

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 22, 2022

Maui, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

Louisville Cardinals

Kenny Payne

Jae'Lyn Withers

J.J. Traynor

Postgame Press Conference



Texas Tech - 70, Louisville - 38

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started with an opening statement from coach and then take questions for the student-athletes.

KENNY PAYNE: First of all, all credit goes out to Texas Tech. Great team. Great defensive team.

The lesson in it, you know, us coming to Maui was to walk away and learn about ourselves. And the two things I take away from Arkansas and Texas Tech so far, their defense, their ability to create turnovers. It's not about how skilled they are. It's about their will.

They imposed their will on us consistently throughout the whole game and we turned the ball over and we shot a bad percentage because of them. We have to learn from that and we have to play the similar way as they played. I thought when we pressed and got after 'em in the second half a little bit we created some of that same type of energy that they have defensively toward us.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for our student-athletes.

Q. How did you mentally stay with it today after they got out to a big lead and it just seemed like such a task to try to score today?

JAE'LYN WITHERS: It's a tough position to be in, you know, with the clock ticking down, but shout goes out to the last group that finished out the game for us. I mean, it's a tough position to be in, but they fought to the very end.

J.J. TRAYNOR: Yeah, I have to agree. It's a long season so you don't want to quit fighting, just keep getting better as a team and just keep remembering that throughout the

game.

Q. I know it's pretty fresh, but if you had to think about one or two things that you think you want to try to get your teammates to do as you're turning the corner to come back and play tomorrow, what are some of the things you want to focus on to kind of get that momentum going?

J.J. TRAYNOR: I would say talking more collectively. I feel like, even myself, I find myself not talking as loud or as much as I should. I feel like working on that and then just being more desperate, just fighting more, I feel like.

JAE'LYN WITHERS: I have to agree with what he said as far as the desperation. I think that the other thing should also be us being able to fight through adversity. I feel like that's been an issue for us since the beginning of the season. But it's progressively, I guess, gotten better.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you, guys. Appreciate it. We'll take questions for coach.

Q. Your reserve unit was able to string some points together there in the final minutes of the game. It seemed like you guys had something that you could maybe take away from that stretch that perhaps applied to tomorrow or when you guys get back home.

KENNY PAYNE: Well, two things: One is, you know, everything that we've been teaching since we've been here has been about handling adversity. I'm evaluating players just like anybody else would. So when we're playing this game and as we're playing it, I'm seeing and watching body language. I'm watching to see who is going to fight through adversity, who is going to hang their head, who is going to fight through and give us positive energy when we need a basket, when we need a stop, who is going to rebound the ball with two hands instead of going after it with one, who is going to be strong with the ball and pivot and keep the ball tight and squeeze the ball, or who is going to be loose with it in pressure situations.

All of that I'm evaluating and I'm learning who I can trust and who I can't trust. I need a group of guys that will fight. I have a great group of kids, but I need them to fight.

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

There's a sentiment amongst themselves that there's a black cloud. There's not no black cloud. You determine the black cloud. You determine how you get out of it and get out from under it.

And we're going to get there. I feel 1,000 percent sure of that. That's a part of my job is to push them to reach higher heights, to be better people, to be better players, to understand the importance of being a great teammate, not just a good teammate, and to play winning basketball.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports....

