

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Kentucky Wildcats

Dontaie Allen

Postgame Press Conference

Mississippi State 74, Kentucky 73

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Dontaie Allen. We'll take questions.

Q. Obviously this has been kind of an up-and-down season for you with these two Mississippi State games as the highlights individually. What was your mentality coming in today? What did it feel like to play so well, still come up short?

DONTAIE ALLEN: I think the biggest goal coming into today, it wasn't anything individually, it was I wanted my team to get a win. I wanted us to go on a roll. I'm disappointed. Like, I'm upset, the fact that this team couldn't show what we actually are, so...

Q. It certainly looked like you were playing with more confidence and aggressiveness today than what you had been. What kind of changed? Was it making the shot to start the second half? What ignited you more today?

DONTAIE ALLEN: I think it comes down to me just getting in the gym more lately. It wasn't something that just happened today. It was something that's happened in the past month. I've just really been getting in the gym, working on all aspects of my game. I think that's why you see more confidence in me on the floor.

Q. On the last shot of the game, how comfortable were you on that shot? How much did you think it was going in? Or did you know it wasn't?

DONTAIE ALLEN: I mean, you can't really ask for a better shot, especially from someone like me that has confidence in myself. I had it lined up straight. It just hit the back end, so...

I don't know. I'll live with that. It was a good shot.



Q. Now that it's over, you've had an interesting year, kind of the ups and downs, what was your big takeaway from all of it? What is your final analysis of what this first season playing for Kentucky was like?

DONTAIE ALLEN: I think a big thing for me was it showed how resilient I was. I've always known I was resilient, but after going through things I went through this year, it just shows I'm resilient, I'm a strong person.

I just hate that me and the team had to go out like this. I'm still kind of stuck on that, but... I don't know.

Q. As the local guy, you're the won who has the best kind of feel for what this program means to fans. What is your message to fans after a season like this, what you can take from it moving forward or use it to make sure it doesn't happen again?

DONTAIE ALLEN: I think that's one thing. Obviously I'd say to stay with us for the following seasons. That's one thing, if you really look at the team, you can say they didn't have the best of records, you could say they wasn't good. You can have any excuse you want.

Like, this team fought every single game. That's something you can't say we didn't do. You can look literally, there was fight every time. I would just say to stay with us.

Q. For you, as you approach this off-season, what is the biggest thing for you and for your game?

DONTAIE ALLEN: I'm going to stay in the gym. Like I told you, the last month I've been in the gym. I'm feeling really good, really confident. I'm just going to stay in the gym literally all summer. I'm going to work to exhaustion.

Q. You talk about the team's fight. In the first half it didn't seem to be there. What changed the second half?

DONTAIE ALLEN: I think it was a halftime talk from Cal, but also just everybody coming in as one, everybody coming together and saying we don't want our season to

end like this.

Obviously it was on (indiscernible). I feel like after that conversation with ourselves at halftime, everybody seemed to fight. We didn't pull it out, but there was definitely fight.

Q. This isn't the first time you've shot well against Mississippi State. Was it what their players said to you, what you heard them saying about your shooting and your performance?

DONTAIE ALLEN: I'm not sure. In the game it's kind of, like, especially games like that, unconscious. My hearing, I don't really hear a lot. I got tunnel vision. Even if they was saying stuff, I wasn't listening.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

DONTAIE ALLEN: Thank you.

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