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John Calipari

Press Conference



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Q. The flow and team chemistry. How hard is it the fact you've got someone missing every single game?

JOHN CALIPARI: Well, one guy's misery is another guy's opportunity. I loved how Daimion started the game, then he starts shooting step-back threes. What are you doing? Like block shots, rebound, go dunk some, and every once in a while make a jumper or two. But you're not playing for that.

Like the time he had TyTy in the corner yelling one more, and he was going to show his stuff. They ran the guy over. What are you doing? What are you doing? Well, he hadn't played that much. But what's the impact he has on the game? You see the impact.

Tried to play Jacob. He just hadn't played. So he ran up and down four times. He was gassed. And the way we're playing now, like I told him after, what we're trying to do is continue to run for 40 minutes. If you can't do that when you're in, you're not going to be playing much. If you're not understanding why we're doing this till we can eventually wear them down a little bit.

And we may have some teams that we don't wear down. That's fine. But you've got to shoot the ball better then. Again, Dontaie, I told him, you can miss shots. If you fight, I'll leave you in. He didn't fight early in the game. Didn't come up with the ball, ran the wrong way, pushed. You're not missing shots and playing. Then all of a sudden he missed shots, but he fought. When we came in at halftime, the guys said, that's the way to fight, Dontaie.

I'm giving them the answers to the tests. You can miss shots if you fight, if you defend, if you go after balls. So it was great to see him make shots. Kellan missed a bunch, but he made twos, which were good for us.

Oscar did okay. I didn't think he played -- he tried to grab balls with one hand. You know how many of those he brought in? Zero. So we had five more rebounds. Why

are you doing that? When did you start doing that?

So we've got a long way to go, but I'm trying to just figure out how are we going to play late in the game? What are we trying to get done? When it's winning time, what do we do? What's the best way to play if you have Oscar and Daimion in? How do you play now offensively?

I tried to have Daimion run to the rim and let's see if Oscar's making shots, but Oscar missed them all today. Now, he is a good shooter, but he missed shots. So we're still a work in progress.

Here's what I like. We fought, and we defended. That's what we did. We scrambled. We played. We came up with balls, and we flew. A lot of breakdowns.

Only had six turnovers in the second half. We had seven turnovers from our bigs in the first half. Seven. Come on guys. Too many.

Q. Now that he's back, what does Jacob bring to this team that he can add to the rotation?

JOHN CALIPARI: Energy. Energy. Got to shoot balls. He may not make them, but to drive baseline and step out of bounds, you're not doing that. Shoot the ball. What if I go 0 for 9? Where are you tonight? You're in the gym shooting. I don't know what to tell you. You've got to take the shots that are there because, when you don't, they all lead to turnovers.

So he's a good shooter, not a great shooter. But he's a good shooter. Shoot the ball. And then get in the gym more. Live in there like some of the other guys have.

By the way, love what Bryce did. Now, he understood I took -- we give it to the guards on our team because they're great distributors. You're not coming down the full court and doing this. All you've got to do is give it to him and run. Give it right back to you.

So I took him right out. You're not doing that here. Why would you do that? You know how we're playing. 30 seconds later, I stuck him back in, or a minute and a half later, and then he played. I mean, we need him. No



question we need him. Just glad to see him make some baskets and defend the way he did, come up with balls.

Q. You made a big deal preseason about the guys talking to each other. We're a long way out, but it looks like they're communicating better out there. How is that going?

JOHN CALIPARI: Oscar didn't do it. Daimion's still learning. Bryce is still learning. Dontaie, he communicates with sign language. You still -- the problem is, when two guys come together and neither one talk, something bad is going to happen for us and something good for them.

So I'm just all over it. I don't want one guy to talk. I want both guys to talk. You hear a guy say one more, throw it immediately because, when you say one more, you want it. So we held it a little bit today in the first half. Again, the guys were -- there's a lot of clutter. There's a lot of noise they're hearing. But it was good.

Q. I saw Oscar doing it some tonight, but big guys have done it for as long as the game has been around. Why do they catch the ball up high and bring it down low to reset? Is that one of those old habits you have to break?

JOHN CALIPARI: Yeah, he did two today and got them right in. So then you would say, why wouldn't you do that? Because he has a habit of bringing it down, and we talked about it. We're trying to figure out ways where we can get him the ball and he can just score it, but that's hard against good teams.

Second thing for he and Daimion and a couple other guys, you can't accept a block out. In other words, we shoot it, and they put their back on your chest. You never have a back on a chest. Never. So the shot goes up, I move that way or that way. Maybe I spin. I do something.

So you tell me why would a guy do this versus that?

Q. Easy.

JOHN CALIPARI: Good, you've been in our practices. It's way easier. I'm not going to do it. It's too hard. Again, you'll get three or four more offensive rebounds as a team if you move instead of you're not blocking me out. I'm going to move. And you're going to have to move with me.

You move with me, it's hard for you to rebound. If you're standing here like this and don't move, yeah. But now try to do this and then go get the ball.

Look, I haven't done a good job with Oscar offensively. I

know I haven't. We've got work we've got to do, got to have post presence. Like I told him, I said, you understand five balls, instead of having 16 rebounds, you would have had 21. And then the whole team laughed. He had 16 rebounds, and you're getting all over him. What are you talking about? He's leading the nation in rebounding.

But why not five more?

Q. With Davion and Keion both having illness issues, are you concerned about some greater thing in the team right now? Are those connected?

JOHN CALIPARI: I am. My son was sick. Three managers were sick. So I am. I wish I could make them take flu shots, but I can't. I had mine the other day. Normally, I won't, and it's not because I don't trust, I just don't like getting shots. I know I need to get it, but I hate to scream in front of girls that they're watching me get a shot.

Let me say this too with Matt. Pittsburgh guy was -- the reason I laughed, he threw a couple yinzes. He is a Pittsburgh guy. Played at Slippery Rock. If you're at Pittsburgh, you know Matt. You know him as a terrific coach.

But he's put his team through a gauntlet, and they played well. I'm telling you, I watch games with five minutes to go, it's a two bucket game, three bucket game, against Arizona State, against Grand Canyon. I watched, even with UCLA, it was a tie game with ten minutes in the half, kind of like they did to us.

So they're going to be ready for their league. My guess is they're going to be a team to be reckoned with, and he's running good stuff. They missed shots. I think they wore out a little bit. They missed some shots that they normally would make.

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