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Coach K apologizes to Altman for postgame chat with Brooks

(AP) - Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski says he has apologized to Oregon coach Dana Altman for his postgame conversation with Dillon Brooks.

In a statement issued March 26, Krzyzewski said "it is not my place to talk to another team's player" and he hoped he "did not create a distraction" for the top-seeded Ducks. Oregon lost to Oklahoma 80-68 on Saturday night in the West Regional final of the NCAA Tournament.

Brooks hit a long 3-pointer with the shot clock expiring in the final seconds of the Ducks' 82-68 victory over Duke on Thursday night. In the handshake line, Krzyzewski had a prolonged discussion with the Oregon guard - and video of it immediately went viral.

In the statement, Krzyzewski said that chat "took the focus away from the terrific game that Dillon played." The Hall of Fame coach also apologized for responding "incorrectly to a reporter's question about my comment to Dillon."

Brooks managed just seven points with three turnovers before fouling out against the Sooners, but the Canadian forward said the spotlight on his postgame conversation with Krzyzewski wasn't the reason.

"I'm still the same player," Brooks said. "I'm just going to learn from this and rally for next season."

Altman dismissed Krzyzewski's concerns after the Ducks' loss to Oklahoma.

"He called and apologized, and I told him he didn't need to," Altman said. "Someone that has accomplished what he has accomplished and makes a comment to one of my players is perfectly fine with me, and it didn't bother me at all. It bothered a lot of people. It didn't bother me. It didn't bother Dillon, and Dillon's response proved that."

In the locker room after Thursday's game, Brooks said that Krzyzewski told him "I'm too good of a player to be showing (off) at the end."

In his ensuing news conference, Krzyzewski disputed Brooks' version of events and appeared angry when it was brought up.

"I didn't say that," Krzyzewski said. "You can say whatever you want. Dillon Brooks is a hell of a player. I said, 'You're a terrific player.' And you can take whatever he said and go with it, all right?"

A day later, Altman defended his leading scorer, saying Krzyzewski should have approached him - not Brooks - and that he gave the order to shoot because the shot clock was winding down.

"I told Dillon to shoot it. So if anybody's got a problem with it, it should be directed at me," Altman said. "He was acting on my orders. I told him to shoot it. I didn't think he'd make it. It was a 30-footer, but there was a five-, six-second difference there."

On Saturday, Krzyzewski expressed regret about the situation.

"Clearly, the story that night was about Oregon advancing to the Elite Eight, and the outstanding game they played," he said. "I sincerely hope I did not create a distraction for coach Altman and his team at this critical time of year. Certainly, I have the utmost respect for the Oregon program and their tremendous accomplishments."

Statement on New Pell Grant Program Costs from CBO

"Today, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released new data projecting Pell Grant program costs that are significantly lower than prior estimates. Program costs have also declined over the last six years as a result of eligibility cuts made in FY2011 and FY2012 as well as an improving economy, creating a temporary program surplus.

"Nearly 8 million students are depending on Pell Grants to help them afford and complete college, now and in the coming years. We urge Congress not to undermine Pell Grants by raiding the temporary Pell Grant surplus to fund other programs. Using Pell Grant funds for any other purpose would jeopardize access to college when our nation and economy need a more educated workforce.

"We should be doing more, not less, to help students and families pay for and complete college without burdensome debt. Eighty four percent of Pell Grant recipients have family incomes of \$40,000 or less, and they are already more than twice as likely as other students to borrow to pay for college. Nearly 9 out of 10 Pell Grant recipients who graduate from a four-year college have student debt, and their average debt is \$4,750 more than higher income students.

"Past Pell Grant funding gaps have led to deep and harmful cuts for students. Assuming Congress maintains current funding levels, CBO now projects that Pell Grants will not face a funding gap for nine years - until FY2025. However, spending Pell Grant funds elsewhere now would make that gap occur much sooner. For example, diverting \$2 billion from Pell Grants in FY2017 could lead to a funding gap as soon as FY2021.

"Moreover, these funds are urgently needed to strengthen Pell Grants. The 2016-17 maximum Pell Grant will cover less than 30% of public four-year college costs, the lowest share in more than 40 years. Under current law, the maximum Pell Grant will stop adjusting for inflation after 2017-18, eroding the grant's purchasing power even more. In addition to increasing the maximum Pell Grant and continuing to adjust it for inflation, other priorities identified and supported by a broad range of stakeholders for strengthening Pell Grants include: restoring Pell eligibility for students whose federal loans are discharged due to school closure or fraud; making grants available to students year-round; and restoring eligibility for incarcerated individuals who will be returning to the community.

"The Pell Grant program is the federal government's most valuable and effective investment in higher education. If we do not strengthen it, millions of students will be forced to borrow more, drop out, or forgo college altogether."

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