But he was our best player tonight.

MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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