

NCAA Men's 1st and 2nd

Rounds: Detroit

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Detroit, Michigan



Matt Painter

Vincent Edwards

Dakota Mathias

Purdue Boilermakers

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Purdue student-athletes Vincent Edwards and Dakota Mathias. Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Your next opponent is obviously Butler, a team you're familiar with. You played them earlier in the season. Their campus is not far from yours. How well do you know the guys who play for that team and do you follow them at all? I know they're in a different conference, but do you kind of pay attention to how they're doing as the season goes along?

DAKOTA MATHIAS: Yeah, we're familiar with them, obviously being so close. A lot of those guys are from Indy and I think in the summertime we work out with them, open gyms and things like that.

So we're familiar with them. And due to that, I personally follow them throughout the season, know how they're doing. I got pretty close with Kelan Martin this summer, just working out together. So we definitely follow their progress and how they've been doing.

Q. What was your reaction to Isaac being ruled out for the rest of the season with the elbow injury? How hard was that for you guys, being seniors as well?

VINCENT EDWARDS: I mean, it wasn't as hard for us as it was for him. We had to be there for him and keep our heads up. We're not going to hang our heads down. Our focus is on Butler. We've dealt with injuries before. These guys have picked this team up when I was out. So we plan on doing the same thing.

Q. Like a lot of teams, Butler seems to have some of its best games when they're making their 3s. How did you guys defend Butler in the 3 the last time? What was so effective about that? And how have you dealt with good 3-point shooting teams generally throughout the season?

DAKOTA MATHIAS: I think the first time we played

them, especially in the first half, we were very active with our hands. I think we kind of disrupted the flow of their offense. We made things pretty tough for them.

Whenever you get out of rhythm like that it's tough to kind of rebound. Like you said, they're a great 3-point-shooting team, so just making them feel uncomfortable is going to be the biggest thing for us.

VINCENT EDWARDS: I would say the same thing. We were really active in the first half and we were able to get a lot of the loose balls and get our hands on deflections and passing lanes and things like that. So, when you can disrupt someone's rhythm and the flow of their offense it makes it tough.

Q. Isaac came back in the game yesterday after the injury. He was joking around. Seemed like he was in great spirits in the locker room. How big of a shock was that to everybody? And what did you say to him to try to lift him up?

DAKOTA MATHIAS: Obviously we didn't expect that, those results. But he's a tough kid. He's battled a lot. We just wanted to let him know that we were there for him. Obviously being a senior like that, it's tough to handle. But he's our brother, he's our family and we just wanted to let him know we were there for him.

VINCENT EDWARDS: Just to piggyback on the same thing, me and Isaac have had some rough patches throughout our relationship and career, but definitely like a guy I've grown closer with. And just like these guys, being the senior class and not being able to actually walk out on the court with him knowing his senior year ended the way it did, it sucks for him.

And, like I said, we're not going to hang our heads on it; we're going to be there in spirits, and he's going to be our biggest cheerleader. We're going to go out and play for him.

If Little B is watching this, shout out to Little B for blessing us with his presence. Appreciate it.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. We're now joined by Purdue head coach Matt Painter. Coach an opening statement.

COACH PAINTER: Excited to be able to move on. I



thought our guys played well in the second half, had some really good energy, got some stops, made some good plays. We were a little bit too eager in the first half of our game yesterday. I thought we took some ill-advised early, quick shots and really didn't probe the defense.

Thought we did it much better in the second half. And our guys really played much better, played together, played hard, took what the defense gave them, got some quality stops. We know we have a tough task against Butler. And they have a great program through the years. LaVall has done an unbelievable job with this team. Baldwin and Martin are very, very difficult to stop. But it's really more than them.

They outrebounded Arkansas by 20. Play hard, stingy on defense. Do a good job getting their hands in passing lanes and on the ball, just being active, just being around the ball, just a really good all-around basketball team.

Q. There's a report out that Isaac did practice today. He's had a brace. Is that the case, and what's it going forward?

COACH PAINTER: Yeah, he ran up and down today, did a few things, worked out. I don't see him playing, though.

Q. Butler, like really most college basketball teams, is much better when they're making their 3s. And most of -- a lot of their big wins they were making 3s. How was Purdue so effective in neutralizing that the first time? And just how have you defended -- have you been pretty successful defending the 3 on a year-long basis, or do you have like a special philosophy or strategy to guard the arc?

COACH PAINTER: I wish I did have a special philosophy. I think it's different with different schemes. Sometimes you feel like you're doing a good job, like against Butler by the numbers in the first game, it looks like we did a good job. Or is it just wasn't their day.

Sometimes guys that shoot the basketball, Kamar Baldwin, you go back watch tape, he had a handful of shots he normally makes. And he didn't make it. It helps us. And you go watch him against Seton Hall in the Big East Tournament, and they're just draped all over him and he just makes tough shots.

Sometimes it's just your day. I think that day was ours. We try to do a good job of guarding the arc, but also not exposing ourselves to where now we're not containing the dribble and they're getting to the free-throw line and getting easy 2s.

Sometimes guarding the arc means they get by you. Now they still penetrate and pitch and still get good 3s. They have some tough matchups for everybody, so it's going to be really important for us that we do a good job and stay out of rotations.

Q. Back to Isaac for a second, after the game yesterday he was joking around in the locker room, seemed to be in great spirits. And then the rumor was it was mandatory surgery; now he's back. Can you talk about the emotional roller coaster of the last 24 hours? And if he's not able to play tomorrow is it your understanding that this condition could get better at some point during the tournament?

COACH PAINTER: No, he's not going to -- he's fractured his elbow. So he can go out there and get in warmups and do things but I don't think he's going to play. I'm obviously not a doctor. But I've been able to look at it and see -- he just went through things today and just getting loose and everything. His legs aren't broke. So you're allowed to still run when your elbow is fractured.

Q. As far as you as a coach and handling the emotional swings of this with your team and this senior class, can you talk about what that's been like?

COACH PAINTER: It's not an emotional swing for us. We just prepare for Butler. When Vince Edwards went out, and we had to play two conference games, we won those games. And you focus on what you have. You don't focus on what you don't have.

It's no different than foul trouble. Isaac plays half the game for us. We're used to playing half the game without him. So now we've just got to play a full game without him.

Q. If Isaac can't go, what do you see from Matt Haarms that -- obviously he's played a good amount, but stepping into that starter role, what do you see from him that gives you that confidence he can step in?

COACH PAINTER: Matt's played the whole year. He's done a good job for us. He played 27 minutes in the game versus Butler when we played earlier in the season. He's long, he's athletic, he can run, he can block shots. He knows what's going on. The game matters to him.

So it's a great opportunity for him to be able to step up and stay in his role, be really good at being Matt Haarms. You don't have to be something else. And I think that's going to be important for us that he brings that energy and helps us get going on both ends of the court.

Q. Not a lot of international players end up at Purdue over the years. How did Matt end up on your radar? How did he end up coming to west Lafayette?

COACH PAINTER: He played at Sunrise Christian, so just seeing him in AAU. And then just following up, he was a little bit of the under-the-radar guy. He wasn't a guy at his high school that was averaging 20 and 15. But he was really skinny. So he's gained about 25 pounds since he's been at our place.

But we were very fortunate. I think you hear a lot of stories as coaches when you recruit somebody for three years and then you lose out, you know, to somebody and you get upset about that. We put in all this time and you put in no time you get the player. We were on the back end of that one to where we didn't recruit him for a long period of time and then when we went in to recruit him, he liked us, he knew everything about us. He watched us a lot on television. And he knew everything about our program and the development of our big guys.

And so it was one of those rare moments where the exposure that you're getting internationally and just the exposure and the understanding that he had of the development of our bigs really helped us land him.

Q. How similar is this situation with Isaac in terms of 2010 with Robbie? And what did you learn from then?

COACH PAINTER: That's a good question. You know, we still had three games in conference season when Rob tore his ACL. So we had three conference games. We had two tournament games and then we obviously had three NCAA Tournament games. So it gave us a little bit of time to prepare.

And it's interesting you just said that. I just watched one of our games in the NCAA Tournament because it was on the Big 10 Network against Texas A&M to go to the Sweet 16. It just makes you run things differently. Rob made things work for us. We don't run anything differently. We run a lot of things for Isaac, but we also run things for other people. Whereas we ran a lot more motion at the time.

We'd isolate JaJuan Johnson and we'd isolate E'Twaun Moore a lot in some ball screen action. So, we had to change some things. We had to change a lot. And we didn't shoot the ball as well when Rob didn't play. And the guys that stepped in there who were good shooters still didn't shoot the ball well.

So that's a big part of it. It goes back to what David said before is, like, how good Butler is when they make

their shots. And it's kind of a profound statement. It's as how good anybody is that relies on 3-pointers.

I think it's going to be key more than anything, just us running our stuff, sticking with it. But we had a lot of turnovers the first time against Butler with Isaac Haas. It's going to be important that we play this game and not turn the basketball over and just be able to rebound and just kind of focus on those things.

Q. I know you said it's unlikely, but is there a chance Isaac would even dress tomorrow?

COACH PAINTER: I would think he dresses and goes to warmups. I would think he wants to do that to stay connected and stuff. But I don't think he'll play.

Q. Is there a brace he would have to wear?

COACH PAINTER: Yes. Yes. He'd have to get that approved, yeah.

Q. I don't want to harp on this, but down the road is this something you could see it would have to be surgically repaired or will it heal itself?

COACH PAINTER: No, they said you have to have surgery.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.