

NCAA Men's 1st and 2nd

Rounds: Milwaukee

Saturday, March 18, 2017

Milwaukee, Wisconsin



Matt Painter

Caleb Swanigan

Vincent Edwards

Issac Haas

Purdue Boilermakers

Purdue - 80, Iowa State -76

THE MODERATOR: Joined by Purdue Head Coach, Matt Painter, and Purdue student-athletes, Vincent Edwards, who had 21 points, 10 rebounds, Issac Haas, who had 14 points, and Caleb Swanigan, who had 20 points, 12 rebounds and 7 assists. An opening statement from Coach, and then questions for the student-athletes.

Coach, please.

COACH PAINTER: Well, unbelievable game. Iowa State is a great basketball team. I think they showed that in the second half. I thought, you know, at times when Burton was putting the ball on the floor, it was so hard because they have so many shooters that are out there to try to give some help on his drives. They made some 3s and some -- just some tough shots that you don't know what to say to your guys in the huddle. I think they showed why they're an exceptional basketball team.

Our guys played a really good first half. I thought in the second half we had some good looks that didn't go down. We had some balls at the basket. We had some 3s that were good shots. They just didn't go down. But we hung in there. To be able to withstand things after they take the lead, lot of times when you get up 16, 17 points, someone takes the lead, it's hard to recover. I thought our guys kept their poise. Got in key offensive rebounds on the last three, four minutes and made some obviously some key plays. And it was great to see P.J. Thompson there at the end knock down those two free throws to seal it after Biggie got that rebound. That was a huge rebound, to be able to make that play at that time to give us a chance to make the next two free throws and seal the deal. Just proud of our guys the way they play, these three guys were obviously exceptional.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach. Questions for the student-athletes, please.

Q. Caleb, just generally what does it mean to you to be moving on to the Sweet 16 now?

CALEB SWANIGAN: I'm excited. I'm ready to get back to campus and get to work and watch the game tomorrow, Kansas-Michigan State, and see who is left.

COACH PAINTER: That's great. That's all we get? That's beautiful.

Q. This is for any of you guys. What was the message at halftime? Obviously you knew that they weren't going to roll over and lay down and walk away. And sure enough, you get the big lead but they make the big run. Were you probably ready for that? What was the tone, what was the message?

VINCE EDWARDS: We tried to talk out all our mistakes in the first half. 0-0, our coach said, try to tell us what they saw. I just kept trying to tell the guys, you know, everybody makes a run. It's March, it's Madness. It happens. We got to be able to withstand it. I'm proud of this whole team and the coaching staff to be able to withstand that run and be able to hold on to it is unbelievable.

Q. Vince, you're a veteran. You've been around. How would you put this one emotionally to some of the others games in your career?

VINCE EDWARDS: You make me so old. It's just huge. I've never been past the First Round. To be here and to be going into a Sweet 16, I can't even describe the words that I'm feeling right now. It's crazy.

Q. Issac, for you as well, what does it mean to you to be going to the Sweet 16, and what did you learn about yourself and your teammates that you gave up the big lead but then sustained or were able to overcome?

ISSAC HAAS: It shows maturity. And like Vince said, we maintain our poise when they took that lead and we knew that they had a run in them. That was it. We managed to overcome that. And I'm just really excited to be here, and then now it's on to the next one.

THE MODERATOR: Anything else for the student-athletes?

good shooters. I don't mind that.

Q. Matt, on the TV broadcast they were showing the post-game locker room and everybody is going nuts. You walked in and talked with them briefly and said something about "for future reference."

Can you give us an idea what you said?

COACH PAINTER: I was talking about fouling. It's a hard thing to do when you don't want to burn your timeout and you're up 2 and your free throw shooter makes 1 to go up 3, but if he misses the next one with seven seconds to go, it's a hard thing to be able to say if you miss this one, you know, we're going to foul because that's what we normally do. We do it on a time basis.

But I was trying to talk to the other two guards that were there. And so that's all I was talking about, just because if we would have missed that free throw, we were going to foul once he crossed half court.

Q. Coach, in the past -- last two years close losses coming down at the end. Do you think your core group now that they're mostly, other than Swanigan, juniors, do you think they built off those past -- the last two years and kind of just handled it much better because they went through that?

COACH PAINTER: I think we've learned a lot. Those games that we've won in the past, they were close games also. And the games you lose, they're normally close games in the tournament, too. You just try to learn from your experiences. I think it sits with them when it's always -- you know, lot of times you don't really sit on things too much with the things that are remind -- people remind you of.

When you lose at the end of the year, you always remember that. You always remember that last loss and how that felt. And so when you lose back-to-back years in overtime, it sits with you, whether you miss a free throw or miss an assignment or turn the basketball over. As a player you want that next chance to get yourself in that position again so you can do it and not go home with that overtime loss.

Q. Matt, personally what is the significance for you to be going back to the Sweet 16, I think since the first time since 2010?

COACH PAINTER: I think that's right. I think that's right. It's huge. You know, you win first round games and lose first round games. You try to put yourself in position in the matchups. And we were in this position last year to play Iowa State to hopefully go to the Sweet 16 and we lost. You just feel for your players. I'm happy for our players, happy for our fans. We've hung in there. We have a good group of guys and they're fun to be around. So I'm just happy for those

Q. Vince, what's going through your mind when they're making that run and you're down to the last couple of minutes and you got the make some plays?

VINCE EDWARDS: I was praying, you know. They got going, and those guys, hats off to Iowa State. They're a really good team. They were making individual plays at the end. Some guys got hot. You know, we were just -- I kept trying to tell myself stay poised, stay calm. And we were all just talking out and kept telling each other we got this, we got this. We were able to stick it out and win.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions for the student-athletes? Thanks, guys. Congratulations on advancing to the Sweet 16.

Questions for Coach Painter, please.

Q. Matt, is this game pretty much the definition of survive and advance for you guys?

COACH PAINTER: No question about it. When we went to the Sweet 16 with Robbie Hummel, JaJuan Johnson, E'Twaun Moore, we played Washington. They had Isaiah Thomas and they had three guys score 20 or more against us. Same thing. We're up 13 at the half, and you knew they were going to make the run but did it in the same fashion that Washington did. They weren't running offense. They cleared us out. They were making plays.

Sometimes that's the hardest thing to do as a coach because you feel helpless. You don't feel like you can help them in that regard, because if you come in and help and stop the basketball, their shooters are so good they're going to expose you. And if you don't, then they are going to take you off the dribble with Burton. We hung in there, and we had to make offensive plays. You know they were going to score the basketball. We had to make offensive plays, and obviously we made just enough.

Q. Coach, how do you rank this team with how well they execute?

COACH PAINTER: I thought we executed and did a good job. I thought we got the ball where we wanted to. In the second half we had some things not go our way. We had some open looks, especially that one at the very end. But I thought our guys did a really good job of executing and running our stuff and kind of picking their spots.

In the first half they did a really good job of picking their spots, when to push, when to shoot quick. We were a little trigger-happy to start the game in how many 3s we were taking. If you look at our percentages, we have

guys.

Q. On the inbound play that went to Dakota Mathias, was he the one you wanted to put the ball in his hands? He's like 85 or whatever?

COACH PAINTER: Yes, sir. He's around 83, I think.

Q. It didn't work out though.

COACH PAINTER: No, it didn't. He's not a hundred (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: Anything else for Coach?

Q. Haas had about 14 points in nine minutes. How hard was it to not play him late and what are the thought processes?

COACH PAINTER: 14 points in 15 minutes.

Q. Was it?

COACH PAINTER: Yeah. It's still pretty good, huh, a point a minute? It drives you nuts because you want him in the game and you want him to be on the offensive end. And it's so hard sometimes to do it, we're so big. What everybody thinks about that, they always think that's your advantage, and it is your advantage. He proved it tonight when he was in there. But when they go super small -- see, they didn't put Burton -- a lot of our talk at halftime was Burton playing the 5. Those guys said, "Coach, he hasn't played the 5." It's coming. They're going to flip it on us because they can't guard us down there and they're going to make sure their offensive end is working.

No matter who they put down there that they're not going to be able to stop our big guys. They're -- now they want to expose us on the other end. It's really hard for us because you want him in the game. He's -- he really played well here and did some good things here today and -- but he keeps a positive attitude and keeps playing, and we'll looking forward to playing next weekend with him.

Q. Matt, what does it mean to you that Biggie is now getting a chance to show the entire country what he's about and how he's a Player of the Year candidate?

COACH PAINTER: I think today you saw it. He got the huge rebound there at the end, and then P.J. gets the -- gets the ball to P.J. and makes the 2 free throws, getting the 7 assists. His decision-making and his passing today were big.

Obviously he's put up points and rebounds all year, but I thought he did a really good job of making decisions. It's great for everybody to see -- he would be one of those guys that would be a good player if he was 5-11. Just a very small player, got good instincts, and one of

the best players in the country, if not the best.

Q. Do you feel this team has maybe resolve other teams hasn't had, a poise?

COACH PAINTER: We're a skilled team. At the end of games this year, even though we missed one at the end there, we've been able to make some key perimeter shots and been able to make some key free throws. I think that kind of resolve and just little bit of experience of going through it and having some struggles in the past. This year we've actually done pretty well in close games. I think the more you can win close games, the more confidence you build.

We felt terrible about our loss in the Big Ten Tournament. We miss a layup and free throw in the last minute, minute and ten of that game, and those are plays that we've made all year. And so I know that's set with a couple of our guys, and both those guys may plays for us today.

Q. Matt, the Big Ten has taken some criticism, not being as good as years past. With what Wisconsin did today, Michigan State winning last night, what you guys did night, what message does it send about the league?

COACH PAINTER: Our league is very good. Obviously, we have very good coaches. Lot of times people compare it. For us as coaches and players, it's hard to talk about it. You guys seem to get a theme, whether it's good or bad. Tell them to go play Michigan. People that don't think our league is any good, tell them to go play Wisconsin. They're not an 8th seed. I don't understand that. You don't understand basketball if you put Wisconsin as the 8th seed. Wisconsin is one of the toughest teams in the country, period. And sure they struggled a little bit at the end. Everybody has something outside of four, five teams where you struggle.

We got a good league. You play Michigan State, you better bring your lunch. I can talk about the teams that didn't make it that are tough. Iowa this year was an unbelievable out. They beat us. Nebraska beat us. We have a tough league across the board.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach.

COACH PAINTER: All right.