

Camping World Maui Invitational

Monday, November 30, 2020
Asheville, North Carolina, USA

UNLV Runnin' Rebels
Coach T.J. Otzelberger
Bryce Hamilton
Postgame Press Conference



North Carolina - 78, UNLV - 51

Q. I know a lot of people doubled the post, but it seemed like they were pushing you guys out and making it hard sometimes to initiate offensively. Can you just go through kind of if that was the case and what happened offensively for the most part?

TJ OTZELBERGER: I think overall we, first of all, from an offensive standpoint, we were building our confidence offensively by the great job we started doing defensively to start the game. We were very intentional. Our guys were in the right spots and we were able to play with a little more pace and flow to our offense. As the game wore on, they picked up the pressure, brought some presses, some traps, denied entries more on the wings and we didn't do the job we needed to do to be stubborn to get open. We didn't cut well enough to put ourselves in great position. And eventually what it did is it just pushed us out on the floor and we were running offense at 35, 40 feet, which is a challenge. So we have got to do a better job using our competitive spirit on every cut, every catch, every pass, especially against a team with the size and length of North Carolina.

Q. On the defensive end you guys were doubling on the post and got off to that hot start. Is that a defensive strategy that you think could work over the course of an entire game or is that something you can only use in spurts?

TJ OTZELBERGER: We think it's something that can work over the course of the game. We, when we were successful with it, we had a great sense of urgency and we continued to do it. It wasn't that the plan started to not work. It was that we didn't execute the plan, and so a lot of their post touches, a lot of their points in the paint came

one-on-one, they brought it down and entered the wing, dumped it in, and we didn't have the urgency to get there quick enough. So I feel like as the game wore on, we spread out more, but the ones where when it went in, where we really shrunk the floor and brought that secondary defender, we were disruptive, we generated some turnovers, we created some plays for our offense. So I think it's more about just continuing to stay the course with that plan over the long haul because I thought it was effective when we did it.

Q. What was the most difficult thing about trying to keep a team like that with that size and length off the boards? It seems like it can be kind of a withering experience the longer it goes.

TJ OTZELBERGER: Yeah, I think that to rebound the ball successfully you've got to be the aggressor, you've got to initiate contact, you've got to carve out space, you got to move bodies out, you can't have the momentum coming towards you, you've got to move them out. And I think that as they build that confidence of getting that push into the paint, they continued to go at it and like you said, it's kind of, it wears you down. We talked a lot as we prepared for this game about doing the same thing every play, and for them, that's what they're looking for. They're looking to wear you down with bodies and physicality in the paint and going to the boards and we have got to make sure that we're more intentional blocking out and then we have also got to make sure that everybody else is coming back to help on the glass. We didn't have enough rebounds from our perimeter guys tonight to help offset that.

Q. What do you feel like Leaky Black, what was he able to do successfully defensively when they switched him over to Bryce?

TJ OTZELBERGER: Well he's got great length and lateral quickness. He's able to move his feet, he speeds you up just because he's so lateral and anticipates and he put Bryce in some tough spots. At the same time, I think Bryce is a very outstanding offensive player, we have got to have better movement for him, we have got to have better cutting for him to keep him in space and I know and I trust and I know that he'll make those plays. But I think, like I said, with Black, he's obviously a very good defender, very



good rebounder, a lot of respect for him.

Q. How much does their size kind of wear you down because it's not just obviously their starters they have got length and size off the bench as well?

TJ OTZELBERGER: Yeah, they have got waves of guys, they have got, they go five or six deep on the front line with guys that can score and be physical there. And then they're still playing a 6'-7", 6'-8" wing where they can offset, where they can get some more rebounds and have that length and physicality. So they have got a lot of bodies, and they keep them fresh and they keep throwing them at you and it does have that affect where it wears you down. At the same time I loved to see if we continued to stay the course game plan-wise and really shrink that floor if it would have had that same effect or not.

Q. Curious, you guys started 5-5 for the game, but I don't think you shot but 23 percent the rest of the way. Kind of what went wrong in your estimation offensively with just the shots not falling or what they did defensively?

BRYCE HAMILTON: I think North Carolina, they just started to have more pressure, bringing us out like 35, 40 feet out of the court and they just started to key in more and we didn't have much ball movement, so I felt like throughout the game they got better.

Q. Was that an issue to start the second half? It's like when you see the score and you start to try to chase, maybe some quick shots by guys and you're trying to chase, and all of a sudden the score inflates a little?

BRYCE HAMILTON: Yeah, I feel like that we had to get a little bit more ball movement as the game went by. We got out of it a little bit at the beginning of the second half and we know we just got to stick to the game plan.

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