

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - Miami (FL) vs USC

Friday, March 18, 2022

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

USC Trojans

Chevez Goodwin

Drew Peterson

Reese Dixon-Waters

Andy Enfield

Media Conference

Miami - 68, USC - 66

THE MODERATOR: We're now ready for our press conference for the University of Southern California. Our players are Chevez Goodwin, Drew Peterson and Reese Dixon-Waters. We'll start off with a comment from Coach Enfield.

ANDY ENFIELD: Very proud of our team. Outstanding season. Unfortunately, we were a possession short tonight.

Q. Drew, can you walk us through that final minute and how you felt the ball come out on that last shot?

DREW PETERSON: Thankfully, my teammates found me in great spots. I hit a few shots, but, obviously, too little too late, and they hit some free throws in the end to win the game.

Q. For all three of the players, what was the difference for you guys in the second half, especially compared to the first? It seemed like you guys came out a completely different team, it seemed like, in the second.

DREW PETERSON: Yeah, that's on me as a leader of the team, that first half. We came out -- I came out slow. I didn't do enough to help get the guys in good positions, give them the ball.

We came out and really talked at halftime, the guys were



ready to go, we know what time it is. We had a good run to start it. It was a lot of energy, but that's on me as one of the leaders of the team for not having enough energy there.

CHEVEZ GOODWIN: That's on me too. Being a captain of this team, we just came out slow, a little timid at first. I guess it's nerves and jitters, but you can't have that in March Madness. Second half, we just knew that it's either we do it now or we just go out and get embarrassed. We didn't want to go out that way, and we just came out there from the jump and had a whole different type of mentality and energy.

People like Reese Dixon-Waters and Ethan Anderson came in and gave us minutes. So can't be prouder of that.

REESE DIXON-WATERS: I'm young, so this game was fun for me. Of course I want to come out with a W, but there's a lot of learning experiences like my two turnovers I could have prevented, my free throws late in the game. It was fun for me. Just wish we came out with the W.

Q. Drew, and really if all three could answer, what is it that Miami does defensively to force so many turnovers? What do they do? Is it different from what you've seen before? Is it more intense than what you saw on film? Just kind of what do they do that makes it so difficult?

DREW PETERSON: We knew they were going to pressure off. Our staff did a good job. Against Washington, same thing. We knew what we had to do. We knew they were aggressive on defense. They had us ready and that's on me for not helping stabilize that. We kind of just let it get out of control.

As lead guards, me and Boogie didn't do well enough with handling pressure. We knew what they were going to do. We knew the scout. We knew they were going to be aggressive, and we didn't do a good job with that.

Have to give them credit in the first half. They got out to a nice lead because of that. We tried to stabilize that in the second half and clawed our way back.



CHEVEZ GOODWIN: Yeah, I feel like it was just on us. I don't think anything they did was anything crazy that we didn't know or expect. It just was on turnovers. We turned it over the last couple of games before this. It was something we had to fix as a team, and we just didn't fix it when we needed to. It was really just on us. I don't think it was anything special they did. Turnovers are on us, really.

THE MODERATOR: Reese?

REESE DIXON-WATERS: The same as what they said.

Q. Chevez, what does it mean to you to have your career come full circle and end close to home?

CHEVEZ GOODWIN: First, I'd like to thank everybody that came and supported me and just I'm really thankful for my state showing my team a lot of hospitality and a lot of love just having us back here. It means a lot to me. It means the world to me to be able to go out here and play this game. To say I was one of the few players to play in the NCAA Tournament three times is honestly a blessing. I know guys who never played in the tournament. I know guys that played once and never came back. To say I played in three NCAA Tournaments is crazy, and it's truly a blessing.

I'm super happy I got to play in my home state as my last go around. I'm kind of upset it had to go out like this. I'd rather it just go out a different way. I can't be more happy. This is a blessing honestly. I know guys wish to be in my shoes in general, so I can't be that mad. It's just a super blessing to be where I am.

Q. Drew, what was kind of the thoughts going through your head as you're watching that final shot? And then you shared a moment with Isaiah Mobley kind of near half-court. What was going on in that moment?

DREW PETERSON: Yeah, obviously, I thought we could have made that comeback. I thought that shot had a chance. It was close. But it's unfortunate. Sometimes games end up like that, late foul, and we had to kind of chuck up a prayer there at the end.

Playing with guys like Isaiah and Chevez, I've never played with a better group of guys. They care so much about the game. Obviously, they can get emotional at times, but they're two of the most passionate players I've played with. So it sucks to end early like this.

Just all credit to them. They really battled their butt off there at the end. We all really thought we could make that second half comeback.

Q. Reese, we know you've been injured this last week. It seemed like you were really fighting through it tonight. How do you feel -- or how did you feel throughout this game? And for the other two players, what did Reese kind of prove to you kind of fighting through it in that second half?

REESE DIXON-WATERS: The pain was definitely there, especially after my fall. But I feel like I needed to be there for the team and just get through it and play as best I can, as hard as I can. I'll push through it for any team, especially this one.

CHEVEZ GOODWIN: He didn't prove anything to me tonight. Honestly, I knew he was like this from the get-go. I've known Reese for almost a whole year now. One of the first time I met in L.A., honestly. I knew what to expect from Reese every single night. It was no surprise or wow, he's fighting through this. No, it's just Reese being Reese.

I'm super proud of him. He has a bright future ahead of him for USC. I think he holds the future for this program and I think he's in good hands, honestly. He's a tough kid. He plays well. He can play multiple positions. Honestly, I don't have any ill will at all. I feel like he's going to be a great player coming down the stretch.

DREW PETERSON: Yeah, Reese, I couldn't speak more highly about Reese. He's one of the hardest workers I know. It's good for him to step up in such a huge game. There's nothing but good things I could say about Reese. He's a heck of a player.

Q. For Reese and Chevez, my question is watching Drew in that last minute, what was kind of going through your head when you know, like he said, you guys put him in a lot of good positions and he was just firing and he seemed to hit on almost everything. What did you kind of feel for your teammate? What was it like watching him?

REESE DIXON-WATERS: I knew Drew could make shots. So I wasn't -- for me, it wasn't a shocker. I just wish the last one went in, but I'm happy for him. Just wish we got the W.

CHEVEZ GOODWIN: Yeah, I was confident in every shot he made or every shot he took, honestly. He makes a lot of tough shots, as you can clearly see. The last two threes he hit, I was like, well, that's good. I'm glad he made that. Let's get another stop.

The only thing that made me upset those last couple seconds was just that foul they called down the stretch on

Ethan. That was a tough one. That was the only play that I was like why did they make that call? Other than that, every shot Drew took, I was confident he was going to make it. I wasn't like, oh, wow, you made that? I was like, okay good, he made that. Next play, next play, next play.

Q. Andy, Chevez just mentioned that foul on Ethan with three seconds left. What was your view of that?

ANDY ENFIELD: Well, I thought Drew got fouled on the possession before when he drove and tied the game, they hit his arm. So I guess, if you're going to call it at one end, you should call it at the other end.

The call was made, and unfortunately we were one possession short. I did think the out of bounds call at 2:05 was the wrong call when they gave the ball to Miami. They hit it out off the free-throw miss. It was a one-point game. It should have been our ball, and they gave it back to Miami. It was the wrong call.

So when you're talking about a one possession game, a one point game, it's very disappointing to lose like that, but they fought back and gave it their best shot.

Q. What was the explanation, or did you get an explanation on that out of bounds call? It certainly looked like they were thinking about it for a while and then just kind of went with what was in their gut.

ANDY ENFIELD: I don't know what was in their gut or their head, but it was just the wrong call. It was very clear. Everybody saw it. I don't know what they discussed or didn't discuss. I don't know how you missed that call in a crucial part of the game in the NCAA Tournament, but it went out on Waardenburg, and it wasn't even close. That's it.

Q. Andy, after the team started the season pretty strong in terms of preventing turnovers, why do you think that became such an issue these last couple weeks?

ANDY ENFIELD: I don't know if it was the last couple weeks. I think they answered it pretty well tonight. Some of the things, when our guys get sped up, sometimes either their skill level or decision-making, some of their passes they threw in the first half left their feet or they got sped up, and they just didn't make the right decision or made an errant pass.

We have good players on our team. They won 26 games, so it is frustrating, I think, as a team and a coaching staff when you know your players aren't performing as well as they could. But they came out in the second half and did a

great job. They took care of the ball. They shared the ball. We ended up with 18 assists, scored 46 points in the second half, and we shot a high percentage from the field and the three-point line.

So they can do it, but I think they answered it probably as well, a lot better than I could have.

Q. Andy, what did you tell the team at halftime? What was the discussion there at halftime?

ANDY ENFIELD: Well, we weren't playing as well as we could have. It was a very poor half of offensive basketball with all the turnovers. It was more of what we were doing ourselves, what I just described, versus what the opponent was forcing us to do.

So that's why we changed the starting lineup. We changed two guys out of the starting lineup to start the second half. I thought our flow was very good to start the second half offensively. We made the right decisions. We had a high assist total. We ended the game with 18 assists, scored 46 in the second half.

I thought they did a great job of realizing how to attack and get good shots the whole second half.

Q. Andy, we asked them about Reese. What did he show you in particular?

ANDY ENFIELD: He showed me he's ready for the big time. The spotlight was on, and he stepped up, and he played great. He's been hurt. He hasn't practiced for over a week. He hasn't played, and he came in tonight on the biggest stage, and he was ready. Very proud of him.

Q. Andy, what changed offensively in the second half? 30 percent in the first half, almost 70 percent in the second.

ANDY ENFIELD: Well, I think the guys answered a little bit of that, but we ran some sets to get guys in position, but they made plays. As a coaching staff, you can call different type of actions, different sets that you have in your playbook, but the players started executing, and they started making great decisions, and they started sharing the ball. It was really fun to watch because they played terrific offensive basketball in the second half.

Then when we did call something, they executed and were very sharp. I'm not sure how many assists we had at halftime, not a lot. We ended up with 18. Even to the last three plays we scored, the two threes by Drew, one was on the first, one was an Ethan assist, and then off the double screen he hit the three. Then the last play where he drove

the basket, those were executed perfectly. They did a great job when the pressure was on.

I'm very proud of them because on the biggest stage, they fought and they executed extremely well until the last possession. Defensively we just let Charlie Moore get in the teeth of our defense and get to the foul line.

THE MODERATOR: You had four assists --

ANDY ENFIELD: Four assists. We had 14 in the second half.

Q. Andy, is there something you could point to to why the offense was never able to have that consistency that you had in the second half, just throughout the season where you'd have those ups and downs, the lulls that you would have?

ANDY ENFIELD: I think, if you look at our personnel on the team, there's certain strengths and certain weaknesses. After 32 games, 33 -- I don't know how many games you play. 26 and 8, 34 games. After 34 games you kind of are who you are, and certain guys can do certain things. When they try to do certain things they can't do, it usually doesn't turn out too well.

So I think when you say what changed, nothing changed. We're the same team, the same guys. Now they've made a lot of improvements in certain areas. But when certain players get sped up, bad things happen. I think that's true across the nation. You look at players, that's why you try not to get sped up. The easiest thing to do when you get sped up is just come to a jump stop and pivot and ball fake. We didn't do that in the first half. The second half they did a great job.

As a learning experience, they can always look back, but we really weren't looking for learning experiences at this point. We wanted to win this game.

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