

Maui Jim's Maui Invitational

Monday, November 22, 2021

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

St. Mary's Gaels

Randy Bennett

Tommy Kuhse

Dan Fotu

Postgame Press Conference



St. Mary's - 62, Notre Dame - 59

RANDY BENNETT: Yeah, it was just fun to be part of this event and be part of a game like that, playing Notre Dame. We've never played them, so it's just special to be able to play them and to be in an event like the Maui Invitational and to get a chance to play them.

And then the game was, I think, what you expected, two pretty even teams, and it came down to the last couple possessions. We hit a couple free throws and were able to hang on.

But it was, yeah, I just, it was a game you'll remember the rest of your life, I think, for coaches and players, and just to be part of something like that, that competitive, on a pretty big stage being Maui Invitational, it's just, we feel fortunate to be in the game, to be able to play in that game.

Q. Tommy, when you think about getting to this point, talk about what it feels like to be on this stage, get this kind of victory, given the journey that you've had?

TOMMY KUHSE: Yeah, I think coach hit on it. It's an awesome event, so cool to be a part of it. And this is what we do it for. We play to play against the best competition in the biggest moments. So it's just awesome to be here and it's really fun to be part of this team and we have such a good culture developing guys that it's really fun to be a part of this team.

Q. Dan, you hit the game-winner or the shot that really clinched it. How does it feel to have a game like that?

DAN FOTU: It feels great. We come out every night to try to get the W, and tonight the boys just toughed it down, stayed close, and we got it done, so I'm happy. I'm happy for the boys.

Q. There was never a point in the second half where either team led by multiple possessions. Do you ever recall coaching in a game like that and what were the emotions like for you on the sideline?

RANDY BENNETT: I was just dialed into the game. I knew it was, we got up 7-0 and after that it was just back and forth, back and forth, and fortunately kind of got a last shot with Fotu shooting it from the corner. I didn't see the shot. I just heard a big roar from our crowd, so I was, I knew it went in.

But it was one of those games. Like I said, it was a special game. Just playing Notre Dame makes it special, playing the Maui Invitational makes it special, and then the game was back and forth. It was a tough game.

So, yeah, it was, that's about all I know is you just felt like you were part of a really good game. I thought both teams played well. It was a special game. One, like I said, that I'll always remember.

Q. There was a point where Notre Dame went small and Cormac Ryan was getting what he wanted against a bigger lineup. Did you think about going smaller or were you like we have an advantage on the other end in size and you wanted to keep that?

RANDY BENNETT: We kind of are small. Like our 4s aren't big, they're not clunkers, they're guys that can move around, guard perimeter guys. So we were fine on that. I was kind of, I think I was kind of good with that they're not as big on the boards. But Cormac played really well and their other wing, 23 I thought played really well and they gave us problems. Cormac played well. We didn't do a good job of taking away what he can do and then he did it. He hit I think he hit at least three threes and, yeah, so he hurt us, but we were able to play -- Fotu got 22, so it helped us too, because he's big on the post, I think that's a tough matchup for them guarding him with one of their 3s.

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