Denver Head Coach Jamie Franks

*Opening remarks*

“This is a tough time for my program. In a game like this, I thought we came out and we gave them too much. Fighting futbol has been our mentality from day one and that’s what makes us special. We wasted about 15 to 20 minutes of the game. At the end of the day, on this stage, you can’t really gift them two goals. Their first goal came off a turnover and their second came off a corner from us. That should have been an attacking moment for us and it wasn’t. At the end of the day, I know that my program, it’s my job to make sure that my program learns from these lessons. Just like we did last year against SMU and get better from it. At the end of the day, I’m extremely proud of these kids. You know when we took over we were ranked 88th in the country. Nobody believed in these kids. We did it through recruiting high character kids and pushing them outside their comfort zone. That’s why I’m in college soccer and this is not the last you’ll hear about Denver we’ll be back.”

*On the first time making the College Cup*

“Course there were nerves. The kids are 18 to 22 years old. How could there not be nerves? This was Wake Forest’s first time too. It’s just the game of soccer. At the end of the game, no I don’t think that there were any nerves. For us, we have been in those big moments, more times than not this year. We’ve risen to that moment.”

*On how the game was played*

“For us, we knew they would do a great job reacted after turnovers. Because they are so great in procession they put tons of numbers on the ball. Then when they lose the procession they are quick to react to it. That’s how they scored their first goal. Then, their second goal was a counter. The game itself looked pretty close to what we thought it would. At the end of the day Andre said it best we just didn’t execute.”

*On coaching against Wake Forest head coach Bobby Muuss on the other end*

“We had a moment before the game, underneath the tunnel, which was special for me. He’s my mentor. The reason I went to Wake forest was because of him. I came out to Denver about five years ago to help him build a program that was character driven. For the past five years that’s exactly what we focused on. Course its bitter sweet. I love wake forest. I got my undergrad degree there. It challenged me
socially, academically, and athletically. At the time I went to wake forest, they never made it past the sweet 16. Four final fours later it’s a brand name and that’s what I’m trying to do at Denver. That’s why I got back into college coaching because me and all my friends, which are here tonight that I played with we coached each other. We held each other accountable. For me, that’s what college sports are about. The student athlete experience was something so special to me at Wake forest. To be able to try and recreate something that a little more of my own. Being out there with bobby, like I said he is one of my best friends in the game. I’ll be rooting for wake forest on Sunday.

(About the Wake Forest goalkeeper’s injury)

“Alec Farrel is the best goal keeper in the country hands down and he’s been out three weeks since the coastal Carolina game with a meniscus and he didn’t have enough practice time. That was something that we wanted to test early. We definitely wanted to make him playout. I think we did that, but at the end of the day he is a prenominal keeper.

(About his post-game speech to players)

“For a second, I think my guys and it’s natural like I said their 18 to 23 year old kids, for them to kind of drop on the field and hold their head that’s natural. I told them there was nothing to hang your hat on. They have accomplished something that hasn’t happened in 38 years. Back to back undefeated regular seasons. Made it to their first college cup. When you put as much sacrifice and commitment into something. Our tagline to our programs is your actions must meet your ambition. They said they wanted to get to a final four and we’ve challenged them since. The reason why it hurt so badly is because it was genuine and honest. I love those guys. This year there is absolutely nothing to hang your head on. I also reminded the returners that I lost my fist one in the semifinal. The next year I came back and we won the National Championship.

Senior midfielder Sam Hamilton

(On the last play)

“It was a mis-hit corner. They broke on the counter had a good finish. It’s as simple as that."

(On the mixed emotions he’s feeling)

“Really proud of my group. We took the program to a place it has never been. Which is not an easy thing to do. We built a belief for the program to feed off of for the next couple of years. We laid a road map for what it looks like to get here. I’m really appreciative of my experience and just to be able to walk away leaving a history like that at such an awesome university.”

Sophomore forward Andre Shinyashiki

(On his goal)

“I think that when they scored the goal, it was a fluke. I don’t think that we were giving them anything. I think they got a little lucky. We knew that we were going to score at all times. I don’t think that we never doubted ourselves. Definitely, after the goal, we kept going. We had a few more chances. We could have finished, but we didn’t. That’s how it goes. We have to learn from it. At this stage, you can’t miss opportunities because the other team is probably have to make theirs.”
(Did the early goals change the game plan)

For me, it didn’t change at all. Our plan was to put balls in behind them keep pressing them high. I just think that after both goals got scored, because both teams have the best defense in college soccer both teams were like ok the other team is going to exploit us if we make mistakes. So I think both teams improved on the defending. I don’t think we put as many balls in behind them as we should have and that is our fault. We didn’t make enough runs from behind, as we’ve done before, which is my job. However I think the game plan stayed the same the whole time.”