

**March 13, 2011**



An Interview With:

**COACH MIKE BREY  
TIM ABROMAITIS  
BEN HANSBROUGH  
SCOTT MARTIN  
TYRONE NASH  
CARLETON SCOTT**

**Q.** Just a general sense of your reaction to being No. 2 seed out there and kind of your thoughts on how it's all played out.

**COACH BREY:** Well, I mean, I'm proud of our group to earn a 2 seed. We haven't been in 2 seed territory in our program in a long, long time. Not only is it great for this team, I think it's great for our program, and I think it's a little bit of a -- maybe an exclamation point on the consistency that this program has been for 11 years. We're thrilled that we get to go to Chicago. You know, I think that could become a little bit of a Joy Center West, Purcell Pavilion West for us. Keith Dambrot is a very good friend and a heck of a coach, and you know, once you get -- you take the seeds away from the teams' names now, and now you've got to go try and win a tournament in Chicago.

**Q.** Were you kind of thinking it was going to be a 2 after the way things ended up in New York?

**COACH BREY:** Well, I think we had a lot of argument for a 1, quite frankly, you know, when you look at our résumé. But we're fine; we're thrilled. We're thrilled we're a 2. We earned that. You know, I think we've won, what, 12 of 14 or 11 of 13. We've been on a pretty good run.

But you know, it's great being in Chicago, and at this point, everybody talks about seeds and numbers here for the last

couple days. Just erase the numbers now and look at the match-ups. Get the numbers off the board and look at the match-ups, and one of the things I told our team was two years ago we played in the Chicago Invitational, we went 1 and 1. This Chicago Invitational we'd like to go 2 and 0.

But here's the key, and I mentioned this to our team just ten minutes ago: One of the things that drove our group all summer was they didn't win a first round NCAA Tournament game. So our goal is to win a first round NCAA Tournament game first. There's so much talk of projections and match-ups down the road. You know, we've got a Big East kind of match-up on Friday night in Chicago, and that's kind of how -- that's our mindset this week of practice.

**Q.** Is it fair to say you guys are a basketball school now?

**COACH BREY:** (Laughing) it's hoops right now, I can tell you that much. It's a heck of a day for us, and we'll see you over there in your town, and we're thrilled to be coming that way. Obviously I think it was looking that way for the last couple weeks. I'm glad we could solidify coming to Chicago. I think it's extremely important for us to play in Chicago. You know, the one time we played in Chicago this year, we played pretty darned well. I hope we can bottle that.

I'm excited for our group. To earn a 2 seed is something to be proud of.

**Q.** Could you have envisioned this, losing as much as you did from last year to this year, when you got together for the first time or as you watched this team come together? Could you have envisioned this? I know you say you were driven by the fact you lost a first round game last year, but this was a pretty hefty rebuilding project and yet here you are.

**ASAP** sports

...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

**Notre Dame 03.13.11**

**COACH BREY:** Well, I think because of how we finished last year and earned a 6 seed from being off the board without Luke Harangody very healthy gave all of us confidence, most importantly the guys in the locker room, the nucleus, that we could be a pretty good seem.

As I've said around here, I think we were better earlier than I thought. Going to Orlando and winning, I didn't know if we'd be able to do something like that. And that certainly gave us a spring board and a confidence, you know, that has continued pretty consistently throughout the season. But when you have -- when you step back and forget rebuilding, forget what you lost, and look at the experience and how much these guys have played together, especially the starting group, and I would include Jack Cooley in that because he's played a lot of basketball now for us, you know, you just felt you had a chance to be pretty good.

One of the things this group has done is stayed pretty hungry all year. You know, after big wins they've come back in a pretty even keel demeanor and felt what do we need to do for the next one, and after losses I think we've had our best practices, and that's kind of the mode we're in now again: Can we have great practices because we just lost?

**Q.** Are you guys kind of a template? You've been successful with keeping four-year guys, and by the time they get to be juniors and seniors and they're experienced and mature and you tend to play older guys?

**COACH BREY:** I think we've been a great model. This group is really the ultimate model of guys that have all been on our blue team, they weren't starters as freshmen. We are kind of a model of older guys. I think one of the things I've been very proud of, Ben is the latest in the senior all year league but Ty Nash is the guy who's having his best year as a senior here.

I think we can get guys better here, and that's one of our recruiting teams, guys get better here. If you plug in with us and let us teach you, it's not always going to be easy but I think we can get you better. I think we're a little bit refreshing because there are guys that have taken all different paths.

I love Ty Nash's line about a month ago, we're the blue team All-Stars, he said, because all of them played against the starters at one point.

I remember Ty Nash coming in my office when I had Harangody and Kurz and he couldn't really get any minutes and he said, coach, I'm the eighth man on a seven-man team. And I said, I'm guilty, you're right, and right now I can't get you much because Kurz and Harangody are better than you. But he's come around and is part of it, and he's really had a very good senior year for us.

**Q.** Just from your perspective over the years, going up against teams that may or may not have won their respective league titles, what are the pros and cons? I would imagine like yourself, you want to win a league title but it's a long road, you've played a lot of games before you get to the NCAA Tournament. What's your thoughts on playing the MAC championship team?

**COACH BREY:** Yeah, well, make no mistake, we invested a lot emotionally and physically to try to win a regular season title and we chased Pittsburgh and we wanted to get to Saturday night and play for it. That was disappointing, especially not getting there and not being able to get to Saturday night.

Having said that, you turn around and you've got a fresh start, and I mentioned to our team about 15 minutes ago that we are playing a league champion. We're playing a team that has won a championship, we're playing a team that has just cut nets down on Saturday night that feels it's their time.

So we're very, very aware of the vibe around the Akron team right now.

**Q.** And with a league like the MAC, you've got to win out to get in the tournament, so there is definitely a lot of motivation there, and once they get there and they don't take it for granted. Have you seen that in teams like Akron in the past?

**COACH BREY:** Absolutely, and I lived that at times when I was at coach at Delaware. There's nothing like getting the bid from a one-bid league. There is no pressure like trying to win the bid in a one-bid league, and we did that two of my three years at Delaware

and I don't know if there was a more gratifying feeling.

For Akron to dog fight their way through there and they were a lower seed, and for them to get it I think says a lot about their resiliency and toughness and their leadership in their coach.

Q. You talked about motivation for the players all year about what happened last year in the first round and what they learned from that experience. I just wondered when you start to prepare for Friday, will you look at what you did last year, and did you learn or take anything away from that disappointment?

COACH BREY: Yeah, I think for us to mention it is the key, but as we go there, you can't play afraid to lose, and I don't think this group really ever has. This group has gone for it, and I've got to prepare them that way. You know, you've got to stay as loose as possible in a one and done situation and play. You know, I think that's got to be my psyche.

The nice thing is I think our veteran -- they have kind of handled things like that. You know, we've had games at home where we're supposed to win here in the last month, Big East games, and maybe we haven't played great, but we've gone for it. You know, we haven't tied ourselves up in knots. You know, that's a thing I think you're concerned about moving forward, and I think you just -- I just took the numbers away from the names of the four teams over there in our little mini-tournament, and I told them, we've just got to have preparation like it's a Big East game. We tried to do that for Old Dominion, as well. They're really a good team.

But I think mentioning it as what kind of had them a little edgy this summer is good to kind of go back to. For all we've done, this nucleus, at the end of last year and through this season, and people have said glowing things, and rightfully so, they haven't won a first round game yet. So that's what we try to do.

Q. You've had a lot of smart teams, teams that do the right things with the ball and get focused, but in terms of mental toughness how does this team compare?

COACH BREY: Yeah, it would be up there at the top, it really is. You know, there is

a real -- an NBA coach left me a message the other day, toughness and team work when he watches our group, and that's the ultimate compliment as their leader. Mental and physical toughness I think we've had, we've been really resilient, and we certainly have been a group that understands we have to do what we do. And you have to do what you do is a theme I've talked about a lot from probably the second week of practice.

And I've also said when we've gotten off the tracks a little bit, no group in the country, certainly in the top seeds, relies on the sum of its parts more than us. We need all our parts kind of doing their thing, or we can be kind of average.

Q. Have you digested what happened against Louisville that second half? Was that just an aberration, or legs get a little tired? What do you think happened?

COACH BREY: Did we play Louisville? Did we play? Isn't it a new season?

I think we did get a little physically worn down. Certainly got to give Louisville credit. I don't know if we took great shots at times in the second half. I thought we took some rushed shots, and one of the things for us, part of our defense is our offensive efficiency. We need our offensive efficiency to be high to beat any team now, and I don't think we -- I think we got a little frazzled, and I've got to give Louisville some credit because they kind of harassed us the whole second half. Disappointed what we gave up on the back board, concerned moving forward how people played volleyball against us on the back board, and overall we've been pretty good rebounding as a team. But that's an issue we've got to come to grips with before Friday night.

Q. (No microphone.)

COACH BREY: Yeah, yeah. I think also maybe we're maxing it out. Yeah, no question. I think for our guys there's probably a little bit of unfinished business, not getting to Saturday, because we really invested in that emotionally and physically. I never talked to them about, God, we should be a 1, and I don't think they were -- we knew we were going to be a high seed, and we knew we were going to be in Chicago, and then I think you take it from there.

But certainly this group has been good when they've had a little chip, so if they develop that, that's great.

Q. How happy were you for Friday night? Have you kind of put that aside? Are you still thinking about it?

COACH BREY: I'm still pissed. I think our guys have moved forward. It'll take me until tomorrow morning because -- for our program, like what we've done, I just really wanted us to get to Saturday night there. And I know not every coach in the Big East invests in a tournament like that, and we really did. I think we're the only team that's played in the semis two years in a row. I'm not pissed at our guys, I'm just disappointed we didn't get there, and that's kind of resonated longer with me maybe than ever before.

But I knew once I saw the brackets flash up and once we get on the practice floor tomorrow, you kind of get on to the next thing, and I think our leadership has done a good job over the weekend kind of understanding, you know, we've been good coming out of losses.

I did mention in the locker room after the Louisville game the last time we lost was West Virginia, and I think we then won five in a row, and I kind of framed it that way.

But I think we all invested. I certainly did, wanting to play last night. I couldn't watch that last night.

Q. Your friendship with the Akron coach?

COACH BREY: Yeah, Keith is certainly LeBron's high school coach and just a well thought of guy. This is a great story. It's funny how small this world is. 2008, and my son was playing at buffalo. I go over and I sit in the pressbox in the last game in the Rubber Bowl, Buffalo at Akron with Gerry Faust and Keith Dambrot to watch the game. Well, my guys know that -- well, they knew what days Kyle played because we practiced in the morning and then I'd drive. They were pissed. They were like, oh, Kyle must play tonight, Thursday night MAC game, we're practicing at 7:00 a.m. They win in four overtimes. It was that magical year they ended up winning the MAC title. I remember sitting with Keith the whole time, great guy, talking about his program, talking about our program. He says to me, you know,

...when all is said, we're done.®

**ASAP**sports

visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

we just got this big kid from Pittsburgh. It's the Marshall kid. And he said, I think we stole one. I saw him block a shot the other night, and I happened to watch the game, and I thought, that's the guy he's talking about.

Keith is very well respected in our profession, paid his dues, and I think it's five or six straight 20-win seasons he's had at Akron. But he's just a coach, good old teacher coach, and he's done a great job with the Zips.

Q. How much more do you know about Akron?

COACH BREY: You know, I watched a little bit of that game the other night. I watched a little bit here with Martin Ingelsby before I walked in, and I looked at their numbers a little bit. They certainly have used the three-point line as a weapon. Forty percent of their field goals are threes, which is like Louisville. You know, they're a team that really uses the arc for their advantage, and I think they've always been a steady half-court man-to-man teams and kind of a motion offensive group. But skilled guys, and you look at their numbers, they've shot a lot of three-point shots, gotten at no time foul line. Good assist to turnovers, but you're going to have all those things if you've won a league championship. But it's funny, the Marshall kid now becomes the key guy on the championship game, and it just seems like yesterday we were talking in the pressbox about him.

Q. Is being in Chicago far more important for you than that 1 or 2 seed?

COACH BREY: Yeah, I think Chicago was very important, and we knew we were going to have a really good seed. You know, a bus ride over there was great. I mean, when we played at DePaul each year and this year not too long ago we had a great ND crowd, so I just think we're going to have a heck of a following over there, and I think we'll be comfortable there. It was looking that way for a month. I was hoping we could make it come true, no matter what the number was next to our name.

Q. Talk about playing at night.

COACH BREY: You know, I think it's hard to call that. I think it's hard to say, yeah, you're definitely going to be in the night

*Notre Dame 03.13.11*

session because it sells tickets. That has nothing to do with it. TV will take this stuff right now and probably by 3:00 o'clock tomorrow we'll know we could play at noon, we could play at 10:00 eastern time, and there's really no way of predicting that.

**THE MODERATOR:** The first player that we have is Ben Hansbrough.

**Q.** I just wondered after the game the other night, do you immediately switch your focus to the NCAA Tournament despite how tough of a loss that was, or do you -- did you kind of stew on it until the brackets were announced today?

**BEN HANSBROUGH:** Yeah, it was obviously one of the tougher losses for me here at Notre Dame, but then again, it's on to the next one. I think one of my jobs as one of the leaders of this team is to get this team ready for the NCAA Tournament, and I think we'll do that by bouncing back from a loss. I mean, we've been great all year. After every loss I feel like we've had our best practices and our best preparation, and this group has done a great job of preparing itself for any tournament we go into.

Even the Big East tournament I felt like our practices were very good. We came out on the other end of it, and sometimes that's how it happens. I think we'll do a great job of practicing for this tournament and moving on.

**Q.** As good of a leader as you've been for this team, I just wondered how vocal have you been, if you have been at all, about the Final Four as the ultimate goal and as you enter the NCAA Tournament here in Chicago on Friday? Is that a goal that you talk about?

**BEN HANSBROUGH:** I mean, right now we want to take it one game at a time. You can't get caught looking into the future too much and miss out on the opportunity, the present opportunity at hand. You'll slip up if you don't take care of your business when it's right there. We'll take it right now. We're just trying to win, like Coach Brey said, the Chicago Invitational, and we'll try to win our first game against Akron and then move on to the next one and so on and so on.

**Q.** (No microphone.)

**ASAP** sports

...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

**BEN HANSBROUGH:** I don't know yet. I'm going to look up their schedule tonight and see who their losses were again and try to put some pieces together. I'll know a lot more tomorrow.

**Q.** What do you take away from what you guys went through last year?

**BEN HANSBROUGH:** I think that's been our motivation all year. It's been a chip on the shoulder. You can ask any of these guys, Carlson, Abro, Ty, me. I know Scott, Scott is playing at an all time high level of confidence now, and I think he will continue to improve for us, and I think we're going to go in here playing with a chip on our shoulder a little bit.

**Q.** Coach Brey mentioned how he had to get you guys to go out in New Orleans and just walk around after that game. Do you remember that?

**BEN HANSBROUGH:** Yeah, I do remember it. It was very emotional for us, but then again, I think it's helped us for the long run of the season, especially this year. Like I said, it's been a driving factor to work hard in the weight room and push ourselves and continue to improve.

**Q.** What was the initial reaction when the No. 1 seeds were unveiled and Notre Dame wasn't one of them?

**BEN HANSBROUGH:** You know, we can't change it. We can't change it. I think the NCAA Tournament, I think seeds do matter but I don't think they matter greatly. If you're wanting to make a deep run, you have to beat some really good teams regardless of what your seed is. You're going to have to take care of business. At the end of the day, you're going to have to beat whoever it is.

**Q.** I know the numbers don't matter. Does that mean that you guys are happy where you are?

**BEN HANSBROUGH:** Yeah, I think it's a representation of what we've done throughout the season, hard work starting this summer and talked about some of our goals. Now we're inching closer and closer with the tournament coming up.

*Notre Dame 03.13.11*

Q. Can you use the fact that you didn't get to the Big East Finals as an additional chip on your shoulder, as motivation?

BEN HANSBROUGH: Yeah, I think so, for sure, especially look at the way this group has responded after losses, and I think we've really responded well after this team has gotten beat, and I think we will continue to do so.

Q. How much do you guys need a game to get rid of what happened Friday in New York?

BEN HANSBROUGH: I think we just need to practice because I think we're going to have some of the best practices of the year heading into the NCAA Tournament, especially with the heart-breaking loss that we just had against Louisville, but I think it'll be good for us in the long run.

Q. (No microphone.)

BEN HANSBROUGH: I think we just need to have like our focus, and it has been all year. I think we're going to try to take it to another level of intensity, new level of focus and new level of just getting ready for the NCAA Tournament.

Q. How exciting is this?

BEN HANSBROUGH: It's very exciting. We're about to go play in the NCAA Tournament 90 miles down the road with a bunch of teammates that care about each other. It's a thrill to go chase it down with a true unit of guys.

Q. I think in the middle of the season you were asked, this team is a great team. How good has this team been?

BEN HANSBROUGH: I think we can beat anybody in the country when we're playing well. I don't think there's one team in the country we can't beat.

Q. How has your role changed from day one through today? Have you taken more of a driven type of player, or would you say you're pretty much the same?

BEN HANSBROUGH: You mean from day one as soon as I got to Notre Dame?

Q. From day one of this year.

BEN HANSBROUGH: I wouldn't say my role has changed a lot. I mean, I've just been -- I'm one of the leaders on this team, continue to push people, and I would say I'm more reliant as a point guard.

At the start of the season, Coach Brey really wanted to get me going at the two. I would say now I play a majority of the one.

THE MODERATOR: The next player we're going to have is Tyrone Nash.

Q. (No microphone.)

TYRONE NASH: Yeah, you mean in New Orleans? Definitely couldn't enjoy Bourbon Street like we wanted to. But we have a chance to redeem ourselves now. We have a little sour taste in our mouth that we want to wash out, and we're looking forward to this great accomplishment and just looking forward to taking advantage of it.

Q. How much pride do you take in how far this program has come?

TYRONE NASH: This is a testament to how great a team we are. It's a blessing, man, just to have an opportunity to be in the NCAA Tournament. A lot of my friends never receive the opportunity to play in the NCAA Tournament. I've got the chance now three times, so it's definitely a blessing. These guys that I play with every day, it's just a great achievement, man. I may not show it but I'm really ecstatic having an opportunity to play again with these guys and just go out there and have fun, be a kid again and go out there in the NCAA Tournament and be proud and have fun.

Q. (No microphone.)

TYRONE NASH: Like Ben said, all that goes out the window. Once they come out with the numbers it doesn't matter because you have to win games. Regardless of who you play, every team in the tournament is good or else they wouldn't be there. We have to go out there and give our best shot to everyone because they're going to give their best shot to us.

Q. (No microphone.)

TYRONE NASH: I mean, once again, we have to go in with the mindset that every team is one of the top teams in the country, and we

can't take anything for granted that they come from a lower tier league or Colonial League or America East or wherever. It doesn't matter what conference they're from. If they're in the tournament, they're good. If we're in the tournament, we're playing one of the top teams in the Big East or top teams in the country, and going in with that kind of focus, I think we'll be okay.

Q. (No microphone.)

TYRONE NASH: I mean, yes, 90 miles down the road in Chicago, St. Paddy's Day, the holidays is around, and hopefully it'll be a home game for us and you know how well we play at home.

Q. You guys talked in the preseason about goals this year. Did you guys ever talk about getting an X number seed in the NCAA Tournament?

TYRONE NASH: No, our goal has always been to get back to the NCAA Tournament, not just to get there, we want to win. Nobody wants to get there and lose in the first round again. That's something we try to avoid doing because that's what's driven us to this point this year.

Q. Did you think during the season you had a chance to be a three or to be a two?

TYRONE NASH: I mean, we really didn't care about that. We just felt if we win and take care of our business on the court, all that stuff will play itself out. We just concentrate on winning games, man, and we're lucky we've got a 2 seed.

THE MODERATOR: Next up is Scott Martin.

Q. Just your thoughts on getting into the tournament, not having played for two years, coming off one of your best games offensively. Did you ever imagine that you'd be in this position, and what's it feel like?

SCOTT MARTIN: I always hoped I'd be back in this position. There were a couple days there where I wasn't sure. But I'm just excited to go back to the tournament and get to play. It's been a long time, and I haven't got to play in it in a Notre Dame uniform, so I'm excited to do that and excited to do it with these guys and just go out and have fun.

Q. Playing close to home, too, are you going to have -- I imagine you're going to have a lot of family and friends there?

SCOTT MARTIN: Oh, yeah. I'm a big fan of the central time zone, so I'm excited to get back there and be close to home. Yeah, I'll definitely have a lot of family and friends there.

Q. (No microphone.)

SCOTT MARTIN: It's a great honor. I'm excited, obviously. It's such a great league, and to be honored like that is a big deal for me, and hopefully it translates into some wins down the line here.

Q. When did you find out?

SCOTT MARTIN: Coach Brey called me. I couldn't watch the game really, so I didn't know. I kind of watched the end of it and turned it right off. I didn't want to watch them celebrating and stuff. Coach Brey called me and Coach Ingelsby texted me and then the rest of the staff texted me, so that's how I find out.

Q. What do you need to do to carry over what you did against Louisville next week into the NCAA Tournament?

SCOTT MARTIN: Just keep doing what I've been doing pretty much all year. I haven't changed anything, just going about my business and doing what I do.

Q. Are you sure about that? You haven't changed anything?

SCOTT MARTIN: I haven't changed anything. I added a song to my pregame playlist. That's about it.

Q. What song is it?

SCOTT MARTIN: I'm just kidding, I didn't actually do that. (Laughter).

Q. Are you carrying a little anger into the tournament and can you use that to your advantage?

SCOTT MARTIN: I mean, I wouldn't call it anger. I would call it determination, I guess. We're focused now. We stumbled, but we'll get back up, and we'll keep fighting. The great thing about this team is there's no quit in us.

We're going to keep going until they stop us and they take the ball from us. So we're just going to go out there and give it everything we've got and let the chips fall where they may.

Q. (No microphone.)

SCOTT MARTIN: No, not yet. I know they've got a seven-footer from Coach Brey. That's about it.

Q. When you look at the bracket, just the fact that Purdue's (Inaudible) cross your mind?

SCOTT MARTIN: Oh, I didn't notice. Yeah, like coach said, there's a lot of stuff that's got to happen for that to go down, and I'm not worried about it. We're trying to beat Akron right now and win what Coach Brey calls the Chicago Invitational. We've got to win two games for that to even be thought of, so that's the farthest thing from my mind right now.

Q. (No microphone.)

SCOTT MARTIN: I had a little chuckle, but that's about it.

THE MODERATOR: Next up is going to be Carleton Scott.

Q. (No microphone.)

CARLETON SCOTT: It was a big smile but it didn't last that long. We had to focus on the Chicago Invitational, as coach said, and concentrate on that first game against Akron. If we take care of business, then we'll head down south. But until that, we have a job to do in Chicago.

Q. Of the things that motivate you, that's not one of the things that motivates you, playing at home?

CARLETON SCOTT: Yeah, it is. I'll be honest, it is, but like you said, you've got to concentrate on the now and taking that first step.

Q. What did you take away from last year's experience, the tournament experience?

CARLETON SCOTT: That we don't want that feeling again. It was a terrible feeling for us. We didn't achieve what we wanted to last year, and our stay was cut short. You know, this year we have a different focus, different mindset, and we've just got to approach the

game with that focus and mindset and we'll be fine.

Q. What did you learn about the tournament itself, just playing in that atmosphere, everything that goes with it?

CARLETON SCOTT: It's great. We loved that feeling of being in the tournament. There's been a year where we haven't made the tournament, and it's a place that we love being in, and just satisfied and happy being there.

But that's not our goal. Our goal wasn't just to make the tournament, our goal was to win, so we just have to go in there with that mindset.

Q. You knew the Chicago thing was almost certainly going to happen, but the fact that it did happen, you're lucky to say we have an opportunity in Chicago. How is that going to help you?

CARLETON SCOTT: It's going to help us a lot. Like Ben said and the guys before, we haven't lost at home. It's going to be like a home atmosphere for us and we have to treat it that way, and it'll be a good test for us.

Q. How does this team respond to playing (inaudible)?

CARLETON SCOTT: This is something that we focused on all year long starting in the summer, actually starting from the day we lost to Old Dominion last year. We came back in the off-season and said we don't want to feel like this again, and ever since then we've been pushing each other as hard as we can to ensure that doesn't ever happen again.

Q. What do you remember from the walk last year?

CARLETON SCOTT: Yeah, I kind of wanted to just be in my room and just think about everything, and it was tough, especially with that run that we made at the end of the year. To have it cut short like that, it was definitely a heart breaking thing for us. But it's something that we have to learn on, and like I said, learn from the experience and come back and make sure it doesn't happen again.

Q. What was the plan after last year, just team building or --

**CARLETON SCOTT:** It was more like a mental thing for us. It's kind of like a coping thing. You know, everybody was kind of shocked, almost just like when we lost against Louisville. It was like a shock. We were numb. Coach just wanted to try to ease us down as best we could because we're a team when we do stumble, we take it to heart and we always try to come back, and unfortunately you can't come back from a loss in the tournament.

**Q.** What do you take from the loss against Louisville?

**CARLETON SCOTT:** You know, you take it as it's something that we can learn on and we've got to play again. It's not the last game of the season. We have film to watch and analyze and say, hey, we can get better in these areas, and that's what we're going to do.

**Q.** (No microphone.)

**CARLETON SCOTT:** The same way we've responded in losses before. You know, the guys, we have this focus. You can just see it on everybody's faces saying, hey, it's time to go back to the lab, and like I said, go back to work and look at the guy next to you and say, I know he's got my back, I've got his back, and just trusting each other and that's the way we've been all year.

**Q.** As one of the more vocal captains is there anything you say, a point you want to get across to these guys?

**CARLETON SCOTT:** Same point I've been making all year. We have to play again and we have to bounce back. We can't hang our heads; we can't feel sorry for ourselves. We got hit in the mouth and we've got to get back up.

**Q.** Did you watch the final game last night?

**CARLETON SCOTT:** No, I didn't. It was tough. I watched the highlights of it. It was tough for me. I would have loved to have been playing in it. It was tough.

**THE MODERATOR:** We'll have Tim Abromaitis.

**Q.** (No microphone.)

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Yeah, it was. I didn't know if I wanted to at least, but there wasn't

really much else on, and I guess I was just tempted and ended up watching the whole thing.

**Q.** How would you describe your emotion? Was it anger?

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Well, I think the initial reaction to losing was disappointment because obviously we wanted to go further in the tournament and hopefully win the whole thing.

But right now I think we've kind of started to put it behind us, and we're kind of anxious right now, I'd say, for the tournament more than anything else.

We've been able to bounce back all year and kind of put losses behind us and learn from them, so I think right now we're kind of moving on from the Big East tournament and ready to make a run in this one.

**Q.** I'm just looking at the schedule now, and you guys for the most part after a loss have come back and played two, three days after. Is that typical, having to wait now a full week from the Louisville game?

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Yeah, I think it's easier to bounce back when right away you have to kind of get yourself mentally prepared for a new team and get back into the pregame routine and everything like that. But at the same time, I think it's kind of nice to have a little bit more of a break right now after having played two games in two days and being able to rest and kind of recover and kind of get the emotional aspect of being in the NCAA Tournament kind of out of the way. Obviously it's been nice and good for us in the past being able to kind of bounce back right away, but I think we're mature enough and experienced enough to be able to handle this little layoff and come back ready to go.

**Q.** Even though last year was a disappointment in the tournament, what do you take away from that that'll help this year in terms of you talked about the emotional aspects?

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Yeah, well, I think last year proved to us just how quickly it can be over. You know, being I think the first game maybe of the tournament last year and being

out right away just showed us how you really can't take it for granted and can't take anybody lightly. You have to go out ready to go.

You know, we'll get prepared. I think we're all definitely excited. But none of us are taking it for granted, and I think that's what we learned from last year.

**Q.** What was the reaction I believe upstairs when you saw the four No. 1 seeds? Was there any reaction at all?

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** No.

**Q.** You guys kind of expected that one?

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Well, I think realistically we were expecting to be a 2 seed. I mean, I don't know, no one really talked about it, but I wouldn't say anyone was shocked or anything like that. Even just looking around at the guys when they named the four seeds, no one really reacted. I think that's kind of a testament to just how steady our team is and willing to face any challenge, and I think we're all excited to be a 2 seed, and it's kind of an honor to be in that position.

**Q.** The fact that this is Notre Dame's best team in 30 years, does that come with some pride?

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Yeah, definitely. We're proud of the situation that we've put ourselves in and the success that we've had this year. You know, we're happy with a lot of the accomplishments that we've had so far, but being a 2 seed, that doesn't really -- that doesn't get you really anything unless you get a few rounds in and make a run hopefully.

**Q.** Is there a different buzz when you're around campus or when you're in New York because of what you guys have done?

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Definitely. I think there's a lot of new Notre Dame fans out there. Even just talking around the streets in New York Tuesday and Wednesday when we got there, it was really cool to see just people on the street wanted to take pictures with us and just shouting, "Go Irish," that kind of stuff, and it's definitely something none of us have experienced before here, and I think it just speaks to how well we've done this year.

**Q.** Do you think you might have one or two of those in Chicago?

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Yeah, I'm hoping a couple fans make the trip out. It should be easy enough.

**Q.** (No microphone.)

**TIM ABROMAITIS:** Well, I mean, that being the year that we didn't go to the tournament, I would have definitely been excited to hear that. I mean, I don't know if I would have believed it because definitely to be a Top 2 seed is to be in elite company. Obviously I think we've been a competent group. All the teams since I've been here have been competent, but to be this good is something that is definitely new for us and exciting for us, and I think we'll kind of take that excitement into the tournament.

*FastScripts* by ASAP Sports