

University of Kentucky Basketball Media Conference

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Joel Justus

Press Conference



Richmond - 76, Kentucky 64

Q. No 3-pointers today. How do you address the shooting? Is it guys just taking more shots, getting different shooters on the floor. How do you fix that?

JOEL JUSTUS: I think you got to go and look back at the film, look at the tape and see exactly where our shots came from for the whole game. I think you got to look and see how we were played within the offense. I think you got to see what your screens looked like. You got to see what your cuts look like. You got to see what your passes look like. Before you can go and look at the end result, you got to really look and see the building blocks of your offense and see kind of what happened.

It's early. It's young in the season. And obviously you've got to give some credit to Richmond and how they played defense before you can go and just make a statement in terms of we need this, this, and this, especially this early right after it.

Q. They were obviously veteran across the board, but they had a really bothersome point guard who has got a chance to be an all-time leader in steals in Division I basketball. You had a freshman point guard out there a lot of times today. How much were you concerned about that matchup going in and what's your evaluation of how Devin handled that today?

JOEL JUSTUS: Well, I think, I mean, when you look at a young man like Gilyard, you are obviously aware of the kind of impact that he has had on many games during his time at Richmond and then you come in and you have to be prepared for that. You have to be kind of cognizant of that with your players and we were. Our guys knew how good not only Gilyard is, was, but also Blake Francis. And I think that our guys are smart enough to know the premium that you have to have on back court play to be successful here, be successful anywhere. I think you tip your hat to those guys, especially. They imposed their Will on the game many times before tonight. We were able to identify that with our guys. They saw it. So like I said, I

think that this is an opportunity for our guys to learn. It's a lesson for them, especially in that back court, how young we are, and I think we'll grow. We'll get better from this.

Q. What do you hope the guys learn from this, What they will take away from this? And also, how much were you guys trying -- it looked like Olivier was much more active tonight. What was that about?

JOEL JUSTUS: I think your -- first question, I think that we have to become a little bit more unselfish on the offensive end. I think you look at the fact we had zero assists in the second half. I think as coaches, that was something that was very obvious as we were playing the ball was sticking a little bit. You only have five for the game and obviously all those were in the first half. So you got to look at that early on in how we want to play, who we are. Defensively, you give up 59 percent from the floor, almost 60 percent in the second half, and we got to find out where our lapses were. We got to take better care of the ball. 21 turnovers is something that's a little too high even as aggressive as coach wants to play and as our teams here in the past have played. We'll tend to have double-figure turnovers. But, hey, look, there were holes tonight that hopefully we'll learn from, we'll have lessons on, and we'll grow as a young team.

Your second question, in terms of Olivier, I thought that we liked our matchup. I thought that he was a guy that we could play through, and coach felt the same way, that he wanted to go after him early and especially when Golden got in a little bit of foul trouble, we knew that he would have to back up a little bit in terms of his aggressive play on the defensive end and it was good to see Olivier play that way early and then you know what you got now.

Q. You've already mentioned zero assists in the second half, and then 21 turnovers for the game. Was that a little bit of, you think, just panic on offense when you got behind or the game stayed close and your guys just didn't handle things the way you wanted?

JOEL JUSTUS: I think there was a variety of turnovers. We had a couple rebounds stripped from us we had a couple -- I mean there was the one deflected ball in front of our bench that was just a pass and catch turnover. We



had a couple of those. We had a couple travels. So 21 is not necessarily through your offense, but sometimes, hey, look, this is, this was a team that was going to present veteran moxie. We knew that coming in, and we knew that we were going to have to play really well to win the game and we didn't and that's partly due to the way Richmond played and, I would say, and I think everyone in our locker room would say some of those turnovers, some of the missed shots, obviously the missed free throws, those are self-inflicted. But to beat a very good team, an experienced team, you're going to have to play really well. You're going to have to play 40 minutes, oftentimes 30 seconds of possession. And, shoot, there was a period of time there in the second half where we had, consecutive stops, we didn't have any. We might get one but to string together consecutive stops, we weren't able to do that for awhile.

Q. You guys out-rebounded them 54 to 31 and had 21 offensive rebounds, but seemed to miss a lot of shots around the rim. What do you kind of attribute that to?

JOEL JUSTUS: I think some of that is nerves. I think some of that is first-game or second-game jitters that you're going to have with these guys. What we do know is these guys are competitive, talking about our team, they're guys that want to win, they are trying hard, they're practicing hard. And, hey, look, I think sometimes the ball doesn't go exactly the way you want it to go, but your effort, yeah, is great. To get 21 rebounds, that means we were going. Those don't just fall in your lap. You've got to have an effort to go and offensive rebound, to have a presence on the boards. So I think once again it's a lesson for our guys. It's a lesson for our staff to go and see kind of what we can do to get better and especially with a quick turnaround like this.

Q. First of all, I would like you to make a comment about the free throw. You missed 11, 12 free throws. Do you believe that was kind of a lack of concentration about your players? And also, how would you evaluate B.J. Boston's performance?

JOEL JUSTUS: I think, as I've said, it's a young season, it's a first opportunity for our guys to be in close games, to be in a big game like this to where every basket matters, every possession matters, both on the offensive end and on the defensive end. Our guys, sometimes free throws are a product of, maybe missed free throws are a product of trying too hard, but I think it's not a lack of concentration. I would say it's potentially concentrating too much. But our guys will be in the gym and they're going to spend time. And, hey, look, it's a lesson for us. It's a lesson for them.

I think for your follow-up, I think B.J. has done some nice

things early this season. He's going to be a guy that's going to be in position as to where he's going to be asked to score the ball, he's going to be asked to create, and we just got to go back and look at each one of his touches, his minutes, and continue to get better. Everything at this time of year, win or lose, is a lesson.

Q. Do you anticipate having Keion back for Tuesday and if not, how do you find Olivier some more rest? It looks like he was noticeably tired out there in the second half at points?

JOEL JUSTUS: Our medical staff will up date us on Keion, if there's any changes. I think we're going at it with the same, I guess, protocol in that we're, that we have been going at, so I don't know that I can answer your question there, other than guys that are ready will play, guys that are ready to practice tomorrow at 1 o'clock will practice. We'll see who is ready to play there on Tuesday night.

In terms of rest, I mean, yeah, I think Olivier's an experienced guy, so you trust him out there in a game like this. You kind of hopped on his back there for a little bit and we needed to ride him. But I think there's opportunity there for guys to play a couple more minutes. We ran into a little bit of foul trouble today with Lance early in the first half, and in terms of moving forward we have got to be ready to have everybody active. We have got to have everybody ready to play and with it being such a young season you never know. Sometimes it's one guy that is in foul trouble that gives an opportunity for someone else to step up, like you saw against Morehead State with cam Fletcher. So I think all guys are ready and they're ready to contribute when their name is called.

Q. You talked about B.J. is going to be called upon at times to score, to create offense. Is he the guy, does it feel like he needs, you've got to have a guy that when all else fails you can put it in his hands and he will get you buckets efficiently, create you offenses. Does he need to kind of have that mentality, that he's going to be that guy for you?

JOEL JUSTUS: I think he has the mentality and I think, I'm obviously speaking for Coach Calipari here and the rest of our staff, I think that when you're coaching young guys like that and they're in that position, they have to respect the position. I'm not saying that B.J. doesn't. I think he does. He's got to be a guy that takes extreme pride in being a guy that we call upon to get buckets and that's our job to teach him that. B.J.'s a competitor. He's a fighter and he wants to win, much like the rest of our guys on this team. Hey, look, sometimes as Cal has said, it's great to have multiple guys be able to go and get 25 in a game because when you're in that NCAA tournament, somebody's going

to get it going, and I think you've seen the great teams here have had multiple guys get 25. So while it might be B.J., we're training everybody to be ready to step up when that time is as we try to get to March. It's a long ways away, but for us, I think this is a lesson for us that we must learn from, and with a quick turnaround we'll be able to see what we have learned this afternoon and be ready to go Tuesday night.

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