

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Wednesday, November 23, 2022

Maui, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

Louisville Cardinals

Kenny Payne

Brandon Huntley-Hatfield

Postgame Press Conference

Cincinnati - 81, Louisville - 62

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: They shoot 61 or 62 percent from the field in the second half. You're not beating anybody when a team can shoot that kind of percentage. So hopefully it's another lesson learned. We walked out of this tournament 0-3, but hopefully we saw some of the best teams in the country and we learned from 'em.

We learned that Arkansas rebounds, forces turnovers, fighting every possession. We learned from Texas Tech that you can win being a great defensive team and it's about your will, not your skill. Tonight we learned that if you don't get the shooters and raise your hand and contest shooters hard and execute on offense and don't turn the ball over, anybody can beat you.

So I can walk away and be doom and gloom, but I have to look at this and figure out a way to get this team better and get this team for these young men to go out and get a win.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Questions for Brandon.

Q. As coach said, you were playing well, neck and neck, it was a 1-point game at half. What were some of the things that coach was trying to emphasize and have you guys emphasized early on in this game to be effective?

BRANDON HUNTLEY-HATFIELD: That it has to start on the defensive end. We have to know our personnel. We have to close out on our shooters and be desperate once they put us in scramble situations.

We also have to execute on the offensive end. Missing



layups around the rim, it started with me. I got to be better at that. But just really doing the little things for us to win and get by. We didn't do that tonight. We do it every now and then, but we have to do it over the course of the 40 minutes. But we're going to get better at that.

Q. As a life experience maybe, I know it was a tough few days, but what do you think you'll be thinking about when you're flying home after this week?

BRANDON HUNTLEY-HATFIELD: Just the things we could have done differently as a team and things I could have done differently myself to help our team win. This whole course of the tournament I wasn't, I didn't perform how I work and how I expected to.

But it's a learning experience. I'm going to go back, once we leave, I'm going to go back to the drawing board, get back to work and continue to improve every single day and not let this, let these last three games or this whole tournament dwell. I'm not going to dwell on it. I'm just going to look at the film, see what I can do and get better, and I'm going to get better. I'm going to have to change. We all have to change individually and as a team. I think we're headed in the right direction. But for myself I just, I got to change a lot of things. I'm looking forward to it and I'm excited to get back to work.

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

Q. One of the moments I think you've been kind of emphasizing on kind of just how do you deal with adversity. You ran a really good set at the end of the half with Ellis. I think they executed it great. It felt like momentum. They come back. I don't know if that was, DeJulius hits the shot and you can see, that was one of those moments you're trying to see how they -- can you talk about that as a moment that is kind of a teachable moment?

KENNY PAYNE: Well, it goes like this: The best people, the best players, the best leaders, every successful person out there has went through adversity. There's nobody that's exempt from it. You got to get knocked on your butt and get up and dust yourself off and go on and perform



and do better and get better. You look back at it years later and you say it was a great learning lesson for me.

This game is the same way. We executed. We did a lot of great things well. We relaxed for a second. We give a guy his right hand and he goes and makes a half-court shot. For me as a coach, and I'm learning as I go, but the one thing I walk away with, what if I gave up? What if I, you know, get discouraged. How can I ever say I'm a leader? I can't.

I hope I'm a man of faith. I pray every day. I don't worry about the outside clutter. But true leadership is how you handle adversity. True leadership is being an example for players. And I tell every player on this team, Don't you panic. Don't panic until you see me panic. And I'm not panicking. I'm encouraged. I'm going to keep pushing and we're going to keep working harder. We're going to work harder on conditioning. We're going to work harder on defense and every single day we're going to keep fighting.

I know that they know I believe in 'em. I love 'em. I know they know that. And they love me. That gives me great joy in knowing that through all of this adversity, we still are close. We haven't splintered. We have stayed together.

It's disappointing because we put together great game plans, and all of that's fine until, like they say in boxing, until you get hit in the mouth by Mike Tyson. Well, we've been hit in the mouth. We got to dust ourself off and keep fighting.

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