

Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gainbridge Fieldhouse

Ohio State Buckeyes

Jake Diebler

Micah Parrish

Postgame Press Conference



MICAH PARRISH: I didn't get to see the play, but we just tried to help each other. We was too far to help, the whole game basically, and that's how they got most of their 3s. That's what I'm just guessing, somebody tried to help a teammate and he got the wide open 3.

Iowa - 77, Ohio State - 70

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Coach Jake Diebler and Micah Parrish.

Coach, we'll ask you to make an opening statement.

JAKE DIEBLER: First off, give Coach McCaffery and Iowa a ton of credit. I think they've been playing really well lately, and that carried over today.

We've guarded the 3-point line really well all season, and made some uncharacteristic mistakes there. Like some old veterans do, they made us pay, and I thought ultimately that was the difference.

I thought we had really good fight, played hard. We just had some defensive errors that they made us pay and ultimately was enough to be the difference.

Q. I'm sure you guys understood the implications of this game, not just for the Big Ten tournament, but for your NCAA Tournament hopes. Curious what the conversations were like pregame and how you felt like your energy was tonight.

MICAH PARRISH: I think we was ready. We wanted to win the game. We want to win every game. Not just being in the Big Ten tournament, but we wanted to win it for us.

We wasn't really looking too far in the future. We were just worrying at the present. Tonight we just didn't get it done.

Q. Micah, on that last possession in which Brock Harding hit essentially the game-winning shot, can you just walk me through what happened on that possession, whether it was some kind of breakdown, defensive lapse that he got that wide open?

Q. When you think about some of the maybe missed opportunities this game and this season, I think about the Northwestern game in late February, is there a common thread, do you feel like, in some of those games? Or just today you said it was maybe defensive lapses. Is there something you see overall that contributed to some of those poor performances in big moments?

JAKE DIEBLER: I don't necessarily feel like today was a poor performance. I know we didn't maybe shoot the ball as well and we had a couple defensive breakdowns, but I felt like our energy and our effort was good.

Again, they're playing with a lot of momentum. They shot the ball from three -- and certainly some of that was our fault, but they made us pay when we made those mistakes.

That's what teams who have kind of that momentum, and we've seen that lately, as they adjusted to playing without Freeman, who was a great player certainly.

So this game was different than the first time we played them. As far as some of the other opportunities, I'm really proud of how this team has stuck together and kept fighting because a bounce here, a shot there, we're talking like we have lived in the margins this year a little too much. I think part of that is some of our youth and inexperience.

I think those are probably the moments that I reflect on. I think, aside from a couple halves in the nonconference against a tough schedule we played and certainly for a portion of that Northwestern game, we played really tough and hard all season long. It just at times toughness and playing hard isn't quite enough. You've got to execute. Attention to detail becomes critical.

I thought we got a lot better with that as the year went on, and our guys deserve a lot of credit for that. It's why we're



in this position headed into today and beyond. There will be a time to really reflect back, but I think overall I'm proud of just how this team has stuck together and overcome a lot. This team's overcome a lot.

I think most teams could have folded and wouldn't have an opportunity like how big and meaningful today's game was.

Q. Coach, you talked about Iowa playing without Owen Freeman this time around. What's different about them without Freeman in the lineup?

JAKE DIEBLER: I think before they were really trying to find him touches near the lane. It was a big part of their offense. Not that they weren't doing the other things, right, the motion screening, the ball screen actions, but a lot of what they were doing was predicated off him getting touches. He's a great player. He's proven that since the day he came into the league.

Now, they aren't doing that. Those possessions, which were a significant part of their offense, are no more. You're seeing Dix and Sandfort, both Sandforts, playing at a really high level with increased volume. They certainly had significant volume before.

I thought Harding deserves a ton of credit. I thought he managed a really good game for them, played with great poise, had some big time plays at the end of shot clock.

So I think the dynamic of their offense was a little bit different certainly, but the foundation of who they were was play with great pace and the motion screening and stuff. I think that's the biggest difference, those paint touches that they were getting are kind of mid-post touches.

Q. In the second half around the U8, you guys tried it, and they took the 63-61 lead. I think you guys had five cracks at tying it around or going back ahead, there were a couple of turnovers in that stretch, a couple of pull-ups. What did you see from your offensive execution in those moments, and did you feel like you got the possessions you wanted, or how did those play out?

JAKE DIEBLER: If I remember correctly, one was an offensive foul, which from my vantage point certainly don't necessarily agree with, but the game wasn't won or lost there certainly.

I think we had an opportunity on a back door cut, executed perfectly. We bobbled it right at the rim. That was another one. We got the ball to some pretty good positions, but turnovers certainly. I think that's been something we've been fighting to get better at really in some of these

stretches is some of these empty possessions with turnovers.

I thought offensively we did some really good things. I thought Bruce Thornton was phenomenal. Again, I think he's one of the best players in the league. I think he deserves to be treated as such in games and hasn't been for whatever reason this year.

But I'm proud of some of the segments we had, the segment, the fight-back, and in that moment we need more poise offensively.

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