

**March 18, 2014**



Albany – 71  
Mount St. Mary's – 64

An interview with:



THE MODERATOR: We are joined by the head coach of Albany, Will Brown, as well as student-athletes DJ Evans and Peter Hooley.

Coach, an opening statement, and then we'll open the floor for questions for student-athletes.

COACH BROWN: First off I'd like to congratulate Coach Christian and Mount St. Mary's program for an outstanding season.

To me it's all about matchups, and this was not a good matchup on paper for us, because they played four guards, they spread the floor, and they shoot a ton of 3s.

Our goal coming into this game was to stay big, play big, be stay. And I'm proud of my guys. I thought we handled adversity well tonight. I thought we weathered the storm, we stayed the course, and we made plays down the stretch, we finished.

That's important. It's a great win for the America East Conference and for University of Albany, our athletic department and our program, and we couldn't be happier.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes only.

**Q. DJ, nine rebounds tonight, it was one of those things you knew coming in -- you**

**knew you had to do what you had to do against the pressure?**

DJ EVANS: Yeah, my coaches just told me to get in to help the bigs rebound because they were shooting a lot of long 3s, so long 3s against long rebounds, so I was at the right place at the right time.

**Q. For either of you guys, what was going through your mind when you guys were up 21-2 and they just made a furious comeback, end up with the lead? What was going through your mind?**

PETER HOOLEY: We knew they were a great team. Every team here is a great team. We knew they were going to make a run. We just had to remain calm and weather the storm and make sure we stayed together.

We had to go on a little run of our own, and then we did. They went on another run, and then we had to fight back and make another run.

That's what we pride ourselves on, being resilient. The fact that we managed to pull it out is a great thing.

**Q. Can you just talk about the guy sitting to your right, what DJ has meant to this team, not just today but the past three games?**

PETER HOOLEY: DJ is a terrific player. I knew that coming. He's really an unbelievable player, every part of the court. He got nine rebounds and he's about 4'8", so that's really impressive.

He does all the little things that you can't find in most players. I don't think any other 4'8" guy would go in there and get that many boards.

But he did what he had to do to help us get this win, and I'm really proud of him.

**Q. Your family been to the game?**

PETER HOOLEY: They had a nice 3:00 a.m. wake-up, so probably all my 20 relatives will probably all be around the TV watching back home. Probably get on the phone with my mom

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after this. She'll probably be in tears, so that will be good.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions for our student-athletes? DJ and Peter, thanks for your time. Good luck against Florida in the second round.

Open the floor now for questions for Coach Brown.

**Q. You guys are leading 21-2. They go on a 21-2 run. I don't think I've ever seen that. Can you tell us as the coach what were you thinking at that point when the game was tied and blowing a 19-point lead?**

COACH BROWN: Blowing a 19-point lead, we're the only game on national television, so we wanted to keep the viewers interested.

No, I mean, basketball is a game of runs, and we happened to make that first run. And Mount St. Mary's is too good of a team, they're too good offensively. And they play the pressure, defense and they -- as VCU, it's havoc.

So we just knew they'd make a run. We just didn't want to hurt ourselves, and we did during that initial run they made with some careless turnovers.

They took 37 3s out of 60 shots. I mean, our defense wasn't bad. We held them to 36 percent. Biggest thing was we pounded them on the glass. That was important to us.

But they're a difficult matchup for us. They played four guards, they spread the floor, shoot a ton of 3s. And heading into the game -- I'm a stubborn coach and I wasn't going to match up to them. I wanted to stay big with Sam and John up front and try to be the more physical team.

And I think we did enough. We beat a good basketball team and a team that was playing very well heading into the NCAA Tournament.

**Q. Same question I asked of Pete. Do you think is it fair to say DJ has been sort of an unsung hero for you guys for a little while?**

COACH BROWN: DJ is awesome. What people don't realize, DJ as a freshman in college led East Mississippi Junior College to the national tournament, as a sophomore led East Mississippi right back to the national tournament. As a junior now he comes in and sits behind Mike Black, a First-Team All-Conference point guard.

Tough, tough year for him. He just kept working and working and working, and I had to keep telling him next year's your time. Next year's your time.

And one of the things we talked to DJ with, you know what, Mike left his mark, you know, make your mark now.

And he was up and down. He was streaky for the first -- throughout the year. And the last month he's been as good and as valuable as any player in our program. And I'll tell you what, I have no problem saying the last couple of weeks he's been as good as any player in the America East Conference. He has a chip on his shoulder. Peter said he's 4'8". I'll give him five feet. He's fearless. I think at that size you have to be fearless and play with a chip on your shoulder.

I'm very happy for him because it would have been very easy for him last year when he wasn't playing to make every excuse to go somewhere else, and he believed in us, we believed in him. And he's the happiest kid in the world right now. He really is. And he deserves to be recognized. And I'm glad he made All-Tournament in the America East Conference tournament, and he was tremendous today.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions for Coach Brown? Coach, thank you for your time. Good luck against the Gators.

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