

# University of Kentucky Basketball Media Conference

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Lexington, Kentucky, USA

## Head Coach John Calipari

### Press Conference



Kentucky 92, Georgia 77

**Q. How different is it learning to play without Sahvir, having to adjust to that on the fly, having some time to work TyTy in, and could he have handled it much better, any better than he did tonight?**

JOHN CALIPARI: No, and we did some things and added some things for him, but they've got to play him different than they try to play Sahvir. He is a phenomenal elbow pull-up shooter, and so is Sahvir, but they'll play under. They'll play games. They can't with him now.

But Sahvir helped us because at halftime I kept telling our defense, you've got to get up and play people, and then he stood and said, listen, guys, our game is pressuring people and getting into their legs. You can't just back away and let them do what they want. You've got to push up in them. And I said, it's what we've been saying, so he helped.

But TyTy played really well. We can do, just like we've done with Jamal, just like we've done with Brandon Knight, just like we did with Tyrese Maxey. He can be away from the ball, and we can still do things with him so he can make basketball plays, but he was good today.

Oscar was good today. Davion was outstanding, and I know you're saying, well, he made shots. No, he defended. He came up with balls. He tried to take charges. He flew. The biggest thing of the game for Keion, I know you say, well, he made jump shots. Stop. He tipped the ball loose because he had no rebounds at halftime. Tipped the ball loose that Oscar got and laid in and put it to 17. Kind of ended the game. That is the play from him because I know all this other stuff he can do. Again, we didn't have many turnovers. A couple that we had were bothersome because they were just throw-aways. I thought after we got the guys in the right spots versus the zone they were better. I also looked, and I liked Jacob and Keion in together, but I'm not sure I want to start that line-up. I kind of like where we've gone with three guards. We'll just see.

**Q. John, what does it mean to you when Davion comes off the bench? Obviously when he makes shots, but when he does provide that energy that you are talking about today on the defensive end?**

JOHN CALIPARI: I told him he was outstanding. He only had one turnover. There was one play he made. He passed up a shot and drove into a bad shot, and I jumped him. Shoot the ball! If it doesn't go, we'll rebound. We can't rebound your bad shot. Kellen didn't make shots, but he got them, and he took them. You're not making them. These kids aren't machines. They're not robots. But I thought by us running and throwing it ahead. Now, with Sahvir a lot of times he'll keep the ball and he will do it with his own speed. TyTy was throwing that thing ahead, and that broke them down some, made us a little different.

**Q. How much did missing Sahvir have an affect on your defense in that first half?**

JOHN CALIPARI: Just the pressure, and he pointed it out at halftime. He knows the difference he makes and how he plays, but, look, give Georgia credit. They shot 50%. People don't do that to us. They put their heads down and ran for layups at the end of the game. Probably made five layups in the last four minutes. They rebounded with us. They fought. I thought we kind of wore them down a little bit, but, look, Tom, the tapes I've watched, two games where they lost at the buzzer and they should have won both games because they had a little bit of a lead in both of those games. Texas A&M being one of them who I believe -- did they win again today? They this Texas A&M beat, so Tom is doing a heck of a job with this team.

**Q. What is the most important part on TyTy's game because he has 17 assists and only two turnovers.**

JOHN CALIPARI: I was upset he had two turnovers. I'm just kidding. He is a play-making guard. Whether he is bringing it up or whether he is away from the ball, he is still a play-making guard who can shoot. Was that a quiet 17 he had? How many shots did he take to get 17? 13 shots; he gets 17 points. Come on.

**Q. You mentioned the line-up with Jacob and Keion together. What is it you like about that group in certain**



## situations?

JOHN CALIPARI: I would have expected us to be better defensively, more active, and I thought -- I even said to Jacob when I took him out, you look exhausted. He must have been a little anxious that he was starting, and he ran up and down three times, and he turned ashen, and so I took him out. You know, he hadn't started. He is playing well enough. He is doing some good stuff. I need he and Jacob -- or Keion to rebound. They both had just two rebounds. Come on. Go get balls. You may say, well, Oscar ended up with 17. Yeah, but you got to attempt to rebound, and if you do like Keion did with the one, you may not get it, but you are tipping it to us. You can't accept being blocked out. No, not acceptable. They go to block you out, you move left or right. You lean into the guy, you shouldn't be in the game.

**Q. TyTy breaks the U.K. single game assist record of 17. He breaks John Wall's record. I assume you were aware of that. When a player gets close to a record, what is your mindset in terms of leaving him in and actually letting him or helping him break that record?**

JOHN CALIPARI: I did not know. If it's points, I would probably take somebody out, but if you are talking assist and rebounds, I don't mind leaving a guy in, but the game will dictate. If we're up 30, I'm not doing that. I subbed the other day, two days, three days ago with 12 minutes to go and didn't put anybody back in. I'm not worried about those kind of things at the expense of the other coach and their program. I wouldn't do it. This game was close the whole way. They never -- Tom Crean is not going to let his team stop. Forget about score. They're playing.

**Q. John, are we getting to the point like tonight, Oscar is 29-17. Are we almost getting to the point where we take for granted how dominant he has become inside for you?**

JOHN CALIPARI: Yeah, the only thing is do you -- he got smothered a little bit at LSU. We were trying to throw him the ball. He has just has got to get back to who he is. He drifted away dribbling it the length of the court. What are you doing? Who told you to do that? Are you talking to somebody else? No. Then you saw him give it up today. He took one bounce. He listens. He is a great kid, but he is like everybody else. There's all this stuff swirling, and what I told him today at the shoot-around, don't worry about two months from now. That will screw you up. Worry about how you have been playing. How did you get to this point? What did you do to get to this point? How about this? Keep doing it. Why would you do something different? Just do what you are doing. Stay in the moment. Having fun. I'm trying to get Keion to smile more.

I want to see you smile in the game. Have fun with this. Weight of the world. I got to do this, and everybody is telling me I got to do. You can't play basketball that way. You got to just go play. It's saying, well, let him do what he does. Like you were the ones that said to me, why doesn't Keion take twos, because he is an unbelievable two-point shooter? You're right. That's what he does. I want him to play through some bumps and get some and-ones because he is capable of that. I want him to have ten rebounds in a game because he is capable, and he is playing with Oscar, which means that's like getting 20 rebounds.

Look, I like where this group is. You lose a game. We've lost a couple of games I thought we gave away. We had our chances. We didn't -- but even me as a coach, got to move on, next game. Now we're playing a Vanderbilt team who won the Rainbow Classic. Comes back and beats Arkansas at Arkansas and is playing really well. Offensively one of the best teams in our league. We've got our work cut out. We've got to go up there on a little bit of a funky court where I've got to tell all these new guys who have never played in there, look, this is what it is. You know what, today was a good win. Good win for us. Like I said, they came in with the idea they could beat us.

**Q. Do you have a feel for if Sahvir will be available on Tuesday yet; and even if he is out, how big is this game for playing with him when he is in foul trouble or whatever when he comes back?**

JOHN CALIPARI: If he practices on Monday, he will be available for the game on Tuesday. If he practices Monday, he will be. Today, just teasing him, I said, TyTy, you played point unbelievable, and I looked at him, and he just smiles. These kids, those guys -- I wish I could have played Bryce more. I didn't play Daimion at all, but here's the thing, and I told Daimion and Lance after, if this kid goes for 29-17, do you really expect to play 20 minutes? You've got to know, he is in foul trouble. There's your chance. He is not playing well. There's your chance. So I wish I could have got those two in because we do need those two. They're shot-blocking and play-making ability, so we will see.

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