

Allstate Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 21, 2023

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

SimpliFi Arena

Tennessee Volunteers

Rick Barnes

Jahmai Mashack

Postgame Press Conference

Purdue - 71, Tennessee - 67

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Coach Rick Barnes and Jahmai Mashack. Coach, we'll start with some opening comments from you.

RICK BARNES: Really hard-fought game. Utmost respect for Matt and his team and his program. We knew it was going to be a physical basketball game. Both teams aren't going to shy away from that, playing hard. Not many things are easy to come by. Obviously, Edey's a hard guy to defend. They do a great job with so many different ways to try to get him the ball. Zach certainly is worthy of National Player of the Year. And, again, as a coaching staff, they do a tremendous job just making it hard to keep him from catching the ball where he wants to catch it.

But really proud of our guys. We got down a little bit, missed some shots that I think over time we're going to make at a much higher percentage. But just our effort, got down, didn't flinch. We've been in those games before, we're built for it, and just wish we could have made a couple more shots. We had some looks at it, certainly, but need to get a little smarter in situations.

But overall, the effort, I mean, what Shack does, we honestly thought at the beginning of the game we would put him out there, let him guard Zach because we knew he would fight him and make it hard to get around his knees to make it hard for him to catch the ball. But just proud of the effort and obviously wish we would have come away with a win, but this time of year we'll learn a lot from it, and we'll be better for it, and moving forward we're going to continue to grow and get better.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach.

Questions for Jahmai.



Q. Is it hard to play in a game like this? So many whistles, there's just not a lot of flow to it, you're dealing with a guy who is seven-four as a player. Do you try to adjust the officials? Do you hope they adjust to you? What was it like to play in this game?

JAHMAI MASHACK: I think for me and for our team we really knew that it was going to be a game like that. We knew it was going to be a physical game. They're a tough team and we're a tough team. No matter how many times we lose we never get used to it. Games like this you just have those plays play over and over in your head and you just try and think to yourself what could you have done better to help your team. To answer your question, those games are, they're hard, they're tough. But we're resilient and I think we showed that today. And the reason why we were down, I don't think it had anything to do with us or our toughness. We played that game four minutes, every four minutes and we went out and we did what we could and just a couple shots didn't fall and execution. But, toughness-wise, we did everything we could.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you, Jahmai. Take questions for coach.

Q. Describe how you guys approached defending Edey at the start and how you were pleased with it, given that -- maybe not with as many fouls as you had -- but the approach seemed to work, given you would limit his looks to the basket, you limited their overall approach, and it was really just Loyer's shots that gave them most of their offense that first half.

RICK BARNES: Yeah, you know, as I mentioned, Matt does a -- he's really got a terrific offensive mind scheme what he does with how he adjusts with his players. He does a great job of knowing where he wants to catch the ball. We talked about it with our guys, you got to fight for your space where you want it. They do different things to try to get him right where they want him to set up. I think the key is, and what we tried to do was keep a body on him, but not the traditional way where you try to get on a high side and then hope that -- we were certainly ready if they were going to throw it over the top -- but just keep moving around him so he couldn't get set up where he would feel comfortable.

The ones we wanted to take away from him was he had a couple of the drop steps. You can't give him those. That happened against really the younger guys. But it's the offensive rebounds. We gave 'em too many of those. We needed to put a body on him, get our hands up. Because our length there can deal with it on a rebound. Maybe not so much when he can get where he wants to get with his feet, but we wanted, again, move him, try to move him and try to move around him, just where he couldn't get settled in to where he thought we would be. I think if you try to lock in on one side, like say you're going three quarter him, he knows what to do. You get on low side, he knows what to do. As long as you can keep moving it's harder for him to seal you the way he wants to seal you.

But defensively we, I think, did good enough to win the game, it's just that we had some looks that we need to knock down. But proud of the effort. We're better and we can be better, they're going to get better, we're going to get better.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach.

RICK BARNES: All right. Thank you, guys.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports....