

BOSTON UNIVERSITY HEAD COACH JACK PARKER QUOTES

Opening Remarks:

“We’re very, very fortunate to still be in this tournament. Saturday night’s win (by Maine) could have easily been us going home instead of getting ready to play a third game because they played so well on Friday night as well. We kind of squeaked out a win, and they dominated us on Saturday. We didn’t play anywhere near the way we should. I was very disappointed.”

“I thought Sunday night we played pretty well in the physical aspect of the game and the emotional aspect of the game, and that was what we needed to do because we hadn’t been doing that for a while. We have been on a slippery slope since the Beanpot, not playing our best hockey.”

“Frankly, if you told me we were going to get to the Garden by losing one of the games, I would have said that would be ok because we need to get slapped up beside the head, and we got slapped. We got embarrassed in our own building on Saturday night. We come back and play much better on Sunday and got ourselves here. We’re fortunate, and we’re happy. Now it remains to be seen if we can learn that lesson.”

“Obviously, the teams we’re playing from here on are not teams we’re going to have any ability to look by at all. Hopefully, we’ll be ready to play.”

“I have to mention the fact that if anyone was in the building for any of the games, you would believe that Maine had the best power play in the nation and the best penalty kill in the league, and you would have believed that BU was 34th in those numbers. They completely dominated us in both of those areas of special teams. When you get dominated in special teams and you still sneak out, you’re really fortunate.”

On if it’s unique having UML and NU at the Garden for the 25th anniversary of Hockey East:

“Well, it’s not that unique. We play BC and Northeastern a lot in the Beanpot, so it looks like another Beanpot tournament. UMass-Lowell has been there in the Garden before and has been to the finals I believe. It’s not unusual for them. “

“It’s not the usual suspects either. There were some upsets here if you look at the seeds, but I don’t think anyone is upset in Hockey East. There are some new faces, that’s for sure, but they’re all good teams.”

On if he’ll eventually look back and think that Saturday’s loss to Maine was good for the team:

“I’m hoping we are. It’s difficult to get to a team that is winning but not playing its best hockey to get them to play better. When we played Northeastern during the two tied games, we each got two points out of that weekend. I would have been much happier if we had gotten a win and a loss out of that weekend. We only had lost one game since November, and it’s hard to get their attention if they aren’t doing the little things well or playing physical because they are winning on talent and some goaltending. They needed to be awakened, and we didn’t awaken them. Maybe I should have benched some more guys or maybe we should have tried some more emotional stuff.”

“I wasn’t happy the way we were going down the stretch. The last two regular season games were too easy for us, and in reality, the two games against UMass before that were too easy for us. The puck was just jumping in the net for us. It wasn’t as if we played unbelievable or play with great emotion.”

“The game up at UMass where we’re losing 3-0 at the end of the first and we got back and won that game, I thought since the Beanpot that was the only great game we’ve played during all that time. We need to get back to that. I don’t think we played great against Maine on Sunday night, but we certainly played a lot better and got back on track much better than we were playing the two games before that and the two games that we played against Providence as well.”

On playing Boston College:

“I think we are fortunate that we are playing BC because I think BC and BU usually bring out the best in each other. I think BC is a team going in the right direction, and we have to see if can get back going in the right direction. BC is playing really well lately. They certainly must have played great up at UNH. I saw the game that they lost on TV at Northeastern. I thought they played extremely well, and they obviously must have played great to beat Northeastern at BC. There’s four really solid games in a row from goaltending on out with them. We certainly haven’t done that in our last four.”

“They are playing very well right now. They have their power play going again. They are killing penalties very well. I think they have as great a group of forwards as there are in the league. It looks like [John] Muse is back on his game. They are the defending league and national champion. If you don’t beat them, they are not going to beat themselves. This time of year has been their time of year for a decade. It’s up to us to make sure we’re at the top of our game or we’re going to be watching them play on Saturday night.”

On if the win at BC was a momentum changer for the season:

“Frankly, I thought we played better in the tied game that we had here than we did at BC. But I think whenever you get three out of four points against your arch rival, it really gets you jacked up. That weekend was a boost for us confidence wise but also a boost for us relief wise. We beat our arch rival and don’t have to worry about them for a while. I thought we played extremely well in the last game we played against them here when we were going real well and they weren’t going so well. I think you can throw that game out. The games were really well played and could have gone either way with both teams, but I thought we played really well, especially in the tied game. When we get out of that weekend with three out of four points, we thought really good about ourselves and went on a run from there.”

On Steve Smolinsky filling in for Brian Strait and how that has helped the team:

“We have a great core of defensemen, and we’ve been fortunate all year that we haven’t had any injuries there. We didn’t know that we were going to lose one or maybe two defensemen to the US Junior team at Christmas time. We knew Smolinsky was going to play in those games. We were pleased with how well he played in practice. He never played defenseman for us, and he played very well for us at the Denver Cup. When Strait went down for us, he played well in the games that he came in for that. It’s true that we didn’t move him back before because he would have played a lot for us the year before. This core defensemen is a tough six to crack into.”

“He’s been the ultimate team player and a real good guy in his role. He’s also a great guy in practice to try to make our team better. I’m very happy that he had a chance to contribute to our team this year, especially on the last weekend where he got to play and we played well on Senior Night against Providence. He feels like he’s contributed to this team and he’s there help to us. Looks like [Brian] Strait will be available for BC, but if he’s not, we don’t think we’re missing a beat with [Smolinsky].”