



2018 NCAA DIVISION I MEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

NCAA Championship First Round • Saturday, March 17, 2018
Little Caesars Arena • Detroit, Mich.
#2 PURDUE LOCKERROOM QUOTES

PURDUE LOCKERROOM QUICK QUOTES

No. 32 Matt Haarms

What are your thoughts on the news about your partner in crime here (Isaac Haas) and what that means to you here. You're going to have to step up.

"It just happens. After a loss like this, we just have to be focused on our game tomorrow. That's the biggest thing for us."

What do you bring that he does not? What can you do in this situation?

"I'm just going to bring what I've been bringing every game so far. I've been playing 16 minutes a game, and it's just going to have to extend a little more."

What changes? Do you guys run your offense a little differently?

"We just don't have him now, but our offense is still going to be effective, just the way it has been when I've been in the game."

Were you guys surprised to hear that Isaac was done? It seemed that the mood in the locker room yesterday was 'oh, he got banged up, but he got back into the game and we thought that he might be okay.

"It sucks obviously, for someone who's a great guy to lose him like that. But in the end it's still coming down to what we're about, and we still believe that we can be a very good team. We're just focused on tomorrow right now. Just playing that game with the group that we have."

How did you guys all find out?

"We heard it straight from him."

How is he handling it?

"He's handling it pretty well."

Matt Haarms (continued)

What was your first thought when you found out that he wouldn't be playing?

"I'm still focused. We've had this before and fought through it then, with Vince (Edwards) when he was out, so it's going to be exactly the same. We're still a really good team, we believe, and we're going to play the same kind of basketball that we've been playing."

How has going against Isaac prepared you for this opportunity?

"Isaac is in my opinion the best center in the country, so playing against him has definitely prepared me for this. I'm ready to step up."

Can you take anything from the Penn State game, where you lost a big piece right before that game?

"We're going to have to have that same grind-it-out mentality. Butler's a very good team as well. We saw them yesterday, they went up 21-2 against Arkansas, so they're a very good team. We just have to be ready for them."

What are your strengths as a player that you feel may come out in an extended, more important role?"

"I've got a little more mobility. I'm a bit faster out there, run the floor a little more. It's kind of exactly what you've been seeing, it's not like I haven't been playing. You're going to see more of me and what I've been doing all year".

Does it help you that you had a bigger role in the Butler game earlier this year? Is there something you can refer back to? For you individually?

"It was good to get a lot of minutes. They're a very good team of course. I don't think I played my best basketball that game, but it was good to see what kind of squad they have. It's always motivating to get a lot of minutes against a team."

What have you been doing outside of games to try and keep your stamina up?

"I just try and stay conditioned. Isaac's been doing a lot of conditioning, so I always try to get in a couple. Working outside of practice, extra shots, that kind of stuff, to be ready when the opportunity comes."

Does it add any element of surprise where there may not have been any, because you played Butler already and you guys are very different from what you were before?

"I guess a little bit. They had 20 minutes of me the last game, so they know what kind of player I am, so they know what's coming. I don't think we have that much of an element of surprise. It's going to be a grind out game. It's the second round of the NCAA tournament, can't expect an easy game."

How many minutes do you expect tomorrow?

"I don't know. I'll just take whatever I get from coach. If coach calls my name, I'm ready for it."

No. 3 Carsen Edwards

Seen as how Purdue and Butler are the only two Indiana teams left in the tournament, do you think about that at all, that whoever wins will represent the state of Indiana in the next round?

"Actually I don't really, I just play. I don't really think of it that way but I guess you can. I mean P.J. is from Indiana so I guess he says that but I'll just be hoopin'."

-How did you hear about losing Isaac and what was the team reaction?

"Well we were getting on the bus and he came out and told us. It was a bad reaction, obviously, it isn't going to be a good one. Just kinda liked bummed and just past the tournament I want him to have a good recovery and everything so I'm pulling for him. He's a good dude."

No. 11 P.J. Thompson

Why is the defensive intensity going to continue to be important on Sunday?

"Yeah defense wins games, especially when it comes to tournament time. You gotta be able to defend, you gotta be able to rebound, take care of the ball, those are the consistencies that stay true throughout the season."

What are going to be the keys against this Butler team?

"Nothing, it's the same things for us, you know, we worry about ourselves. Not beating ourselves, by not taking care of the ball, not rebounding the ball, not sharing it, so as long as we do those things, we feel like we'll give ourselves a chance to win."

They have some guys that are pretty hot offensively though.

"Yeah (Kamar) Baldwin's an all Big-East type of guard, Kelan (Martin) obviously just scored over 2,000 points, shows you what type of scorer he is. You know, Tyler (Wideman) is a senior, he's been there before, they got some shooters around them, as well as a good coach. You know, Butler's a good team. Butler in the tournament, they're always dangerous, no matter who's coaching over there, what kind of players they have over there."

No. 12 Vincent Edwards

What was your initial reaction after Isaac was going to be out the rest of the season?

"It's tough to be with a guy that has been with you all four years, and to have his season end that way, it's a nightmare. It sucks. When we found out you could tell everyone was feeling down. But we knew we had to pick our spirits back up, because we have been through this before. It's my job and my opportunity to be that team captain that I am and keep everyone together."

Do you have confidence in that no matter who you put on the floor, you can still make a deep run in this tournament?

"For sure. I have the belief in this team, Isaac is of course a key piece of this team but he's not the only piece that we have. I am fully confident that this team is still capable of making a run."

(Vincent Edwards continued)

Do you see this next game as a rivalry game?

"You can say that. I have been here for four years and have seen them every other year. We of course played them at the beginning of this year, and to turn around and play them again, this time in a different setting on a neutral court is definitely exciting. It's going to be fun and I know everyone is really excited."

#14 Ryan Cline

What is going through your mind about hearing the news about losing Isaac?

"It's obviously tough for the entire team. We're more in disgust for him, it's just terrible timing. Injuries always happen in sports, but we're just on to the next challenge in Butler."

Tell me about the confidence you have in Haarms stepping into his place?

"We have all the confidence in the world in him. He's played in key parts in big games, so we have a lot of confidence in him."

What have you seen about Butler on tape? Another great rematch.

"Yeah, absolutely. We already played them once this year, and I feel like they're coming in with a lot of confidence. We have some things to work on, especially from a ball screen defense perspective, so we'll just see how it pans out for us."

Does the attack of the game plan change much with Haarms in there instead of Haas?

"A little bit. Matt's post-presence isn't as big as Isaac's. He's more of a pick and pop five, and a guy who can stretch the defense and really guard. So it'll be a little bit different for us, but something we'll have to adapt to."

No. 20 Nojel Eastern

On losing Isaac Haas

"Of course, he is a big fella. When he gets hurts, it's always devastating cause he is a key part of this team, but this is the sport of basketball. Things happen when we don't want it to happen. It's unfortunate. We have to continue to move on, continue to stay between us, stay between our group and continue to strive and just continue to be special. Even though we have one man down, we have to just fight for that man too work even harder to get that win."

How did you hear about it? Was it relayed to the team afterwards?

"It was relayed back to the team. He (Isaac Haas) came on to the bus a little bit down so we kind of figured something was up more than just a bruised elbow. We got the message relayed to us from Coach Paint(er), but he just told us to move on. Continue to fight, continue to work on Butler, continue to just to stay within us, and continue to try to win the next game."

(No. 20 Nojel Eastern continued)

How does it change what you guys do?

"He's a big fella in the middle. We have to make adjustments. He's been playing the whole entire season, so you know adjustments on the fly is going to have to occur, but we are just to have to continue to play our game, continue to play Purdue basketball, continue to fight. We still have two other dominant bigs on the team and they are going to have to step up. We're all, as a team, going to have to step up. Each man on the bench, each man that plays, that starts, we have to all step up and fight for one another."

Last time you played Butler, you obviously beat them, but from just watching film what do you think has changed with them in terms of when you guys last met?

"This is March Madness. Every team continues to step their game, step their level of play up. Players start to change throughout the season and start to have better games. They are just playing really good basketball right now. We just have to continue to watch film, continue to break down the scouting report, see their tendencies and continue to play Purdue basketball and continue to stay within us. We beat them once and don't let that get to us at all. It's a new game, new day, new tournament. We have to continue just be that way."

When it comes to matchups, are you most likely to matchup with Kamar (Baldwin)?

"It all depends on the matchup. It all depends on the lineup that is in the game. Since Isaac (Haas) is hurt right now, it all depends on who is in the game at the moment; who is playing really good basketball at this time. We are going to have see what is good, and what is best for the team to win."

Just out of curiosity, your defensive tenacity where you get after it, is that a byproduct of your upbringing in the Evanston/Chicago (IL) area? Where did that come from Nojel?

"I just try to do whatever I can to stay on the court, continue to do whatever I can to help a teammate. That's my main focus is do whatever I can to help a teammate and just try to maintain the play that is really good and having a really good season. That is my main job for the night. In parts where I played basketball and who I played against and the way my coach taught us how to play basketball, we had aggression in us, we had a little fight, and had energy. It just comes from that and build off it into the next level."

No. 23 Jacquil Taylor

With everything that has transpired since we last spoke, how does that affect your role?

"It really just affects my role because I need to be ready to play and help out this team and do the very best to help my team win tomorrow."

Have you talked to Isaac at all?

"Yes I have. Pretty much what he told me was that he had a fractured elbow, that's pretty much it. He was upset, and we're all upset, but our focus is Butler and to play Butler tomorrow, and that's our main focus right now."

(No. 23 Jacquil Taylor continued)

I would assume that you are going to have a much bigger opportunity, what do you plan on doing with that opportunity?

"Rebound, run and defend. And when I'm open shoot the ball."

I know this isn't the situation you would like it to come in but are you looking forward to the chance to have a bigger role on this team?

"Yeah, I really look forward to it. I mean, I don't wish nothing upon anyone, but this opportunity has been put in front of me so."

No. 24 Grady Eifert

Is it a weird thing to say, could you play Vince at the 5 and you at the 4? And kind of mix and mash?

Yeah, I think there's going to be some different lineups than we've had this year, but the coaches are going to do a great job at game planning and putting us in those right positions.

Obviously, you're a Purdue family, so you know the expectations of Purdue fans. They want this team to do something special because it's capable of doing so. Does that weigh on your shoulders at all?

No, I think we just focus on one game at a time. That's kind of been our motto for the last couple weeks. As long as we can do that I think the weight is off our shoulders, if you just focus on one game at a time. Our main goal is just to win tomorrow, you know, survive and advance they always talk about that. If you win tomorrow you go on to the next game.

You beat Butler handedly in December. Is that relevant tomorrow?

No, it's a completely new game with new guys. We're just going to have to do the same thing and keep playing hard.

No. 31 Dakota Mathias

On Isaac Haas' injury:

"Obviously, he's a big inside presence. We use him a lot. We just got to worry about what we can do, what we can handle defensively. Just disrupt them and make it tough on them."

On having just one practice before Sunday's game without Haas:

"It's basketball. There's adjustments. Things happen. We dealt with - you know, Vince (Edwards) was out there for a little stretch. It happens. You got to deal with it. That's the beauty of basketball. New guys are going to come in, step up. That's what happens."

(No. 31 Dakota Mathias continued)

On if the Penn State game is a valuable reference point for Sunday in regards to losing a vital teammate:

"Definitely. We've been through that before. Obviously, one of our best players went out, and we responded pretty well. We have the tools and the guys in the locker room that can do that as well."

On if having Haas still alongside the team is encouraging:

"Absolutely."