

# Maui Invitational presented by Novavax

Monday, November 25, 2024

Lahaina, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

## Iowa State Cyclones Coach TJ Otzelberger Curtis Jones

Postgame Press Conference

Auburn 83, Iowa State 81

TJ OTZELBERGER: Credit to Auburn, especially in the second half. They did a great job. They were the more physical team in the second half, and that showed up in a lot of areas, but specifically on the glass and their ability to get to the offensive glass. Certainly that last play is a microcosm of that.

Credit to them. They played well. Thought our guys had tremendous fight in the first half and just didn't finish the way we would have liked, but we'll bounce back and be better for it.

**Q. Curtis, this was the first high-level opponent you guys have faced this season. You shot 58 percent in the first half and then 32 or so in the second half. Obviously they impacted a lot of that, but did you personally or did you and your teammates feel the effects of that in the final five to seven minutes, given the increase in physicality and competition were markedly different from your earlier wins?**

CURTIS JONES: Yeah, I don't think we felt it as much at the end because we were kind of going basket for basket at the end. I think it more so started at the end of the second half when they went on their run, and we just can't let that happen.

**Q. Curtis, defensively speaking, obviously you guys were able to hold them to 33 points in the first half. I think they scored that in the first 12 minutes of the second half. What were they doing more effectively, or was it something you guys were not executing quite the same way?**

CURTIS JONES: I've really got to go back and watch the



game, but I know No. 10, he got hot. He hit a few threes. It seemed like they actually started hitting more threes if I can remember, and Broome got it going, too. That's pretty much what I remember.

**Q. TJ, what were you hoping to get on that last possession coming out of time-out? It looked like you wanted Keshon to go to the basket?**

TJ OTZELBERGER: Yeah, Gilbert had played great. Wanted to get him in space going with his right hand, and tried to create contact and get in the paint and to the rim and just weren't fortunate enough -- it didn't go our way.

**Q. Your guys' play in this kind of environment, really dramatic game, just a phenomenal atmosphere; how do you avoid having any kind of carryover after exhausting so much emotional energy and knowing you have two more games to go? What do you do to level them and get them ready to play in 24 hours?**

TJ OTZELBERGER: Yeah, there's a lot of disappointment in the locker room after the game certainly, which you can imagine. We told our guys, use that feeling that you have now and you bottle it up and then you turn it into the positive.

You come to a great tournament like this and you play these great programs, and you know that something like that can happen, and you need to learn from it. Areas we weren't as strong, need to make sure we address those, and we bounce back and we're better for it.

I'm confident in our guys that we'll do that, and we'll use it to our benefit to be better.

**Q. Seemed like your team was able to do whatever they wanted to do in the first half. What kind of adjustments did Auburn make that made it more difficult to run the stuff --**

TJ OTZELBERGER: Yeah, they denied a lot more passes, they were a lot more physical guarding the ball, more aggressive with their ball screen coverage. Everything they did, they ramped up their intensity and their aggressiveness.

Like Curtis mentioned, it was that start of the second half. When you're up the way we were you want to try to finish, and they came out with better energy and more aggressive and better ball pressure, and they put us on our heels.

**Q. It also felt in the first half Jefferson was much more aggressive. How can you get him more involved in the offense maybe?**

TJ OTZELBERGER: Yeah, we need to get him more involved. We need to get him more touches in areas where he can be effective, and certainly he was great in the first half, and we'll do a better job of doing that in the second half as we move forward.

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