

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 22, 2022

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Cincinnati Bearcats

Wes Miller

Viktor Lakhin

Postgame Press Conference



Ohio State - 81, Cincinnati - 53

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

WES MILLER: Quick turnaround for both of us. I thought our guys were ready to play coming out of the gate. But they got after us on the offensive glass. I thought that kind of opened the game up for them.

And then give, like I thought Sensabaugh and Sean McNeil hit some really tough shots in the middle to end of the first half. I thought that kind of opened it up a little bit, and then they kicked our tails in the second half.

So we're disappointed. We're frustrated. But give Ohio State credit. They were the more physical team tonight on both sides of the ball. They took it to us there, especially in the second half.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Victor?

Q. What was it like for you and the boys to play out here against an in-state team so far away from Ohio?

VIKTOR LAKHIN: I don't know. It's just another game we were ready to try to win. There's nothing for me personally special that we play another Ohio team. Every game is another opportunity to win. So I wouldn't highlight this game.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you. We'll take questions for coach.

Q. Zed Key was doing a lot of work, created a lot of problems in the lane. What was it about his play that helped set the tone? And what were some of the things were you trying to do to counter some of that?

WES MILLER: His physicality to get position is as good as

we have in the country probably. They do a lot of good stuff, simple stuff, to get him the ball, but it's well-designed, and their team knows how to get it in.

We were trying to push his catches out and we were going to try to double from the baseline side. I don't know if I saw one all night, to be honest. And we're probably a team right now that needs a practice to be able to execute that type of a game plan. Not as an excuse because they didn't have a practice either.

But we wanted to push the catch out. We wanted to double him on the baseline side. He got such deep catches. That was really hard, and the one or two times we did push him out we didn't execute our post double. But it wasn't just his post catches. It was his offensive rebounding. Let me look at it real quick. He had four offensive rebounds. I thought that was as impactful as some of the moves he made around the basket.

Q. Curious about Sage Tolentino's development so far and how he's doing.

WES MILLER: Yeah, I know he's close to home now, which is special for him and his family. He's actually done really well. He had an ankle injury in the pre-season that set him back a little bit. But outside of that he's probably ahead of schedule from what we thought, coming off an injury his senior year in high school. We're struggling a little bit in the front court and we'll probably need to give him a look here pretty soon. So it's something we've been talking about.

Q. Landers is obviously a great player. He had a great game yesterday. But they held him to two points today. Did you see anything that they were doing that maybe threw him off a bit?

WES MILLER: You know, we got to get back and look at the tape. Landers and Jeremiah and David all struggled offensively tonight. They're our three most prolific offensive players. Again, I always say, the first thing you do is tip your cap to the other team. They deserve some credit. Chris's group deserves some credit.

But we got to find better ways to free up our best offensive



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players and make sure they're in the right positions. Been trying to do that this week leading into this. Trying to figure out -- like we're trying to figure our team out early in the year. We made some changes going into Arizona and we threw up 90, I don't know, 63 points in a half and 90. And you're going, Okay, there's some offensive firepower there. And we weren't able to replicate that tonight.

So I think it's there. Obviously Landers and David and Jeremiah can really put up big numbers. They have done it throughout their career. We got to make sure that we put them in position to do it more consistently.

Q. As far as your philosophy on non-conference scheduling. Is a program like Ohio State somebody you would seek out to play as an in-state opponent or do you just schedule regionally or whoever's available, general philosophy?

WES MILLER: Yeah, I think you got to challenge yourself in your non-conference schedule to see where you stand amongst the good programs across the country. And if you can find a way to do that regionally, that's always neat, because of the fan interest and things of that nature. You get in some really cool environments.

We have that every year when we play Xavier in the Crosstown Shoot-out. We would certainly like to find other ways to get games like that. But scheduling is a, you know, it's like an art, not a science. You want some balance in your schedule. You want some games that are at home and you can learn from and things of that nature. You want some games that really challenge you.

I always thought that you want to have some balance. But I've always believed in playing good local games because of the environments that it creates.

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