

Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Chicago, Illinois, USA

United Center

Maryland Terrapins

Buzz Williams

Diggy Coit

Elijah Saunders

Postgame Press Conference



Maryland - 70, Oregon - 60

THE MODERATOR: We are joined first tonight by the Maryland Terrapins. Maryland will advance to take on the No. 9 seed Iowa Hawkeyes tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. Central at the United Center. We're joined by Coach Buzz Williams and student-athletes Diggy Coit and Elijah Saunders.

Q. Guys, what was the general mindset going into today and playing multiple games possibly multiple days in a row?

ELIJAH SAUNDERS: Just take it one day at a time. I felt we're as connected as we've been all year. So just keep playing for each other and playing for the guys next to you.

DIGGY COIT: I would say the same thing. Just trying to keep the main thing the main thing, lock in with each other. Best we probably felt as a team in regards to leadership and intangibles. So it definitely paid off.

Q. Can you speak a little bit more about the momentum this win gives you as you head into the next round?

DIGGY COIT: I think it gives us the right momentum if we take advantage of it, knowing that we played a game. We felt, we've seen what we've got to work on for tomorrow, what we've got to think about. I think we know at least what we have to do on the court together, being on the same page, talking, communicating, being great teammates.

So I think it just keeps us focused for tomorrow.

Q. What were you guys able to do differently tonight obviously playing Oregon earlier in January, lost by 10, what was different tonight?

ELIJAH SAUNDERS: I just felt we were able to defend the rebound at a higher level than we have been earlier in the season. When it comes down to March, whoever can defend the rebound and not turn the ball over is going to win. Just sticking to those principles.

DIGGY COIT: I think from what's been going on in the locker room, starting with Coach and the rest of the staff, leaning into us, I think we're a completely different team from top to bottom than we were when we first seen them. Not just the result, but how we are as individuals with each other, I think we're just completely different.

Q. What are your guys' first thoughts about Iowa tomorrow morning? Obviously an earlier matchup, but what are your guys' thoughts on getting some sleep and waking up early?

DIGGY COIT: They're going to play hard, and we've got to be ready. That's all I can think about.

ELIJAH SAUNDERS: Yeah, playing a team we've already played twice. Get some rest and get ready to play.

Q. In terms of on-court performance, what did you guys like most about the way your team responded tonight?

DIGGY COIT: I would say I thought the bench was really into the game. I thought every huddle that we went into nobody panicked. We knew exactly what we were doing wrong. We were all on the same page. I would say those were the two main takeaways.

I felt like this was the most we were together since for a very long time. I felt that way about our last home game and today.

So I would say just us, how happy we were for each other, how connected we were.



Q. Coach, this was the third time the two programs have ever met and the second time this season. How has your understanding of Oregon evolved since the first matchup this season?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: I think we played them the first weekend in January. I think it was our third conference game. So we watched that game just to kind of have some context.

Our team has changed a lot tactically. I think our team has also changed relative to the roster and how it's utilized. I would say the same thing about their team. There's still remnants of what we do and what they do, but if you've played 20 games in a conference season and the last time you saw them was 17 games ago, there's going to be a lot of differences.

Our staff was tremendous in making sure that we didn't overload our guys. We played the last game of the regular season in the Big Ten, and then obviously we played the first game in the Big Ten Tournament. So we didn't practice. So our practice was in the film room.

I think our staff was as good as they've been all year in making sure that what we explained to our guys without them having an opportunity to practice it not only could our guys understand it, but they could do it and take it from the film room to the floor. I thought a lot of that took place this afternoon.

Q. You were talking about it earlier, but what was your mindset coming into today? Were there any similarities in your prep or your scout process compared to the Players Era Tournament back in Vegas?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Oh, are you saying going into tomorrow?

Q. Correct. Today and tomorrow.

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Well, we play in 16 hours. So that means we'll be here in 14 hours. I would say that we'll try to do a little bit of it tonight after they have dinner, but I think we've morphed relative to what is best for this group.

When we played at the Players Era, I think that was Game 5, 6, and 7 for us. With 15 new players and all new coaches, I don't think we really knew who we were or what was best, and I think there were a lot of guys playing then, some because they were healthy enough, some because we were trying to figure it out.

Our roster is completely different now. Our style of play is completely different on both sides of the ball. Within the volatility of the season, we've continued to try to adapt.

I think we've been in a pretty good rhythm for how we handle prep for our opponent. It will just be an abbreviated one. You don't want to give them so much that they're confused. You want to give them just enough so that it helps.

And Iowa is a unique scout. What our plan was when we played at Iowa, we had a different team relative to our roster -- who was playing, who was starting, who were our significant players at that time -- than when we played them in College Park. And our plan was a lot different.

We'll probably spend most of our time talking about the difference between the two going into Game 3.

Q. Just talking about tonight, what did you like most from what you did in tonight's win and what you'll take into 16 hours from now?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: The thing that translates the most for us regardless of who we play is can we play with a low turnover rate? If we don't give the ball to the other team, we at least have a chance to get an offensive rebound. On occasion we'll get fouled.

Then also, when we don't turn it over, we have a chance for our defense to get set. What we've tried to do more over the last month and a half is how can we figure out a way to minimize our turnovers, and how can we figure out a way to minimize the opponent's offensive rebounds? Just from a time of possession standpoint, mathematically we give ourselves more of a chance.

I thought in the first half we were arguably as good as we've been in those two ways. In the second half we turned it over a little bit more than we should. We gave them too many offensive rebounds. But the thing that we have to figure out how to improve on is how to defend without fouling.

In our last regular season game, the Number 1 offense in our league, they shot five free throws in the first half. In the second half, they shot 21. Today Oregon shot eight free throws in the first half and 13 in the second half. It's just it's hard for us to overcome points without the clock on because offensively we have to play a certain way just to kind of thread the needle on what gives us the best chance.

If you're going to beat Iowa or any team going forward, we're going to have to defend without fouling more than we

have the last two games.

Q. And talking about Elijah Saunders, 5 of the last 6 games, he's hit three or more 3-pointers. Talk about how he's opened up the offense.

BUZZ WILLIAMS: A lot of our paint touches over the last nine weeks have to come off the bounce. Our coaches have done a really good job of -- it's not a play. Whatever play we call is aborted once we get penetration, and relative to where the penetration is, that dictates what we do. Our team has been continuing to figure that out.

A lot of that will end up with Elijah on the perimeter because we don't have anybody to throw it to, and offensively obviously it looks better. I think we made nine 3s on Sunday, and I think we made nine 3s again today.

From an effective field goal percentage, as you know, that helps us so much if we can shoot more 3s, and we have been shooting more 3s over the last six weeks, but if somehow we can make it and not turn it over, it gives us a chance to get an offensive rebound as well.

Q. How important was it for you guys to set the tone early against Oregon, and how were you able to keep up that momentum after halftime?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: I thought we played from start to finish in the first half probably as well as any half that we've played. Whether we've been at home or on the road or neutral site, from a low turnover rate, from an offensive rebounding percentage, even a defensive rebound percentage, and we didn't foul. That was really good. They didn't foul us, and we didn't foul them. So now it's a push. That was good.

I do think to some degree we absorbed their two magnificent runs probably with as much maturity as we have at any point in the season. I didn't think that we just disintegrated emotionally. Then I thought there was some collective thought on trying to maintain and play to the scouting report. So that was encouraging.

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