

Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday March 9, 2017

Patrick Chambers

Tony Carr

Penn State Nittany Lions

Michigan State - 78, Penn State - 51

THE MODERATOR: We'll ask Coach Chambers to make an opening statement, then questions for Tony.

Coach.

COACH CHAMBERS: I thought Michigan State played with great energy. We had opportunities early. I knew those first eight to 12 minutes were going to be critical for us, our energy. To see the ball go in the basket, we didn't see the ball go in the basket the first half. I think we shot 24%, 18 from three.

Give them credit. They played hard, great defense. I still thought we had some good looks. Just didn't go down for us.

This is a process, an absolute process, for this team. You can't speed up the process. We had a great day yesterday, celebratory day. This is the mental toughness part of it, the inexperience part of it, that we have to go through.

But we're going to learn from all these experiences. We're going to have great leadership, and we're going to be able to fight through days like today and understand that we got to get stops and rebounds.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Tony.

Q. What was the game plan going up against Nick Ward, some of the big guys up in the post?

TONY CARR: We just wanted to make it difficult for him, try to front him as much as we could. Just kind of pressure the ball so the post entries would be tough. We just wanted to make everything difficult for him. At the end of the day, we had uncontested shots.

Q. Tony, what's the fatigue like after an overtime game?

TONY CARR: I don't want to say fatigue played a major part in the game. We just kind of got out-worked. They played harder than us. They sprinted the floor both ends extremely hard. They just out-played us at the end of the day.



Q. What was the frustration like? Whenever you would get some offense going, they would get a three-pointer?

TONY CARR: You always want to end a game with a W. We was fighting back, fighting back. They were going on a 10-0 run. We would fight back. They would go on a run.

Our frustration definitely built up towards the end of the game. I would say I'm proud of my guys for keep fighting till the end. We're going to come back stronger next season.

Q. What do you take away from this season and experience being in the Big Ten?

TONY CARR: I just take away great memories, great experiences, playing on the road in some hostile environments. Learning so much from coach. I'm just an upperclassman on my team. I'm looking forward to working hard this off-season and getting better and coming back even stronger next season for my team.

Q. How was this Michigan State team different from when you played them back in January?

TONY CARR: I didn't see much change. They kind of played the same style, push it up the court fast, load up on defense, make things tough for you.

I wouldn't say I saw much change in them. The outcome of the game just changed.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Tony.

We'll take questions for coach.

Q. What do you take away from this week for next year? Big win yesterday, now a deflating defeat.

COACH CHAMBERS: We got a good group, good group of guys, that are very talented. We're going to work extremely hard. Again, it's a process. We got to learn how to compete consistently, I think.

I think we're going to do that. I think we're going to learn from all these experiences, these close losses, throughout the Big Ten season, the non-conference, how difficult it was. To be able to come here and get one. We played at Madison Square Garden a few times, this group has. I think that's going to bode well

next year headed into the Big Ten tournament. I firmly believe we're going to be in a better situation.

I think these guys know it takes 40 minutes every time you step on the floor.

Q. Ward and Bridges seemed like they owned the paint. What difficulties do those guys present?

COACH CHAMBERS: What I would say is they played much harder than the first time around. They've grown up a lot. Coach Izzo definitely has his mark on those two, for sure. They're competitive. They were talking way more than they did the first time. Give them credit. They have really good leaders in Tum Tum and Ellis. You can hear those guys talking out there, motivating the freshmen to keep competing.

That was the big difference, I felt like.

Q. It seemed like Carr and Stevens didn't let off at all throughout the entire game. Taking control of the offense, what does that mean for next season?

COACH CHAMBERS: I think Penn State fans should be really excited that those two kids wanted to stay in the game, wanted to compete. They kept pushing our team. We got a lot of options. Yesterday we had great balance. Today we didn't have a great balance. A team like Michigan State, you need balance. The first time we had balance. That's why we came out on top.

Today we didn't. The fact that they want to stay in the game, compete, not be subbed out, says a lot about their character.

Q. With those two Ts at the end of the game on Carr and Stevens, how similar was the frustration, especially going back on Sunday when Carr got it then?

COACH CHAMBERS: Yeah, I'm not happy about them getting a T. I discussed it with them. However, I always see a silver lining, that they want to compete, they want to continue to fight. They're winners. They're competitors.

I mean, I don't want them getting Ts. They got to control their emotions. We got to get stops, rebounds, all that good stuff. But the fact that they want to keep competing, show some fight... We'll just learn from these experiences.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, coach.

COACH CHAMBERS: Thanks.