

March 15, 2015



An Interview With:
CONNECTICUT
Hartford, Connecticut
SMU - 62
CONNECTICUT - 54

MODERATOR: Welcome to the stage from the University of Connecticut Huskies, Head Coach Kevin Ollie, senior Ryan Boatright and sophomore Rodney Purvis. We would like to ask Coach for an opening statement, please?

COACH OLLIE: First, I want to congratulate SMU and Larry Brown and all his players for a terrific season and then finishing off with the championship. So hats off to them. We didn't give it away, they came and took it, and that's a great team where we faced. I thought our guys fought again, we just can't get down by 17 to a team like this and then we try to come back at the end, but you've got to play perfect basketball. But so proud of my guys. Nobody thought we would be in this championship game and for us to get here is a great accomplishment for them, and to Ryan Boatright right, our senior and the heart of our team, I just want to thank him for, and I know playing in front of these fans for the last time, he's just a warrior. I love him to death. I know Purvis is going to take this experience and come back and be even better, a basketball player and better man next year for us.

MODERATOR: Questions for our student-athletes?

Q. Ryan, I guess just your emotions right now, knowing that this is your last game at Hartford in all likelihood. Just your emotions overall and falling a little bit short here in this championship game.

RYAN BOATRIGHT: I'm extremely proud of my teammates. They came out and they battled. I know Purvis had a tremendous game, he stepped up huge. I'm just disappointed in my play. I missed a lot of shots that should be easy knock-

down shots for me. You know, I just ain't show up and be the player I know I can be, I can be better than that. But my teammates fought, man, they played a tremendous game man. This being my last game, I'm just disappointed that I played like that.

Q. Rodney, with your teammates struggling, did you feel a need to try to take over the game a little bit?

RODNEY PURVIS: No, I just was trying to be aggressive and take what the defense gave me, that was the main thing.

Q. For Rodney, obviously the last couple days and the season gave you confidence you could come back, and when you get it down to 6 six with about five to go, were you guys feeling good, thought you could do it again?

RODNEY PURVIS: Definitely, I gave up an offensive rebound. Coach been telling me to hit all year, I have to take ownership and work on that area. I can take the blame for missing the offensive rebound and that kind of changed the game.

Q. This is for Ryan. Ryan, what was SMU doing to you defensively? And were you happy with the looks you got today?

RYAN BOATRIGHT: Yeah, every 3 point shot that I took, I felt was a good look except the ones that I had to take with two, three seconds on the shot clock. I was just off, just off night for me. Missed a few shots, tried to get to the rim, didn't get to the foul line, them didn't go my way. But I'm a man though, I can take it, I can take it on the chest. I'm going to move on and keep working.

Q. Ryan, obviously in the last four years a lot of ups and downs for the team, but for you personally as well, some on the court, some life's lessons. Could you put into words

...when all is said, we're done.®
ASAPsports

visit our archives at asapsports.com

031505 UCONN

what this experience has been like for you, good, bad, indifferent?

RYAN BOATRIGHT: I mean, I can't really put it into words. All I can say is I became a man here at the University of UConn. Came in an 18 year old, immature kid and I'm leaving a grown man. I learned a lot from my teammates and from KO as a ball player and as a person. I'm just happy and thankful for the opportunity to play at the University of Connecticut.

MODERATOR: Anyone else? Okay, thank you, gentlemen. Questions for Coach Ollie?

Q. Kevin, what was the main message you said to the team after the game today and just encapsulating the whole season and the game itself?

COACH OLLIE: Yeah, the season not over with. I had pride in them. I was happy in they effort. They showed a lot of resilience and a lot of heart, a lot of hustle. Like I told you, a lot of people didn't think we was going to be in the championship game so that's an accomplishment in itself. Of course we wanted to win it, this is the second year in a row that we put our self in the opportunity to win it, and just came up short. I'm very, very proud of these guys. They played with heart. We down two players with Sam being out and Kentan being out. You know, these guys really stepped up and we pretty much got eight guys with healthy bodies. So very proud of these guys. The heart they showed, and this crowd was wonderful and I just want to thank them all for being behind us and supporting us the way they did the whole season with the ups and down that this team had. I told them in the locker room that gifts and blessings don't happen immediately all the time, you've got to go through experiences like this and really understand how it feels and what you're gaining from it and the inner strength that you get from experiences like this. And I think they're going to get inner strength as people and come back even stronger when we get in this position again next year and take it home when we got the opportunity.

Q. Obviously four games in four days is tough. How much was a fatigue a factor and how much did the crowd give you a lift?

COACH OLLIE: The crowd was wonderful, as I keep saying, couldn't ask for a better crowd, couldn't ask for a better family in supporting us and just giving us a push. But you

know, it's tough on your body. You've got four games, Ryan's been playing every minute and I know he takes a lot of blame but it's no blame on that kid. That kid's got heart, got desire. I go with him any day. Just for Rodney to step up was great, but Ryan has been a soldier and we wouldn't have been in this situation if it wasn't for his stellar play down the stretch and throughout the whole season. He's kept these guys together not just on points or rebounds or assists. Pretty much led us in a lot of categories but just the heart and the leadership that he showed through the ups and downs was something special. You know, we not going to say our goodbyes to him yet because we still have a post-season left, but I'm going to miss him.

Q. Obviously you guys are going to be disappointed not making the NCAA Tournament. Now with the NIT most likely going to happen --

COACH OLLIE: Who knows?

Q. Is it going to be hard for them to gear up for that?

COACH OLLIE: Why? You put on a UConn jersey. If you can't get geared up, then I don't want you on my team. So, no, you put on UConn jersey. It's important when you put that jersey on and that's my message.

Q. If it is the NIT, what can you get out of it, how can your team grow and develop from that experience?

COACH OLLIE: Post-season play. You lose, you go home. That's what you get out of it, it's experience. As a man, you grow up, you have experiences and your mama whoop you and you go back and you learn from it. Just like everything in life, you got post-season. There's no next day. So these guys are learning from it. If it's NIT or NCAA, they going to learn from it and they going to come back better from it. I am still coach them the way I coach them. They still going to play the way they going to play. We've got to make better plays. We've got to be more poised. I can break the game down, we got the game down in five, we missed a defensive rebound and we fouled with three seconds on the clock three times. Three times. So we got to be poised in those situations. But man, I love these guys, and they fought like champions and hopefully our fans are proud of

them.

MODERATOR: All right, Kevin, good luck
the rest of the way.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports