

**March 22, 2013**



Duke – 73  
Albany – 61

An interview with:



COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, it's a good, tough win for us. Albany played like a team that just won a championship and had 24 wins. Those veteran guards were terrific and their big guys were very physical. I thought it was a great game for us, and they shot the lights out of it, nine out of 15 from threes and hit every free throw. I mean, they just -- I thought they played really well, like we beat a team playing really well this afternoon.

These two guys really came through for us. We got in a little bit of foul trouble in the first half, and we had that 13-point lead, and we did a couple -- made a couple mistakes, and they took advantage of it and got it down to five, and I thought we ended the half well. Rasheed really made a couple good plays for us, and then the second half we scored well, we could just never put them away because they would score.

But overall, I mean, it's a good, tough win for our basketball team.

**Q. Seth, I don't think I've ever seen a Curry bank in a three before. Can I assume that was deliberate?**

SETH CURRY: No, I didn't call that one. I thought I got a little contact on the shoot honestly. But I was feeling good tonight, and it went down for me.

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Hopefully you see a few more.

SETH CURRY: Whatever it takes.

**Q. Seth, do you guys feel at all like people are sleeping on Duke? Everybody talks about Louisville and Indiana. Do you think people maybe aren't paying attention to you guys, and do you like that?**

MASON PLUMLEE: Doesn't really matter to us what people are talking about. We're very confident. I thought it was a good win today, and we're just focused on us.

SETH CURRY: Yeah, I agree. Like he said, we're focused on our opponent and who we have to play. We have to take advantage of our match-ups and try to win every game we play.

**Q. Seth, after you kind of struggled with the ACC Tournament, was it good to kind of get your stroke going and whatnot and get into a rhythm today?**

SETH CURRY: Yeah. I thought the second half of the ACC Tournament game, I got going a little bit, but I was confident coming into this game. I mean, I was going to take advantage of my opportunities, try and work harder off the ball to get shots, and guys did a good job of screening for me and things like that. Trying to keep this momentum going.

**Q. Seth and Mason, can you guys talk about what your experience of playing in big games means in situations like this when a team makes a run at you? Some teams can -- I don't know if panic is the word, but it can get worse, but you guys today, they'd get it close and you would push it out further and make them have to work harder.**

SETH CURRY: Yeah, just like you said, I don't think we panic or anything like that in those type of situations. I think over the years we've been in every type of situation, down, up, when teams have made runs to come back and things like that. I think in the second half maybe turned it over on the press once and we got in the huddle, they were going to the free-throw line, and Mason got us together and just said calm down and make

the next play, and that's what we did going forward.

MASON PLUMLEE: Yeah, you've just got to keep your cool. When teams get behind they aren't just going to keep doing the same thing that got them behind in the first place. They're going to make adjustments, and you have to be ready for them. I think late game situations we've had success in over our careers, and then this team has this year. We definitely have an experience.

**Q. Mason, talk about Quinn Cook's performance today, I think 11 assists and he was finding you over and over again underneath.**

MASON PLUMLEE: Yeah, he was really good. Passing the ball that's as well as he's played in a while. That gets guys going, and it's really hard to guard a passer. I thought he played great.

And then just made life easier for everybody else offensively.

SETH CURRY: Yeah, how well Quinn plays isn't determined by how many shots he makes and things like that. It's how he gets his other teammates involved, and I think he got us going, finding Mason, finding me coming off screens and things like that. He was good for us today.

**Q. Seth, I wanted to ask you, their players seemed to think the back breaker was the loose ball that you picked up, they thought they had it going the other way down eight with under five minutes. You picked it up, not only got the ball but not the lay-up. Can you describe that play from your point of view and what you saw and what happened?**

SETH CURRY: Yeah, I mean, I think a few times throughout the game there were some loose balls and they came up with them, knocked down some threes. In close games, especially in the tournament, those are the type of things that win or lose your games, so I was trying to be alert on the offensive glass, somebody tipped it and I was just trying to get to it first.

**Q. Mason, when did you add the sky hook to your arsenal, and why do you think it's vanished from the game? You so rarely see it anymore?**

MASON PLUMLEE: I've taken a few this year. Those are just the first couple to go down maybe. (Laughter).

I like coming across the middle when there's single coverage. I feel very confident. I have a couple of go-to moves. It's a hard shot to guard. I don't know why people don't do it more. But I love going to that move.

**Q. Seth, I don't want to use the word pesky, but did you feel like their guards were irritating, as far as defensively, and I saw you chattering quietly a little bit with Black, and I was just curious what the dynamic was.**

SETH CURRY: No, they were just trying to be a little bit physical, on the ball, off the ball, things like that. I think their whole team was trying to do that. I was trying to rip through, go behind in certain situations. They were mixing coverages with traps and things like that. You just had to be alert, be strong, and just go about the pressure.

**Q. I would ask you the same thing I asked the players. Can you just talk about big game experience and what it means in situations like this when teams make runs at you and you do something to push it back out and almost make them start all over again?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, it doesn't happen that way all the time for anybody. Every game we play is a huge game. We almost always get an opponent's best shot where people are not afraid to lose. They're going to gain something if they win against us, but they're also not going to lose anything if they lose to us. And so we've been fighting that for 25 years.

And as a result, teams are never going to quit, and this team wouldn't, because they're so well coached and they're champions. But I'm just talking in general, not specifically about this game.

So our guys have been in these situations really every game we play, every game we play. And those two kids are guys that we can go to. In other words, when someone is making a run on you, obviously you'd like to have a few defensive stops, but you have to score the ball, and a lot of times in those situations people get tight, and guys who shoot freely or want the ball and other times don't want it. We have a few guys who really want the ball in those situations, especially those two kids. Quinn Cook made a big bucket for us when we were up by eight at the end of the clock to go up 10, so we have guys who have stepped up but especially those two.

**Q. I know you're busy this time of year, but I was wondering if you had time last night to watch what Tommy did with Harvard.**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Yeah, I watched, and then -- I didn't fall asleep while they were playing, I fell asleep at halftime, so don't let Amaker think that I was letting him down. But when I woke up -- I didn't turn off the game, let's put it that way, and when I woke up they had the lead, and then I stayed up. I thought it was an unbelievably well played game by both teams.

You know, Tommy, he and Johnny and Alarie and Bilas, Henderson, they all started this stuff. So Tommy is like a son to me and I'm ecstatic for him, really. He's done that with losing his two best players this year. I'm not going to want to schedule them next year. They've got everybody back and those two guys.

**Q. Following up, how high is the limit, do you think, for a program like Harvard, and why don't we see the sky hook more in basketball?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: The limit for Harvard?

**Q. Yeah.**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: I mean, they've got a chance -- if they beat New Mexico they've got a chance to beat anybody. New Mexico had a chance to beat anybody. In this tournament really anybody, especially this year, can win as long as you are not satisfied with the position that you got to. And it seems like a lot of teams are not satisfied with it, and that's why you have all these games. I think three 12s have won already.

And then the seeding of some of those teams probably is -- like how did it happen.

As far as Mason, Mason has just developed -- he's worked really hard since last spring to develop a better offensive game inside, and he's got good touch, and one of the key things he does out of there is pass. He can really pass the ball, and a couple times he did, and we didn't hit off his passes. But that's why he has to touch it. But he has good touch, he's worked real hard on his free throws, and he's hit them well today, and he has been hitting them really well. He's had a great year for us.

**Q. Every coach in the second round of the tournament likes to have a game like Syracuse had last night, but at the same time is this the kind of game where teams keep**

**coming at you for that first game of the tournament to get you guys going?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, what every coach wants is a win, and they're happy no matter how they get it, and if they say differently, then they're lying. Obviously I'd rather have a game like Syracuse had because then I wouldn't have to get as worked up, and I'm getting to be an old guy, and you don't have to use as much energy. But that's not the way it is in this tournament.

That's why I can't say enough about Albany's team. I think Albany played great and they changed how they play offense. They made a really neat adjustment in Rowley bringing the ball up the court. They were very prepared for this basketball game, and so we have to beat a tough, experienced, winning, prepared team, which is really good.

But going forward, I'm okay if people don't show up against us.

**Q. Is this still fun for you, though? Are you still having fun?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: Well, I like to win, you know, so it -- I like to win. So my guys have won a lot, and this team today -- what it is, it's very competitive today. I mean, we had to fight like crazy to win today. And as a staff, as a program. And how you feel afterwards when you win is a good -- I don't know if that's fun as much as a sense of accomplishment. And the more you go forward in this tournament, the greater the sense of accomplishment you'll have.

**Q. You talked earlier about Quinn Cook and his performance, the big shot he hit late. Can you talk about his overall game with the 11 assists and how improved from last year until now?**

COACH KRZYZEWSKI: No, he's had a terrific year for us, and like these guys know, when Quinn is playing like that, we're just a better basketball team. He was in complete control of the game, and we didn't see it late, but he usually -- because he wasn't put on the line. He usually hits every free throw, and he doesn't panic. But 11 assists, I thought he should have had 12 when he hit -- he allowed I think puck to block his shot that one time, and Mason was wide open underneath. But other than that play, I thought he played a great game, and we needed it. We needed it from him, and he tried to play really good defense on

Black, who's a tough out. He's really a tough out.

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COACH BROWN: Congratulations to Duke. I've said it all week; in my opinion if Kelly is healthy I thought they were the best team in the country. Very proud of my guys. We really competed. They believed all week long that we were going to win this game, and we prepared the way we always prepare. We played with great toughness, great resiliency, like we have all year long, and I'm very happy for our University, very happy for our athletic department and our program.

I thought these kids represented our institution and our program and the city of Albany in a very positive manner, and couldn't be prouder of them.

**Q. Was this a game where when you see a team with the experience of Duke, it kind of played well for them because every time you guys would get it close they'd do something to stretch it out a little bit and then make you have to work harder to get it back down again?**

MIKE BLACK: Yeah, definitely. You know, they're one of the top teams in the country for a reason. We battled, we had a loose ball at the end with a couple minutes left there. If we got it, it could have changed the game around, but we didn't, and that's credit to Duke, and they made the hustle play, and just credit to them.

JACOB IATI: You know, they're Duke for a reason. They're good for a reason. They have great players all around you. So that experience,

they play in big games all season long and their whole careers every game is like that for them. For us it's like the game of a lifetime, for them it's just another day in the park. But I thought we battled, we played to win the game. We didn't think we were just coming here to play Duke and go home. We were trying to win the game. We thought we really could and we believed in ourselves. I think we did a pretty good job of fighting until the end.

**Q. Jacob, when you guys got it to eight with 4:40 left, did you feel like that was your opportunity or were Curry and Plumlee just too much?**

JACOB IATI: No, the whole game we kept saying every media time-out just hang around, hang around, we'll make a run. We just wanted to fight every possession. And hopefully there was that one-minute stretch where we could knock down a couple of threes, get a couple stops and get right back in the game. We just want to hang around, hang around and hopefully they would make some mistakes and we could attack on them.

The loose ball was probably the biggest play of the game. I thought I was going to get it, and right before I did, Plumlee tipped it a little bit and then ricocheted off me right to Curry. So I thought I could have had a loose ball, but I didn't.

**Q. Can you just sort of describe dealing with Seth today? I think Mike actually had a little bit of a quiet back and forth -- it was almost like competitive chatter.**

MIKE BLACK: He's a great player. You know, he's at Duke for a reason. He made a lot of tough plays. He's a good player. The game plan was stop him. Obviously we didn't do too good of a job, so credit to him. He just made tough shots. We didn't let him get anything easy, just tried to force him into making tough shots.

JACOB IATI: I mean, Curry is a great player. You have a guy like that you know he's going to score, you're not going to hold him

scoreless, so just try to contain him and make him tough as tough a shots as you can. He played well today. It helps when you bank in a three, too. But he shot well, he made some nice plays and he's probably going to be an NBA player for a reason. He's really good.

**Q. Were there any surprises that Duke threw at you? They don't really have to throw any surprises, they can just be Duke and be dominating, but was there anything that they did that made you think they were even better in person?**

JACOB IATI: We were well prepared. Coach Brown and the coaching staff does a good job of getting us well prepared, understanding what they do on offense and what they do on defense. So I don't think there was anything they did in the game where we were like wow, what was that. We had an idea of what they were going to do, and we were well prepared, but when you play a team that just has better talent than you do, sometimes you come up short, but you just fight until the end. You try to execute the scouting report as good as you can. I thought we did a pretty good job of that for the most part. We were well prepared for the game. They didn't do anything that we didn't know was coming they just made a couple more plays than they did.

MIKE BLACK: Iati pretty much said it all. Coach prepared us well. We knew their plays in and out. They were more athletic. Like Iati said, they have more talent, so that pretty much took its place.

**Q. What do you take away from this game? This is you guys' last game, and was this a memorable situation?**

JACOB IATI: I think we played as hard as we could. I think we left it all out on the floor. Personally I know I played as hard as I possibly could. I think we did a good job any time there was a loose ball diving on the floor, whatever you have to do. I think we did a good job of that. I'm proud of how we fought, and this is, I guess, as good of a way as you can go out rather than last year we lost on a tip-in buzzer beater to someone in the America east. This one was a little bit better, we went down fighting to one of the best teams in the country.

MIKE BLACK: We didn't back down to Duke, even though the jerseys said Duke. We gave it our all. We pressured them down the loose floor, got balls, made tough shots. I feel like they

worked for us. Like Iati was saying, it's a lot better feeling than losing in the quarterfinals or the semifinals in the American East.

**Q. When you look at a guy like Plumlee and the advantage he has on the inside and then Curry from the outside, were those guys just virtually unstoppable for you?**

COACH BROWN: Well, you have to pick your poison. You know, you can't -- it's hard, especially for us, to double-team Plumlee. We were going to play him straight up and roll the dice. They shoot the three so well, and after watching that game against Miami where Kelly had 40, I had some bad migraines, and I'm like, you know what, if they're going to beat us, they're going to beat us with twos, they're not going to beat us with threes. They only attempted 11 threes, they made four. I think that's the big reason why we were able to hang around.

Curry, he's their leading scorer. He's tremendous, and he's a rhythm guy. But I look at it as Plumlee did the best Kareem Abdul-Jabbar imitation I've seen in a long time. He hit three sky hooks. I haven't even seen somebody attempt that shot in my 12 years at Albany, and he hit three of them.

You know, and then Quinn Cook hits two ridiculous shots as the shot clock buzzer is going off, Curry is banking in threes. We made that team work. They had to make some tough plays and some tough shots. We held those two guys to 49. I think that's a good job.

**Q. Was this a situation where Duke's experience being in these type of situations kind of played into it? You made runs at them, but they're used to that, and then they would push it out further and then you've got to fight again just to get back close?**

COACH BROWN: Absolutely. I mean, look at the two teams. They're physically, athletically bigger than us at every single position. Our motto really has been to fight, scrape and claw. The problem is if you're playing another low major or mid major Division I program, you can probably get away with getting behind and coming back, getting behind and coming back. When you play an elite program, a team that's going to compete for a national title this year, you can't afford to get behind by 12, 13, 14 points. You know, Jacob Iati is going to work for J.P. Morgan

next year and Mason Plumlee is going to the NBA, and it's like that at almost every position.

I'm proud of my guys. We're a resilient group, a tough group, and I think they made an awful lot of people proud, and I can sit here and comfortably say we challenged Duke, we made them work, we made Duke beat us.

**Q. The two things you talked about, among others, for keys in this game were not to turn the ball over, and for the most part you did that, and you usually hit a lot more free throws. The game ended up very equal with the free throws, but for a long time there was quite a domination for Duke at the line.**

COACH BROWN: It's tough to make them if you don't get there. We throughout the year have made more free throws than our opponents have attempted, and that's something that we value. You have to find ways to get free points, and getting to the free-throw line is a way to get free points. We've talked a lot this year about getting a piece of the paint, whether it's a post touch or a dribble penetration. It was going to be tough for us to get post touches against Duke, but I thought the way they pressured defensively we'd be able to turn the corner and get in the lane. It's just a matter of what decisions were we going to make when we got in the lane and when we did make that extra pass were we going to knock down shots.

We had opportunities, and Jacob said it best, that one possession real, real late in the game, down eight, loose ball, our guys go to pick it up and he slips on a wet spot, and we were off to the races. I thought we had numbers, and Curry picks it up and lays it in. So instead of us having the ball down eight with a chance to cut it to five maybe, they get a lay-up and push it up to 10. But let's face it, Duke is Duke for a reason. They're good.

**Q. Just on that kind of -- did you guys feel like -- were there times where if you could have gotten that one stop or that one three where the crowd would have gone nuts it might have ratcheted up the pressure on them?**

COACH BROWN: Our crowd was awesome I thought. They've been with us all year long and down the stretch throughout our conference tournament. Our crowd was great, and I thought our crowd was awesome today, as well.

You know what I was most impressed with, did you hear the Duke crowd erupt on that loose

ball at the end, that if we would have had I thought we'd be off to the races to cut it to five? They were worried. They were worried. It sounded like Burlington all over again when we were up in Vermont in the tournament championship game. That place just erupted when Duke scored that basket. It's hard, you can make runs -- for us we can make runs at Duke but they're not going to be big runs.

We're not an explosive offensive team to begin with. We've gotten to this point by playing tough, hard-nosed basketball, playing unselfishly, defending, rebounding and finding ways to score. So we're not an offensive juggernaut by any means. So for us to come back or get behind 14, 15 points against Duke, we can cut it to seven or eight. It's hard for us to get it down to two or four, plus you've got to realize how we're playing, as well.

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