

# 2024 NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship

Saturday, May 25, 2024

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Lincoln Financial Field

**Notre Dame Fighting Irish**

**Coach Kevin Corrigan**

**Chris Kavanagh**

**Will Lynch**

Media Conference



but being able to get the ground balls and assist your teammates and the special connection you guys have with each other that was evident on the field, if you could just take a minute and touch on that, please.

CHRIS KAVANAGH: Yeah, we have a tight group in the locker room. We go out to eat a lot. We're best friends off the field. So it kind of resonates on the field. In terms of scoring and assisting, no one really cares who scores. At least we get a W at the end of the day. I think we do a really good job moving the ball, preparing all week. So we're ready on Saturday.

But, yeah, come May, it doesn't really matter who scores. You're just trying to get a W at the end of the day.

**Q. Could you talk about how it feels to score a hat trick and your brother scoring a hat trick?**

CHRIS KAVANAGH: We just got a W, that's all that matters.

**Q. The Denver defense runs deep and they can play very aggressive. And Malcolm had nine first-half saves. He was hot early. As an offensive group what was it like for you guys at halftime? Did it start to feel like it might feel like one of those rock fight games?**

CHRIS KAVANAGH: Yeah, we've been in the situation before. We faced really good net minders in the ACC and out of conference. When it's not falling your way, you just have to keep shooting and hopefully it goes in. That was the game.

I thought we did a good job. Coming out, a little bit of adjustment on offense, not anything big. Just keep firing and they'll fall eventually.

**Q. Chris, how much did you think the faceoff team's play really tilted things in your favor there, particularly in the second half?**

CHRIS KAVANAGH: I think it's everything. When you're getting the ball a lot more than the other team, you get a lot more opportunities. And to have Will on our team, it

Notre Dame - 13, Denver - 6

KEVIN CORRIGAN: Proud of our guys. First half, we didn't play poorly, we didn't finish a lot. And we maybe gave up a couple we weren't thrilled with.

But they're a very good team. I'm always impressed with a team that has great self-awareness. It says a lot about their coaching and players. And I feel like that's who they are.

But in the second half I think we wore them down a little bit. We had a little more depth and our guys made some plays. A good win.

**Q. Great job on faceoffs, 18-23. And also ground balls, 44-24. Denver was just in here and faceoffs, ground balls and riding sounded like the difference and most of it in that second half. Your comments on that?**

WILL LYNCH: In terms of the ground ball, I think something our team really prides itself on is coming up with the gritty, scrappy ground balls, because at the end of the day games are won and lost based off the ground balls.

In terms of the faceoffs, we did a great job all week preparing, whether it be our scout guys and our collective film with the wing guys. So we really prepared just for that match-up.

**Q. A comment and then, Chris, talk about we know a lot of accolades on the offense. Some powerful goals. The scrappiness and the selflessness of the team, I want you touch on that. And the ability to not necessarily who puts the ball in the back of the net,**

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means the world. We wouldn't be in this situation without him dominating this postseason.

A lot of credit to him getting us the ball and fighting for extra possessions in the middle of the field. He's been a dog.

**Q. Will, we enjoy watching you taking multiple approaches at faceoffs. How pleased were you with how your wings were able to anticipate how you were going to exit and play it out?**

WILL LYNCH: Definitely very pleased. The way we kind of look at the faceoff matchup is more of a 3-v.-3 -- I know a lot of people think it's a 1-v.-1, but the success we have doesn't happen without all three people being on the same page. So just our game plan all week, whether it be when we were watching film -- yeah, they did a great job, opening exits, competing for ground balls.

So the success you see today, the 18, whatever, for 23 number definitely does not happen without all three people being on the same page.

**Q. This is now your second time competing in the finals championship. How do you feel, and what were some of the players you saw from Denver that you guys exposed in the first half? They were giving you guys a little bit of a run for your money, (indiscernible) you guys -- you guys kind of ran away with the lead a little bit. What did you guys see out there?**

KEVIN CORRIGAN: Well, I do think their goalie played an outstanding first half in combination of us maybe not canning a couple of shots we felt we didn't shoot well, but he was right there. He made great saves.

Their defense is hard to play against, and especially if you don't play against somebody who plays like them, because they don't stray way out, and so you have to make your plays in a smaller area. And it takes a little getting used to. And I thought as they do, they were very effective with that.

Obviously the faceoff advantage in the second half became huge because then you're playing make it, take it when you get a couple of goals and you get the ball back.

We've been on the side of that against Denver in the tournament. We've seen this movie before. And it's really hard. It's like you're playing uphill lacrosse when the other team starts with the possession every time. And the only way you can get a possession is by stopping them, it puts a lot of pressure on everybody.

So our guys just stayed with it. Like they said, when the ball's not going in, you've got to keep shooting, not letting it affect you. And I thought that was happy with.

We didn't start missing the cage, starting to pick corners. And we didn't start getting silly about what we're doing. We just kind of stayed with it and the ball started dropping a little bit more.

**Q. Coach, when you sit there and you see Chris answer a question about when him and Pat both had hat tricks and all he cares about is getting a W, you have such high character players, how enjoyable is it to coach these kids?**

KEVIN CORRIGAN: No question, our whole locker room is full of guys like that. And I'm unbelievably fortunate to coach the group of kids that we have. They're great, great kids. The character is off the charts.

Here's the thing. This is great -- we're going to play for the national championship on Monday. We also had the highest GPA of any men's team on campus in the spring. We also just got an award from the Boys & Girls Club that we're the volunteer of the year in greater St. Joe County.

So we got kids who are just great kids, great people to be around. I consider myself blessed.

And then on top of that, you've got guys who are competitors at the level that they are. And I quote a Jeff Van Gundy quote where he says, if your best player does not have complete intolerance for anything that doesn't lead to winning, then you're in trouble.

And we don't have that problem. Our guys, they could care less who scores, who does what. They just want to win and they do every piece of the game that contributes to winning, not just scoring.

**Q. One of the things Chris said was that everybody's best friends on the field. But the fact of the matter is two of them are brothers and certainly grew up together. Could you just talk about that intrinsic connection that they seem to have? And it showed itself in the first quarter with the go-head goal and at the end one there.**

KEVIN CORRIGAN: Listen, again, it's more the makeup that they bring to everything that they do. They both are committed to excellence in the sense that they want to be great players, and they put in the work to be great players. They don't just hope it comes to them.

And then there's, like I said, the competitiveness that they

bring to everything that they do. But then there's the selflessness that they bring that basically embraces everybody else on the team.

They never put themselves in a part in any way in terms of putting themselves above anyone or putting themselves, like, hey, it's us and then it's the rest of the team or anything else. They're as happy for any guy on the team as they are for their brother and vice versa.

Again, the dynamic with our team right now is wonderful. And I say that having just knowing that we're very fortunate because it starts with those guys. It starts with the leaders in our locker room. And we're really, really lucky to have the guys we have there.

**Q. Could you describe how it's been to keep your boys focused on not being distracted, being the defending champions? And just a side note for yourself, could you just share how it feels to be at the cusp of winning two titles in a row?**

KEVIN CORRIGAN: At this point it's not an issue, it's not something I need to talk about because they've have had the experience of going through this and what it takes to do it and all that.

I can't say it was the case in, say, June through October. And that's where we kind of struggled. I talked to a lot of coaches at the end of last year and said, what do you do, how do I avoid the kind of let-down of what happens after you win a championship?

And the short answer that every single one of them gave me was, you don't, you can't. It's human nature. You can't outrun or outsmart that one. You have to go through it. So that's how we talked to our guys about -- you have to go through this.

We had a terrible fall -- terrible in terms of our results. Not terrible in terms of the amount of work we got done. We built some depth. We had some guys who really had a chance to compete. And I think that's helping us now.

But terrible in terms of our performance. We just got our butts kicked. And so we went through that.

And that was -- we just kept saying to them, all right, this is the journey of this team. We don't have to have the journey of last year's team. We have to have the journey of this year's team. Let's keep our eye on the ball and keep working. And hopefully maybe get back to this weekend and have a chance to win again.

**Q. You've addressed this a little bit, but the faceoffs, I**

**was so impressed by Lynch. I think it was Denver's worst performance in 15 years. Could you tell me what you were seeing on faceoffs and what was the week of prep like going into that?**

KEVIN CORRIGAN: Our guys do a great week of preparing. And we can prepare all we want if Will Lynch goes out there does the heavy lifting.

But Ryan Wellner works with our faceoff guys. We have an injured defenseman who helps, who has a knee injury is out for the year, and he helps -- Mason Wordelman. And our coaches do a great job. They really do. And as always they don't get enough credit.

But at the end of the day, the credit really goes to those guys on the field. And Will Lynch just stepped up as he has here in the last part of the season. His wing guys as well. I think Will Donovan is probably as good a long pole wing as there is out there. And Ben Ramsey, he's a great short stick out there. Carter Parlette is a great short stick out there.

And we feel really confident winning and being able to turn that to possession and losing and being able to defend with the guys we have there. And that's a big part of it as well. It allows you to get a little more aggressive knowing that you have the personnel out there on the field to handle whatever happens.

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