

# Allstate Maui Invitational

Monday, November 20, 2023

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

SimpliFi Arena

## Syracuse Orange

## Adrian Autry

## Chris Bell

## Judah Mintz

### Postgame Press Conference

Tennessee - 73, Syracuse - 56

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started. We are joined by Syracuse head coach, Adrian Autry, Judah Mintz, and Chris Bell. We'll start with some opening comments from Coach.

ADRIAN AUTRY: I thought we played well for a big part of the game defensively. That was probably our best stretch of defense that we've played so far this year. I think offensively we struggled a little bit. We missed some shots that we normally don't miss. We didn't shoot the ball as well.

But overall, I thought we competed and battled. We got to get better rebounding the ball. But, you know, in these tournaments, you know it's going to be a battle and that's what you want to do, you want to see your team come out and battle, and I thought we did that today, for sure. We didn't play our best basketball on the other end, but that happens. But, you know, just got to get ready for the next game now.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach. We'll open it up for questions for the players.

**Q. Judah, what challenges did Tennessee present to you throughout game defensively?**

JUDAH MINTZ: Not many, to be honest. I think I just struggled offensively, just missing shots that I usually make. I didn't play for a good chunk of the first half due to foul trouble, so I think once I got back in the flow of the game, I had my way.

**Q. Chris, Coach Barnes was in here and he said to be a good defensive team, you have to finish the**



**defensive possession with a defensive rebound, and you guys struggled on the boards a little bit. Were they just bigger and more physical or why was it so difficult to get a rebound today?**

CHRIS BELL: I would just say they were just a really physical team. I wouldn't say they were better than us rebounding-wise. I would just say we got to be more focused, lock in. Definitely they're a strong team, physical. They're going to try to move you out of the way. It's just can we rebound the ball at a high level, and I think we struggled with that a little bit today.

**Q. What do you think the most important part of your team has to change for tomorrow's game? Because it's against another top-15 opponent.**

CHRIS BELL: I don't think we look at it as being another top-15 opponent. We look at ourselves as some of those top teams in the country. Really just being ready to play, make shots, do the things we know we can do, don't be stagnant. I feel like we play defense at a high level, and I feel like if we do that tomorrow we're going to get a win, so I ain't worried about none of that.

**Q. Judah, do you feel like the ball stuck a little bit today? Did you feel like, in the second half particularly, you needed to move the ball a little better?**

JUDAH MINTZ: At times, but for the most part I think we did a pretty good job in the second half offensively. We went through stretches obviously, both teams did. A lot of fouls were called, a lot of fouls were missed, but at the end of the day we just didn't get enough stops in the game, and that's what it came down to.

**Q. Chris, talk about what was the atmosphere like being in Hawaii, and talk about your game tonight, 16 points a rebound. And, for coach, what has to change, obviously from the free-throw line 8-17?**

CHRIS BELL: It feels good just being out here in Hawaii playing these top teams playing trying to showcase our talents and Syracuse. That's really it, honestly. We're just happy to be out here, competing at a high level, I felt as a team, it showed us a lot tonight how we competed against



Tennessee. They're an older team. That's really it. I feel like we can be one of the top teams in the country once we lock in and focus. If we can do that for 40 minutes, it's going to be tough to beat us.

ADRIAN AUTRY: I think our consistency, obviously, and everything that we do, but it all starts on the defensive end and finishing plays, rebounding the ball. Typically, most teams' offense is not great in the beginning of the year, so we still got to work some things out on that. But I think we've made strides. I said this before I got here. The first game of the season all the way up until -- every game we've gotten better, you know, defensively, and that's going to be a big thing for us, defensively and rebounding the basketball.

So we got to continue to be more consistent, we got to string those defensive efforts together and rebound the ball, and then offensively we'll get better. Offensively, I'm not worrying about the offense. We'll get better there. We'll be able to do some things offensively, but it all starts on the defensive end and finishing, finishing plays and rebounding.

**Q. You folks stayed with them for a majority of the game. You were within like five points, but Tennessee finished on a 12-0 run. Was it that they just wore you down or did you folks -- like, how did you feel about that? Because you stayed with them most of the game.**

ADRIAN AUTRY: I think at the end of the game, I think we -- I don't think they wore us down, we just, you know, the ball, it was tough for us, and I thought we had a couple of drives that we got in there. We didn't get the call. But it was really finishing on the defensive end, getting back, and finishing a couple plays.

They broke away at the end of the game. At the end of the game, typically when you get down five or seven with a minute or two, you kind of push a little bit and you rush your shots, and I thought that's what happened, and that's normal, we just got to have a little bit more composure towards the end and we will, we will.

**Q. You finished pretty well this year. Were they just sending another guy to you at the rim? Was it more difficult to get a good shot at the rim today?**

JUDAH MINTZ: No.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Chris and Judah, you can go back to your team. Thanks.

We'll take questions for Coach.

**Q. Rick Barnes came on in here and said that Syracuse made the right decision by passing this program off to you. What did you like out of your team's performance today against the No. 7 team in the country?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: I just thought we battled. I thought we were tough. I thought we were locked in for the most part of the game. Even when things -- we jumped out, built a little bit of a lead, and then obviously, we got in some foul trouble. So we got a lot of different scenarios in the game, and I thought we responded pretty well, for the most part. Even when they grew the lead, we got it back close.

So, again, I just liked the way we competed and responded. I would love to win, but it's the top-5 team in the country and they know how to win and we'll continue to work and improve.

**Q. Were there any difficult moments out there for you in terms of making an adjustment in the middle of the game?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: No, I don't think so. I think it was really about finishing plays on the defensive end. I thought that was the key. As far as what we were doing, we got the shots we wanted, for the most part. Again, our offense is still a work in progress, and it will take some time, and I'm sure pretty much every coach will say that, for the most part.

But it wasn't really nothing that -- they didn't do anything that we didn't expect or I didn't see, so...

**Q. We talked about rebounding. How do you get a little bit better at that?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: You got to go get the ball. You got to go get it. I think this group understanding rebounding, and rebounding is a team thing. It's not just for our big guys. I think our guards got to get in there and rebound more. I think we just got to rebound better as a team.

I think they understand -- as you go through a season, I think every team starts to understand, whatever that coach is harping on, how important it is, especially when you get so close and you lose some games. I think this group is still learning. We all are still learning what it takes. I think this will definitely head into about how important rebounding is.

**Q. So the last time that the team was here was in 2013. Obviously you were an assistant coach at the time. Being now the head coach, is there much of a**

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

**difference? How does that feel? Is it a big change?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: Yeah, it's a difference, we lost today. (Laughing). Yeah. No, you know what, you get a sense of pride when you get a chance to travel and not only do you represent your alma mater, you represent your fan base, you know everyone's watching, everyone around, if they're not here they're on TV. So it's an honor. I love this place and I love representing, so when you get a chance to travel on the road, especially on the road, you're proud of your program and you're proud of your alma mater and you want to just do the best that you can and make them proud.

**Q. You threw a lot of different looks defensively, whether it was a full court press or the 2-3 zone. What goes into your thought process of implementing that throughout the game?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: Well, some of it is scouting. Some of it is scouting. When you look at the team and you may think you can get an advantage certain places. Then some of it is the game. Judah got in foul trouble and we wanted to try to keep them off balance a little bit. So just sometimes in the game you just want to try to change up the momentum, give a different look, and I thought we for the most part we did that. We adjusted, we gave 'em different looks. It all comes back down to us getting the rebound. I thought even in the zone we were very active, we got a couple of misses and couldn't quite get the rebound.

**Q. Did Rick Barnes say anything to you after the game in that post-game line, especially after The Volunteers had that alley-oop at the end?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: No. He apologized, and I said, There's no need to do that. Game's over with. But I had a chance to play against Rick Barnes as a player and obviously spent a little bit of time with him as a coach. I have a lot of respect for him. He's a great coach. So I don't really get into those type of things -- what is it? The unspoken -- the game's over with so...

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you.

ADRIAN AUTRY: Thank you.

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