

March 8, 2013



Creighton – 65
Drake – 53

AN INTERVIEW WITH:

COACH MARK PHELPS
SETH VanDEEST
RICHARD CARTER

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by head coach Mark Phelps along with Richard Carter and Seth VanDeest. We'll start with a statement from Coach Phelps before taking questions from our student-athletes.

COACH PHELPS: It was a really hard-fought game. I'm extremely proud of our guys. I thought, in terms of the effort and intensity and urgency department, I thought we were really good today.

Defensively, if you would have told me that we would have held Creighton to 65 points coming into the game, I would have thought we would have had a great chance to be right there to win the game. We forced 17 turnovers. They shot 25 percent from three.

Again, I thought our defense was really good. We took care of the ball, which is something we have not done here recently. We just did not have enough shots go in, and we couldn't compete at the free-throw line. We had eight free-throws, and Creighton had 22. So the difference in the game certainly was at the free-throw line and our inability to shoot normally what we shoot in terms of field goal percentage.

The other thing, obviously, that hurt was offensive rebounds by Creighton. I thought they did a great job, and got to give Will Artino a lot of credit for a terrific game, five huge offensive rebounds. One there late I thought was key on an air ball, which those are tough to judge.

We needed to make a few more shots. Our defense was good. Our ball security was good. Needed to make a few more shots or get to the free-throw line a little bit more.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Richard Carter and Seth VanDeest, please.

Q. Seth, Echenique in the second half seemed to find like a different gear. How tough was he to handle in the second half? How big of a factor was he in this game?

SETH VanDEEST: He's definitely a big factor. He has a huge body, does a great job, he uses his body around the basket. Got a few offensive rebounds and finished big around the basket as well. He really stepped up in the second half.

Q. This for both of you. As far as where the game was, you were within a couple, 31 minutes into the game. At that point, did you hit a wall? Was there any part of that quick turnaround from yesterday that happened at that point?

THE MODERATOR: Richard, why don't you start first, please.

RICHARD CARTER: Not really. We just couldn't make shots. We tried to play good defense as we did, but the shots just weren't falling for us tonight.

SETH VanDEEST: We were within a couple there with a few minutes left. They just made their run, and we weren't able to respond. Basketball is a game of runs. For the most part, first half and most of the second half, we responded with runs of our own. Couldn't respond to the last one, and they ended up pulling away.

Q. Richard, you had some really good energy at the beginning of the second half. Talk about what you got going there and how much of a lift you gave your team today.

RICHARD CARTER: I just wanted to come out and play hard for our teammates, especially our seniors. They did a lot for us this year. I was just trying to go to another gear for them.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions for Richard and Seth? Gentlemen, your obligation



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here is completed. You are free to return to your locker room. Thank you so much. Congratulations on your year.

Additional questions for Coach Phelps.

Q. Again, the same question I asked Seth about Echenique in the second half. How much of a factor do you think he was in this game?

COACH PHELPS: He was huge, Mark. He made a lot of big plays in the second half. He scored. We got mixed up a couple times on ball screen defense, where he got at the rim, and then I thought he did a really good job defending Seth.

He was a defensive force. He was an offensive rebounder. He scored. He was huge. You look at the numbers, he had 11 and 11, 6 blocks. He was really good tonight.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you so much for your time. Oh, we have one in the back.

Q. Coach, just wondering if you could talk a little bit about your future and the roster you have coming back for next year.

COACH PHELPS: Obviously, it's always bittersweet to say good-bye to seniors. I don't know that anyone outside of our locker room really understands the contribution of Jordan, Ben, and Chris Hines.

Jordan Clarke, again, without going into great detail, has made some uncommon sacrifices in terms of his body for this basketball program. So we're so appreciative of Jordan.

Ben had a terrific, terrific four-year career. And then with Chris Hines, for him to trust us for his one year -- he had a lot of options. He had some Big Six Conference schools that wanted him for his final year, and for him to trust us means a lot.

Those guys mean a tremendous amount to our basketball program. You heard Richard talk about that. Really excited about the two guys you saw up here. Both of those guys will be seniors next year. I feel like at the point guard position and certainly at the center position, we'll be as good as anybody in our league. We've got some other very good young players -- Joey King, Daddy Ugbede, Micah Mason, some other guys we're really excited about, and we're certainly excited about the guys that are coming in.

There's a lot of optimism about next year. We need to have a great off-season. There's a lot of work to be done spring, summer, and fall.

Really excited about those guys. Today is about the seniors, and you can't say enough (about them). Can't thank those guys enough for their contribution to our program and also to our university.

At Drake you don't just play basketball. It's not a separate thing. It's co-curricular. And those guys are heavily, heavily involved in the very fabric of Drake University. You can go across campus, outside the athletics department, and hear some unbelievable things about our three seniors. That's what makes it even that much more special.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you so much.

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