

# Maui Jim's Maui Invitational

Monday, November 22, 2021

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

## Wisconsin Badgers

## Greg Gard

## Johnny Davis

### Postgame Press Conference

Wisconsin - 69, Texas A&M - 58

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from coach.

GREG GARD: Obviously happy for how we responded. I think this group is learning as we go and how they responded after the first 10 minutes or so I'm proud of. Obviously we got to do a better job of not putting ourselves in that type of position. But the response is always what we measure people by and I thought we reacted to it much better than obviously at the beginning.

But a lot of contributions from a lot of places, a lot of people, so just happy to be able to bounce back and get this one and get on to tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

#### Q. How big of a part did fans play?

GREG GARD: It was really good to see friends and family, but at the end of the day we're not really worried about the outside world, just focused on winning the game.

#### Q. Johnny, what do you think really spurred that late first half surge that allowed you to play so well in the second half?

JOHNNY DAVIS: I would say some of the threes we hit in the first half, those are what put us up, I think.

But we, I think we really settled down and stopped playing more their speed and more our speed and that's why we ended up winning the game.

#### Q. How much fun was it to see your brother get in there and play some big minutes and have some success with a great couple rebounds?

JOHNNY DAVIS: It was great to see him out there. I



haven't played with him in so long, I can't even remember really, but for him to hit that three was huge in the second half. I honestly think I play better when he's out there. It was really great to see him out there.

#### Q. Johnny, what does it feel like in terms of this year having much more leadership role, what does it mean to have that?

JOHNNY DAVIS: It means I need to carry myself as more of a leader on and off the court and just got to know who to talk to and what to say to them, especially my teammates. But I'm not, leadership role isn't nothing new to me and I'm looking forward to leading these guys the whole way.

#### Q. How did you guys overcome your slow start in the game?

JOHNNY DAVIS: I would probably say we settled in, stopped playing a back and forth game with them because athletically they're, they got a little bit more of that than we do. Once we settled down and played our game, you stop the transition offense that they had. That's what got us going.

#### Q. This was your first game back. Can you comment on how it felt being back in?

JOHNNY DAVIS: I'm not used to sitting out and then coming back and playing, so I would say I was a little out of shape. But it was great to be back out there playing with my guys. I'm really happy that we got the W.

#### Q. About the seven-minute mark of the first half it was 33-20. In the final seven minutes you got help with the field goal. Did you know it would make a difference schematically or how do you account for really the big change between the first 13 and the last seven minutes under the circumstances?

GREG GARD: I think Johnny alluded to it being that we were able to get our defense set. Part of that was taking care of the ball. Part of that was getting better shots. Part of that was shooting free throws. So we were able to get back and get our defense set and minimize what they could do in transition. So that was the biggest thing.



Obviously they came out hot and hit some threes but at the same time I think we were doing things offensively that helped our defense and once we calmed down a little bit and settled in and played more to our identity, things started to turn a little bit.

**Q. Going off what you said, was there anything that you said to the guys on the sideline in the first half?**

GREG GARD: Well, as a coach, you can suggest a lot of things, but you don't get to play. So they did a good job of getting back to who they are, and we've been very good defensively, but we weren't for that first 10-minute stretch. So and part of that was because we couldn't get ourselves set and get locked in.

So they understood that we needed to do some things offensively better that was going to help our defense and fortunately they were able to catch themselves and get things corrected and start scratching our way back.

**Q. (Question about slow start with the offense.)**

GREG GARD: We took better shots after that first 10-minute mark. I thought we got rushed at times. I thought we settled for some things that maybe weren't to our best liking, but I thought we got to the free-throw line that latter part of the first half.

Obviously we hit some threes, which spurred some momentum. But I just thought we did a better job of shot selection, taking care of the ball, those things. I thought our younger guys were a little star struck early. It's been first time for a lot of these guys going through this, so they had to settle in a little bit, calm down, and get back to playing how we try to practice and the identity we're trying to create with this team.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

GREG GARD: Well, you like to be able to shoot it better so it's not as important. But, no, I think this group, because of our versatility, because of our depth, I'm still trying to figure out rotations. I got so many new guys that we need everybody to chip in and we got a lot of contributions from a lot of places tonight, or this afternoon.

So we would like to shoot a higher percentage but that doesn't always happen so if you have an opportunity to go get a second shot, we welcome the effort.

**Q. (Question about goals to accomplish by the end.)**

GREG GARD: Hopefully we just get better every time out.

I think that's the one thing, whether it's practice or the next game, can we be a better version of ourselves than what we were this afternoon. And we'll have to be regardless if we play Butler or Houston, two really good teams.

I'm more focused as always on us and how we can take steps forward regardless of what the opponent is, we have to continue to establish and develop our identity.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

GREG GARD: I think what a lot of our guys are doing, I probably don't have enough minutes to go around for guys that maybe deserve a crack. I'm still trying to figure that out. Whether it's Jordan, whether it's Marcus Ilver, whether it's Isaac Lindsey, Carter was able to give us some good minutes today. So a lot of it we're continuing to work with different lineups in practice, so whether they're on the scout team or whether they're over with me, just continue to get better every day. And as we said all along, it's going to take all of us, be ready because you never know when your number's going to get called and fortunately today Jordan stepped up when his number got called and after he got a little lost there in transition, he got stuck in the lane, but I think once he got into the flow of it a little bit he was really good and he rebounded well, obviously hit the three which stands out in the stat sheet, but I thought he was connected pretty well defensively and on the glass with the rest of his teammates.

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