

# Allstate Maui Invitational

Wednesday, November 22, 2023

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

SimpliFi Arena

## Syracuse Orange

## Adrian Autry

## Naheem McLeod

## Justin Taylor

### Postgame Press Conference

Syracuse - 105, Chaminade - 56

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by head coach, Adrian Autry, Naheem McLeod, and Justin Taylor. We'll start with opening comments from Coach.

ADRIAN AUTRY: Obviously this has been a good week for us. We had some really good competition. We played two good games. Our team right now is still growing and I think the mindset coming into this game is we just wanted to play well and try to get better. I thought we did that today.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach.

Questions for the players.

**Q. How nice was it to see the ball go in today from three and can you just address your team's better three-point shooting today?**

JUSTIN TAYLOR: Yeah, I just got to keep my trust in it. Eventually one's got to fall. I'm going to have days like that, but trusting myself. My teammates and my coaching staff kept on telling me, Shoot the ball, shoot with confidence. So that helped me out, and I just kept on shooting and eventually they fell. So it was good to see that go through the hoop.

But like coach said, I think it was good for us to -- this game just kind of run through our sets, get ourselves back, and play together and get a good win under our belt. So it was a good win for us, a good week for us, and just moving forward just watching film and going forward from it.

**Q. Naheem, what did you guys -- what did you learn about your team this week?**



NAHEEM McLEOD: What I learned is that we are going to compete no matter what. Even if, you know, you got decent teams here, every team is going to compete and try to win it all, so we came out here and just tried to compete as much as we can, as hard as we can, and come out here and play together.

**Q. Was there a concerted effort to get you the ball on the lob a little bit?**

NAHEEM McLEOD: Yeah, it was. Coach harped on giving me the ball and me going to making a move or looking over everybody because we had a size advantage, that look out and pass it or just go try to score, so just emphasis to throw it in the post and try to go make a move.

**Q. Justin, what do you think you learned about your team this week?**

JUSTIN TAYLOR: I would just say that we're resilient. Obviously, two tough games against top teams, but we're never going to stop battling. Obviously, we have some things to work on, especially defensively and offensively, but I think we have all the pieces we need. It's just about playing together better and watching film and building on these games and moving forward from 'em. But I think, again, we learned that we're always going to fight and play together, so...

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Naheem. Thanks, Justin.

We'll take questions for Coach.

**Q. Was there more emphasis today on sharing the ball a little bit and trying to assist on more buckets than you had been in the previous couple of games?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: Yes. Watching the last couple of games, especially here, I thought the ball kind of stuck in people's hands, so we wanted to really make an emphasis of passing and sharing and really trying to get the ball inside a little bit more. As we move forward, I think we have to do that. I think Naheem can get around the basket and score and finish. He has a nice touch. So I think that's something as we continue to move forward we have to do.



**Q. You shot the ball pretty well from the three-point line in the second half and it had been a bit of a struggle. Was it good for you and good for these guys to see the ball go in?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: I think it was good for these guys. Obviously, when we get back, we got another tough stretch of games. So we didn't shoot the ball, we didn't play well offensively here. I thought we battled defensively here. Still a work in progress. When I look at these teams out here and look at the scores around these couple of games, 70s, in the 70s, I thought we did a decent job then defensively as a team trying to improve, so proud of that.

I thought every game the score did not dictate what that game was. I know some people use the word lopsided or whatever the case may be, but I thought these guys really battled. I thought we battled well into the second half of pretty much the first two games. So, again, that's something that we can continue to build on and we will build on. But the scores did not indicate, especially the first two games, of how that game was, so...

**Q. What do you think is the most important part of the offense to fix going into LSU next week?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: I think the most important part of our offense is making baskets, right? And then trying to get easy baskets, assisted baskets, and that's the emphasis that's moving forward, especially with this group right here. We got to have some spacing, but we got to help get easy baskets by movement, by screening, and using our abilities to create for others.

**Q. Obviously Naheem played much better tonight, but what are ways that you can kind of get him to be even effective when you're not running offense for him? It feels like can he help you a little bit on the offensive glass.**

ADRIAN AUTRY: Well, I think he can really look and time up his posing. Again, we try to keep him in a short corner, we try to keep him around, and then as the ball is moving towards him, I think he can do some work early. He's a big, strong player, and he's a skilled player, so I think we just got to make a more conscious effort of looking inside and we will do that going forward. We have to try to get the ball inside to balance our offense.

**Q. I know you've been to the Maui Invitational before in this arena here and then you never played Hawaii here, but I remember you played them in Ogden, Utah, in the NCAA tournament in 1994. Do you have any memories of that game? I know it was you and**

**Lawrence and Trevor Ruffin for Hawaii had a big game.**

ADRIAN AUTRY: That's the name I remember, Trevor Ruffin. Was Phil Handy on that team? They had Tony Maroney. Yeah, that was -- I think, did they beat Wisconsin Green Bay to go?

**Q. That was the game after.**

ADRIAN AUTRY: Yeah. Yeah, no, it was great memories. That team was really good. Trevor Ruffin was really good. And then I think years after that, or a couple -- maybe years before that or after that, one of our guys transferred out here. A guy named Anthony Harris transferred out here, and then one of my other friends played at Hawaii Pacific.

But, no, those teams were good. That team was good. We knew they were good, but they were really good when we played 'em. That was a battle. That was a really good game out in Ogden, Utah. Yeah.

**Q. So with Thanksgiving coming up tomorrow, obviously some potential days off for your squad, how are you guys going to use these next couple days to sort of get out of the Hawaii mindset and get back to central New York?**

ADRIAN AUTRY: Well, we'll have a Thanksgiving dinner together as a team and then jump on the plane and head back. We'll probably adjust our times, our practice times, to try to get back on East Coast time in time because we got a quick turnaround. We play on Tuesday. So we'll adjust these practice times to try to keep these guys -- get these guys adjusted back to the time.

THE MODERATOR: That will do it. Thanks, Coach.

ADRIAN AUTRY: Thank you.

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