

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Wednesday, November 23, 2022

Maui, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

Arkansas Razorbacks

Eric Musselman

Trevon Brazile

Postgame Press Conference



Arkansas - 78, San Diego State - 74

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

ERIC MUSSELMAN: I thought in the first half we just, it looked like we didn't have the energy that we normally play with. San Diego State was a team coming into the tournament that we felt with their veterans and how well coached they are, and I thought in the first half it looked like they were a team that kind of knew their roles a little bit more. We're still trying to figure out who we are.

We thought somebody off the bench that maybe hadn't played last night could have an impact and obviously Kamani Johnson was absolutely incredible the last 19 minutes of the game.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll do questions for our student-athlete.

Q. Your play down the stretch, especially in overtime, just tell me, how big was that for you guys?

TREVON BRAZILE: It was big. The main thing I was just trying to be a leader on the court. I know my teammates needed me. So just playing hard, keeping us together, had a good come out.

Q. Were you guys worried when you were down double digits there for a few different times?

TREVON BRAZILE: I mean, you're always worried when you're down double digits, but I just kept huddling the guys up, telling them, We got to keep fighting, We got to stay in it. It's an older team. We knew that going in. We had hard film. We prepped for them hard. We were well-prepared, but we knew it was going to be a fight going in.

Q. Take us through that last sequence at the end of regulation when you trap Lamont Butler and you dive on the floor.

TREVON BRAZILE: I mean, I didn't know that the guy was going to give it up that easy. He's a senior guard. Those guys are old. He lost the ball, dove on it, timeout as soon as I got it.

Q. Are you surprised he didn't call timeout?

TREVON BRAZILE: I'm a little surprised he didn't call timeout. He was in a bad situation. He was fumbling the ball. I'm surprised his coach didn't call a timeout. He didn't call a timeout. We got the ball. Kamani made a big play, and then went from there.

Q. As the game got late in regulation and you guys kept trying to come back and they kept hitting the shot, what's going through your mind? Did you think, at a certain point, you start thinking, yeah, maybe it's not our day?

TREVON BRAZILE: Just taking it one possession at a time. Coach always tells us, we live and die on each possession. So that last two, three minutes of regulation we were just living and dying on each possession.

Q. Their center, Nathan Mensah, Defensive Player of the Year in the Mountain West conference, fouls out. How much of a factor was that not to have his size and length out there?

TREVON BRAZILE: He's Defensive Player of the Year. That's huge. I know number 0 fouled out too in the overtime. But when Mensah fouled out, that was big for us. He was really a non-factor today, I felt like.

Q. How big is it to go home 2-1 from here, especially after last night?

TREVON BRAZILE: It's big. Last night we really just, the game happened how it happened. Really, we just tried to put that behind us today, come back and get the win, and we did that.

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

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you. We'll keep coach for a few more.

Q. If I may, the same question. To leave here 2-1, especially after the way last night went?

ERIC MUSSELMAN: Yeah, I mean, for us with the 11 new players and six freshmen, obviously this game was scheduled well in advance. If we knew that we had 11 new guys and six freshmen, I probably would have asked Coach Odom if we could come another year because the field was really good.

Look, San Diego State's coaching staff I thought did an incredible job today. They controlled the game for most of the game. We did just enough to hang around. It's not often that a game kind of has a NBA feel how it ended. But that's how a lot of NBA games kind of end. You just keep talking to your team about hang around, hang around. Eventually you try to get two or three stops in a row.

We ran some plays that we have not practiced at all, that elbow pick-and-roll, because we had some personnel in the game that we had not had, that there was that group that had never played together.

But, again, I mean, San Diego State's a great basketball team. They're going to have an incredible year. I like how their offense, they got different guys touching the ball, and then to try to score on the Aztecs is really, really hard.

I thought the refs, that's a, that game's really hard to ref tonight. I thought those guys did a good job of controlling the emotions of the game.

Q. What did you see on that last sequence? What was the plan there?

ERIC MUSSELMAN: The regulation?

Q. In regulation. Were you going to trap automatically or --

ERIC MUSSELMAN: Yeah, well, we wanted to try and make as many passes as we could and then maybe rotate a little bit out of it. We kind of live and die sometimes on some of our gambling traps.

But I thought Bradley got a pretty good look on the one that he missed. And then I thought we missed a couple too. I think it was just two teams that it was like a heavyweight fight that, legs, you look at the three-point shooting, you and I probably could have knocked one down. They were just a tired group and two really good defensive teams.

Q. On the last play of regulation or second to last play, you trapped, but they get out of the trap, they reverse it, they get some passes, and then you finally foul Seiko and he makes a free throw. The second time you get a harder trap. But was there something different that happened? Did it come quicker, the one on Butler?

ERIC MUSSELMAN: We just felt like we wanted them not to run whatever Coach Dutch wanted them to run, so we felt like by trying to do something random, I just felt that they were too smart, execute too well, to let them do something in their comfort zone and we were kind of willing to gamble.

But we didn't want, we weren't going to play passive defense and just let them run whatever they wanted to run.

Q. Did something happen in the handshake line?

ERIC MUSSELMAN: No. There was just an Aztec fan that came down and said some things.

Q. To you?

ERIC MUSSELMAN: Whoever.

Q. I got a ton of texts from people saying there was an incident.

ERIC MUSSELMAN: There was words exchanged.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports...