

**March 20, 2014**



UConn – 89  
Saint Joseph's – 81

An interview with:



THE MODERATOR: Joined by Saint Joseph's University head coach Phil Martelli, and student-athletes Langston Galloway and Halil Kanacevic.

Coach, if you want to go ahead and make your opening statement.

COACH MARTELLI: We have a message on the wall in our locker room, we put the message on the blackboard before every game, and then we say it, Act like a champion. I just told the team, that's exactly what they did for 45 minutes, and really what they've done since June.

Sometimes in life you don't get really what you want. There are reasons that may be out there for anybody. I don't know why. But if anybody deserved to keep playing, these guys certainly did. Connecticut did everything that they had to do. And the only number that jumps out is our turnover numbers. It's too high, particularly when we only had five at half.

So we came in here as champions, and we're going to leave that locker room tonight. It will be a long night tonight, probably a long weekend. Then we'll get each of these guys on their path to life.

If it's the hardest thing they face, they've lived a blessed life.

**Q.** Can you guys just discuss the senior class and the effort you guys gave through your four years, and how difficult it is to go out like this.

HALIL KANACEVIC: Yeah, I think we gave tremendous effort since we've been here. We've had a lot of ups and downs. Not only me and Langston, but Ron Roberts, Daryus Quarles, Colin Kelly, we've all been through a tough time since we've been here. We just stuck together honestly.

I think that's what made this year a great one up until now. I mean, it's tough to go out like this. You never want to go out an a loss.

But, yeah, I'm happy to see these guys grow with me. That's the happiest I've been because I've seen everybody get better. It's just been tremendous.

It's tough because obviously no one wants to go out with a loss, but I've seen these guys grow up right with me, and I'm better for that. They're tremendous people. Forget about the basketball. Everybody is a tremendous player, but they're tremendous people, tremendous teammates. I don't think I've been around a group of people my age that are so giving.

So I love these guys from the bottom of my heart, and if I didn't, I wouldn't be saying so. I'd tell you I hate them, but there's no ounce of hate in my heart for any of these guys.

LANGSTON GALLOWAY: It's definitely been a journey. We've been on so many ups and downs. And the main thing, the reason why I know I came here and the rest of these guys came here was to bring Saint Joe's back and get them back to this point because it's been a long time since we've been at this point in the tournament.

I wouldn't do it with any other group of guys. I mean, everybody gave it their all tonight. I mean, the shots fell here and there and some went out. But I just love this group of guys, and I'm just glad I got a chance to play with them. I hope that we keep it going for Saint Joe's.

**Q.** You guys really seemed to execute extremely well offensively all night. Coach mentioned the turnovers. What do you think changed in the second half?

HALIL KANACEVIC: I think we did a good job in the second half defensively, honestly. We had them up by three, and Napier went to the basket, missed, and I did a horrible job boxing out Brimah, and he got the offensive rebound and got that one. That was the pivotal moment when we had them. That's where I let these guys down. I should have boxed him out better and never let him get the offensive rebound.

I think coach did a great job laying out a game plan for us, and we executed it. We had them down. We were up by three. I think that hurt us tremendously, and I'm sorry for that, honestly.

LANGSTON GALLOWAY: I think that we were right there. I know I made a turnover at the end and then forced a shot at the end. I just wanted to keep the ball in my hand. I wanted to go out with the ball being in my hands. It's a tough play. Hit the side of the backboard.

I'm definitely upset with myself for not getting a better quality shot because I know if I had gotten a better quality shot, I probably would have made it.

Just upset. Just going to console the rest of these guys because they have to come back next year and try to get to this point.

**Q. Langston, at the end there, Shabazz came over to you and said some words and gave you a hug. Just what did that mean to you? If you shared any words, were you expecting that? What did that sort of mean for you?**

LANGSTON GALLOWAY: I mean, he's a great player, and he just was saying a few words, saying that I had a great game. I'll see him in the future.

Hopefully, in my career, I'll be able to play professionally and go with Halil, Ron, and just see our games flourish, and we'll see him down the line.

**Q. How does the team change when Halil's not on the floor?**

LANGSTON GALLOWAY: I mean, that's a tough question. The team changes a lot. I mean, he definitely is one of our main ball handlers. He does it all. That's the thing, you get everything from him, offensive with assists, rebounds, defensive you get blocks. He does it all.

It hurt us at the end with him not being on the court, but us as seniors wanted to step up and try to make some things happen, but it didn't go our way.

**Q. Halil, can you just talk about to have such an incredible game, what it was like to have to be forced to watch the end of it.**

HALIL KANACEVIC: It was tough. You don't want to go out like that. I definitely don't want to go out like that. It's one of those things where it bothers you tremendously.

You've got guys on the bench trying to lift your spirits. And I'm still in the game because we were still in the game at that point. I'm still trying to keep these guys going. With me on the court or without me on the court, these are great players. This guy has close to 2,000 points in his career, and leading three-point shooter. Ron Roberts, the beast down low.

Me on the court, me not on the court, I've got nothing but confidence in these guys. But me being in foul trouble is no way I want to go out. I feel bad, but I tried to just stay in the game with these guys. There's nothing you can do at that point.

He called the call, and I'm just mad I was on the bench at the end of the game.

THE MODERATOR: Langston, Halil, thank you for your time. Great season.

**Q. Phil, if you could just take us through that final possession of regulation. Did Langston kind of have carte blanche? What was the approach there?**

COACH MARTELLI: I felt that they would overreact to the ball screen. So what I wanted to do was we ran a fake ball screen. Halil came, and Lang put the ball through his legs, and I was tempted right then to grab another time-out. We wanted the ball a little bit more centered than we got. We got stuck on the side.

If they said, you know, rewind, we're going to do that again, then I would give him the ball again and let him make a play because both of the big plays he made last weekend, he had the ball. Usually, we've been running him off things.

But I really wanted the ball in the center of the floor and Ron and Halil close to the basket for an offensive rebound opportunity.

**Q. Phil, when you're in the course of a game, you're not really thinking about how great the game is. Do you ever take a moment and realize, This is a great game? As the game is going on, I know it's tough now, but it was a**

**great basketball game to watch.**

COACH MARTELLI: Yeah, I appreciate that, and if I worked for the network and I could care about viewership, I'd be cool about that. But it wasn't so great.

I appreciate what you said, though. Thank you.

**Q. Just to follow up on Langston, Phil. If you could kind of put his career in perspective, given some of the you've coached Bernard Blount. You've coached Jameer and Delonte, close to a thousand points.**

COACH MARTELLI: The things that jump out to me with the human being, that's a tribute to his family. He's a wonderful, wonderful young guy. He worked to be this good.

When you start talking about all-timers, you start talking about the person that he is. He's on that list as an all-time person, and the numbers speak for themselves. He's had an awful lot of opportunities, and they've been through some things and stayed the course.

I don't know if we've ever had a player more proud to wear the Saint Joe uniform.

**Q. Phil, did what Shabazz did with Langston and Ron, did that kind of catch you by surprise a little bit? As a coach and a mentor of younger children, I mean, does it strike you as sort of a touching moment in an atmosphere like that?**

COACH MARTELLI: I didn't really see it, but I heard you describe it to him. To me, a lot of societal ways, we've lost our way because we no longer pay each other respect. I tried to build this program on respect, respect for the game, and I think that's what he did.

And to be honest with you, that's what I tried to do, to take them out with eight seconds left. I let them down Senior Day because I was in such a fog and worrying about how he played. I should have gotten them out for a final ovation in Hagan Arena like they received tonight.

But I don't have anything but classy thoughts about Kevin Ollie and the Connecticut program and the competition tonight. The gentleman over here said it was a straight-up competition, and that old cliché, somebody had to lose, and unfortunately, it was us.

**Q. Were you worried at all about what your team had left in the tank heading into**

**overtime considering the amount of minutes they played, not only tonight but all year?**

COACH MARTELLI: No, I wasn't worried about it. It was a media timeout. It was a four-minute media timeout that we had to play. That's how we break the game up.

And really until later in the second half was the first time we lost two consecutive media timeouts. We won four and one in the first half. I don't know what the numbers were in the second half. The first basket in the second half, an then one, and I'm just saying it this way. We did exactly what we wanted to do. They had 67 points in regulation, and they had taken four foul shots.

Then we had to chase. When we got down, we had to chase, and that's not to our strength. It's not minutes. It's actual abilities. We don't have a lot of foot speed.

**Q. Phil, just talk about the senior class as a whole and what they've done to bring this program back. I mean, it's your first tournament appearance in a few years. Just talk about the senior class as a whole.**

COACH MARTELLI: I don't know if I can answer that as well as you just expressed it. Here's what I'm driving at. Halil has graduated. Langston has graduated. Colin Kelly will graduate, and Daryus Quarles will graduate. Ron Roberts will graduate, and Daryus Quarles will be pulled by his feet across the stage at graduation. So that starts with that.

What I asked them to do is to be better men than they were as high school kids. Across the board, that's a yes. I want them to be on the brink of college graduation. They've done that. And every one of them is a better player. So mission accomplished for those five guys.

And for the way that they represented Saint Joseph's, you're talking about three of them are going to go into the Basketball Hall of Fame sometime at Saint Joe, and that's quite an honor. And they left a mark that will have to be followed by DeAndre' and Chris Wilson and the upcoming kids we have.

Thank you for the way you told our story.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach.

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