

Maui Invitational presented by Novavax

Monday, November 25, 2024

Lahaina, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

Colorado Buffs Coach Tad Boyle Trevor Baskin Julian Hammond, III

Postgame Press Conference

Michigan State 72, Colorado 56.

TAD BOYLE: Hats off to Michigan State. We prepared for a fight. They didn't do anything that we didn't expect. I thought Coach Rohn did a great job with the scouting report and the game plan.

Unfortunately we didn't show up -- we showed up the first 10 minutes we played hard and we made shots, but then we lost this game on every front, offensively, defensively, rebounding the ball, all the things that we work on, and they were better than us in every phase of the game.

I can't think of one thing -- we made four threes and they made two. But they scored 50 points in the paint, and that was a team we knew was struggling from three coming in here. They're still struggling from three, but we gave them 50 points in the paint, and that was the No. 1 piece of the game plan was to protect the paint and make them make some shots.

So transition defense, box outs, you name it, bad shot selection on the offensive end. We just got beat by a better team, and it's unfortunate.

Q. For either of you guys, Jase Richardson for them comes in and really makes an impact, and I'm wondering what he does that makes him so difficult to defend and the impact he's able to create for them?

JULIAN HAMMOND III: We knew he wanted his left hand and just didn't really cut it off. He's a real good driver when he gets that way. He can shoot a little pull-up. He has a lot of things to his bag, but overall it's just when he gets downhill to his left hand, he's hard to stop.



Q. For either of you guys, after the first five, at the time, ten minutes or so, it seemed like your offense got really bogged down into a lot of one-on-one play. The ball movement kind of stopped. Was it something Michigan State's defense was forcing you into, or was something lacking on your end?

TREVOR BASKIN: I'd say it was definitely something just lacking on our end. I couldn't say what exact thing it was. I think we got a little too drive happy, and myself included, I think we got a little fixated on trying to attack the rim and over-dribbled a little bit.

But we did a poor job of adjusting and getting back to what we did the first 10 minutes of the game.

Q. How do you flush this one and get ready for the challenge tomorrow against UConn?

JULIAN HAMMOND III: You know, it's a quick turnaround, so we're going to go back, do what we've got to do to get our bodies right, our minds right, scout team, all that. And just be ready to go.

TREVOR BASKIN: Yeah, there's no time to really have a hangover. You're playing a two-time national champion the next day. You can't wallow in self-pity for two days or else you'll get your ass kicked again.

We've really got to learn from what we did today and try to fix those issues and give it our best tomorrow.

Q. Coach, as was just said, this is a quick turnaround, so if there's one or two things you want to try to emphasize here over the next 18 hours, what do you want to do?

TAD BOYLE: Well, look, my assistant coaches, they do a great job scouting. I've got a great staff, I really do. I've got a lot of confidence in them. I'm going to watch this film. We had dinner at 7:00 tonight. I want to spend about a 30-minute film session talking about today's game and what we did, what we didn't do, and show them.

There's no teacher like film other than experience. Then we'll eat and then we'll turn our attention to UConn and get

ready. It's a quick turnaround for both of us. They played the first game. They get a few more hours' rest. But it's who's going to be hungrier tomorrow. That's what I'll find out about our team. One thing I know about Coach Hurley and the way he's wired is I know they'll be ready, and they're a little angry. Who's going to be angrier, UConn or Colorado? That's what we'll find out at 10:30 tomorrow morning.

Q. With all that's happened to Lahaina in the last 15 months, first of all, did you have a message for your team about how important or different maybe this tournament was, and what's it been like to actually be here for you guys?

TAD BOYLE: Well, number one, it's great, and I'm happy for the residents of Maui and specifically Lahaina because of what they went through. We're very cognizant of that and appreciative to be back and maybe help get things back to normal, whatever that is, for the people that were affected by the wildfires.

So our hearts go out to them for sure. I think it's a great step in that direction.

But in terms of this tournament, we knew coming over here, this is a loaded field, and we knew no matter what happened today, you're going to play a really good team tomorrow. No matter what happens tomorrow, we're going to play a really good team on Wednesday.

In terms of preparation, there's no teacher like experience. We had six days to prepare for Michigan State. Like I said, they didn't do anything we didn't expect. We knew they were going to crash the boards. We knew they were going to get out and run on makes and misses. We knew they wanted to get downhill and get the ball in the paint.

We just couldn't do anything to stop them. We made some shots the first 10 minutes of the game to keep us in it, and then our offense went stagnant.

Q. Tad, now you're five games into the season, obviously this was your first high major opponent. As a coach I'm curious on your progress report early on with what this team, what this roster has, and where you need it to get to based on what you lost from last season? Are there certain areas that you have greater concern in than you might have had or thought you might have had in the middle of October?

TAD BOYLE: I know Matt guarding the ball defensively has been an issue for us. Even in our four games before this first high major team. So guarding the ball defensively. I don't know what the final was. I know they had eight

points at halftime from us just guarding the ball in the first half. I don't know what it was for the game. That's part of it.

Taking care of the ball, I mentioned that before the game. Did a better job of that. Four turnovers in the first half, but we had five in the first five minutes of the second half, which allowed them to expand the lead rather than us to contract it.

There's a lot of things for us to work on. The one thing I learned, I think, and it was pretty obvious if you watched us tonight, Elijah Malone is a heck of a weapon for us. We've got to use him more. We've got other guys that think they're shooters, and I call those guys shot takers, and we need to find some shot makers.

The first thing we've got to do is take good shots, and we did a poor job of that, I thought, when we started struggling. Trevor mentioned dribbling the ball. We've got a lot of guys that dribble the ball, not too many guys that drive the ball.

Michigan State has got guys that drive the ball. There's a difference between dribbling and driving. We dribble it, they drive it. Then we've got to make good decisions when we do drive it.

You know, toughness, and they made some really good verticality plays in the second half at the rim I thought were really good defensive efforts by Michigan State, and on the other end, they go through us like a hot knife through butter and there's nobody at the rim going vertical.

That's all toughness. That's all that is. If we don't figure that out, we've got a long season ahead of us.

Q. Coach, Michigan State, if my math is right, finished about 70 percent on two-pointers. What does that tell you about your defense?

TAD BOYLE: Well, it's soft. It's soft. Again, that gets back to that toughness factor. The number one thing on the board defensively before they took the floor, it's a short warmup, but they come in and you say, okay, you give them one or two, maybe three things defensively we've got to do, the number one thing was keep the ball out of the paint, whether it was with guarding the ball and gap help, whether it's post defense, you name it, transition defense. We weren't able to do it. They got the ball in the paint whenever they wanted and in different ways.

It's just -- to me it's a matter of toughness. That's really -- because with Michigan State, if you are not tough, you have no chance to beat them. And we weren't very tough

tonight, and we had no chance to beat them.

Q. A guy like Jase Richardson who's six games into his career, how much of a part of the scouting report has he already come when you watch their previous games and what your general thoughts of him are?

TAD BOYLE: Well, he's a part of it for sure because he's very dynamic. He comes off the bench, and sometimes I don't think our players understand how good a players come off the bench in college basketball, especially from programs like Michigan State.

He's a kid that's extremely athletic. He finished in the lane. He finished at the rim. He's a shot maker. That's why he was 6 for 8.

Now, they're struggling from three, but they got the ball in the paint and they made plays. They finished at the rim, and we didn't finish at the rim. It gets back to toughness.

The one thing I know about Coach Izzo is he prides himself and his program on toughness, as we do, and that's what's so disappointing to me about our performance tonight is that toughness factor. I keep going back to it. But Jase Richardson is a hell of a player, and they've got really good guards.

When they start making shots, look out, Michigan State is going to be really, really good. And they're big. They battle. I can't say enough about the Zapola kid. He just beats you. And Kohler. Those guys rebound the heck out of it, and then you've got a guy like Coen Carr and Cooper come in, they got 7 for 7 from the field off the bench. I mean, they've got guys that finish.

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