

Atlantic Coast Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 10, 2022

Boston College Eagles

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Barclays Center

Earl Grant

James Karnik

Postgame Press Conference



Miami - 61, Boston College - 59

THE MODERATOR: Coach Earl Grant and student-athlete James Karnik.

EARL GRANT: Yeah, guys played really hard with a lot of energy and effort, followed the game plan, and just game up a little bit short. Miami did what they needed to do to keep the game one possession all throughout the night, and then at the end, they found a way to get a lay-up on us at the buzzer.

Q. You mentioned the game plan. When you talk about a team like BC, you guys play a ton of man-to-man. You switched from man-to-man to zone at points throughout the game. Is that part of the game plan or just a mid-game adjustment when Miami was getting going?

EARL GRANT: No, man, it's part of the plan, something we worked on all year. Didn't use it as much. We were a pretty good man-to-man team, but we worked on it all year. We thought it would be important to try to disrupt their rhythm. They're a very rhythmic team, they can score the ball. We were going in and out, man, zone, a whole bunch of things. Guys did a great job of communicating and being able to make the changes.

Q. Question both for Coach and for James. Miami obviously plays very unique offense, that five-out offense, and playing with the one big man being able to get some penetration in there underneath. How did that kind of factor in from the game that you saw eight days ago -- or I think it was eight days ago -- to being able to see Miami again today?

JAMES KARNIK: From first playing them, we obviously did our film and we did our scout, but it's different when you're playing them for the first time. So I think we all knew collectively what to expect the second game. I feel like we did a tremendous job playing in our gaps and making sure the ball doesn't get downhill and stopping them in transition and limiting our turnovers. Those were like big keys for us.

Regarding the big man, he got a little bit cooking on the first one with us with the three. So it was a big emphasis on staying down, making sure he doesn't rip drive us, and make him shoot over us was a big emphasis for this game.

EARL GRANT: Guys did a great job. We had them in the 60s in regulation. We typically win when we hold somebody in the 60s. So somehow they got it to overtime, but we had it where we wanted it in terms of our tempo, our plan. I thought we did a good job of making them play our game.

Q. Can you describe the feeling when you saw that last basket go in at the buzzer?

JAMES KARNIK: I mean, surreal. I just couldn't believe it honestly. I saw him leaking out, and I saw him opening, but just in my mind, I was like, no, there's definitely not enough time. Something's going to give or he's going to miss it or something's going to go away because we fought so hard.

I've been saying it -- and I'm not trying to say I'm a fairy tale believer -- I believed we were going to win this championship. I believed we were talented enough and we had the guys to do it. After working so hard and just seeing that, they kind of forced us into overtime. I just thought I couldn't believe it. I thought no way. This is our season. That pretty much was mine.

EARL GRANT: It was tough. A big key was keeping them out of transition, and we did. Then he got one at the end, a transition basket.

I got to go watch the film. I don't really know what happened. There was a lot going on that last two minutes. So a lot of plays, a lot of things transpired. I don't know



exactly what happened, but I really didn't think he had enough time to go lay it in.

Q. Just how difficult is it playing in back-to-back overtime games?

EARL GRANT: I don't play in terms of -- it's probably a better question for the player, but in terms of the preparation, it's hard because you do have to prepare. So you do have to watch a lot of film. You've got to game plan. You've got to stay up late and get up early. But that's the mental side of it and a little bit physical because not a lot of sleep. You really don't get a lot of sleep.

For the player, that's a different question because they're actually playing 30 minutes and 35 minutes. So I think that's a better question for James.

JAMES KARNIK: Yeah, Coach touched on the preparation side. That plays a big factor. Getting on to the next one because you can't get stuck in your last win. Physically, we have a great staff, and Coach put an emphasis on taking care of our bodies, making sure we're hydrated, just the little stuff that you can do.

For us, I got lucky. I got QP, and we were able to split the minutes. That's probably a better question for JZ or Makai. They're warriors. You can make them play 70 minutes, and they're still up the next day. That's something about our team. We're gritty, not pretty. We're going to be able to fight through things. We can play three games in a row, four games in a row, five games in a row. We're capable of it.

Q. Coach and James, I keep watching that last play over and over again. It was such a heady basketball IQ play, the way they got the rebound, got the pass out so fast. Post ran as hard as he possibly could to get back. It's almost impossible to defend that last shot. I just wanted to know -- I know you have to look at the film, but it was pretty much unstoppable, that shot.

EARL GRANT: They got seven seniors, and to be honest with you, it probably wasn't God's will. It's time for them to advance. I hate it for us, but seven seniors, legendary coach, been doing it for a long time, having a great year. We did what we had to do to move our program forward. Probably was part of God's plan, man.

I don't know what else to tell you. A lot of people probably didn't expect us to be sitting here today, but that was part of his plan too when we got here. We just didn't advance.

Really proud of the guys. Happy for Miami. They did what they needed to do.

Q. Coach, I was just wondering how the strong finish to the season in this tournament, how do you think overall what that says about the foundation that you're trying to build or that you have built in year 1 at BC?

EARL GRANT: We knew we had a hill to climb, and we know we've still got to climb. But the three seniors who played this year, they actually helped us get from one place to another. We're not at the top, but we're not flat at the bottom neither.

We talked about it all year. A certain effort you've got to put in, certain toughness you've got to have, a certain togetherness you've got to have, a certain humility. You've got to kind of be a guy that can wake up every day and roll your sleeves up and go to work, like some of these men in the world who work graveyard shift every night from 7:00 to 7:00. 7:00 p.m., get off at 7:00 a.m. They've got a family to feed, so somebody depending on them.

So we ask our guys, get up, go to class, get up, come to practice, take care of your bodies. That's really what we've been doing is trying to get them to be a dependable man. I think winning finds you when you start becoming a dependable everyday man. I think that's what happened to us. We've been fighting for it all year, and here the last couple days, it just was a group of guys that people can depend on.

JAMES KARNIK: I just want to say one thing too. As a player that transferred in like two years ago and then having Coach Grant here, the type of culture Coach Grant set day one is just I have to commend him. It's a completely different. He made coming to practice enjoyable. Just the whole culture, the environment is so great from staff to managers to players. He did an amazing job from coming in from first year.

Like there was days where I just didn't want to come to practice just because of the culture that was set, but that was unacceptable with Coach Grant. So I just really have to commend him. He did an amazing job, and I loved playing for him.

THE MODERATOR: Perfect. Thanks so much, guys. Congrats on a great run here.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports