

Maui Invitational presented by Novavax

Tuesday, November 26, 2024

Lahaina, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

UConn Huskies Coach Dan Hurley Solo Ball

Postgame Press Conference

Colorado 73, UConn 72.

DAN HURLEY: Congrats to Colorado and Tad. They played an inspired game and a great second half.

Credit to them. Obviously we didn't expect to find ourselves in this position out here based on where we've been. But this is where we are.

Just defensively in the second half, just really, really bad. We've been bad out here defensively. Then obviously I think the foul trouble has taken its toll, too.

Q. Solo, what did Colorado do from your perspective to get themselves back in the game, and was it centered on the fact that Samson and Tarris inherited some foul trouble for the second straight day?

SOLO BALL: It was definitely a collective effort. Defensively we weren't there. We were in the right spots, and they got a lot of open shots that we couldn't prevent. I think just focused on the defensive end, that's the big goal for us the rest of the season.

Q. Solo, what are some of the things that you can try and take from these last two games defensively? Colorado mentioned obviously you guys are incredibly physical defensively, which does lead to some of the foul trouble, but what are the things you can work on moving forward?

SOLO BALL: Yeah, Coach definitely talks about putting more pressure on the offense and not letting them just do whatever they want. They kind of just got to wherever they wanted today, and that's what hurt us today.

Q. Solo, given the success this program has had, how



difficult might it be to just continue to stay positive, especially with the new guys who obviously haven't won yet? Is that something you're going to take upon your shoulders to stay positive after these two losses?

SOLO BALL: Yeah, definitely. It's difficult being in this position, but as a team we've just got to be able to lift each other up and move on to the next game because we have a long season to go.

Of course it's two tough losses, but it's about how we recover from these and get better.

Q. Dan, the irony, Liam gets the over the back yesterday and today didn't get called. I guess it's a somewhat subjective call, but what did you think about that one today, or that non-call?

DAN HURLEY: You know, that's not -- it has a big impact, obviously, on the game. I don't know if it's called an over the back. We obviously go to the free throw at that point and maybe we're shooting a one and one. I don't know what the foul situation was at the time.

It just speaks to how these last two days have gone for us, that yesterday the biggest play of the game was an over-the-back that was called against us, and then today it was more egregious because the kid Baskin pulled Liam's arm down. I saw the replay of it.

Obviously it's ironic, but that's not why -- our defense has been just so dreadful, just so dreadful out here. We had opportunities. I was just surprised by just how -- we should have been fresh in the second half with Alex sitting most of the first half with Hassan sitting a large part with Samson in foul trouble.

Obviously it's been a tough two days.

Q. How do you better coach Samson and Tarris? You could certainly draw the conclusion had they not been in foul trouble in either of these games, you wind up winning them. I don't know if some of it is scheme, some of it is defensive discipline. How do you evaluate fixing --

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, I appreciate Tad saying that we're



physical, but we're not physical. We play hard. There's some undisciplined fouls. Some of them are -- like Samson's first foul to start the second half where he picked up his third one really quickly, I just don't know is that a foul.

In a game with so much grabbing and so much holding -- but some of it is sloppy, undisciplined technique, and some of it I just think in basketball, sometimes you just are not getting a great whistle.

I don't think out here we've gotten a great whistle. It just hasn't kind of bounced our way out here.

It killed us to have so many guys in foul trouble during the game.

Q. Alex was in foul trouble early on, but just seemed to not find an offensive rhythm down the stretch. What do you do to try to get Alex involved more and to be much more aggressive?

DAN HURLEY: Well, he got really involved. He only played a couple minutes in the first half, and then he got great shots in the second half. The guy is a two-time national champion. Just had a tough shooting night. I just kept telling him, just keep firing.

Q. Is Liam okay? It looked like he was grabbing at his hip or his low back or something. Secondly, you do get a time-out with 5.9 seconds left, you have one more possession. What were you hoping to get coming out of time-out there?

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, I think we were hoping -- well, I don't know what Liam's status was. He went out for a little bit, something with his hip. I'm not sure what that's going to look like.

Obviously we had five perimeter on the court, so we were just trying to create a little movement and fake a pitch and give Liam the option to either back-cut his guy on that empty side if he felt like he was being overplayed or kind of play back to the ball, get downhill, drive it, or Hass had the option to, if Aidan back cut there from the corner to drive it baseline and try to get to the rim. Obviously it didn't play out that way.

Q. You moved Hass into the starting lineup. Obviously he got two quick fouls but played well throughout the end, but Ahmad comes in, too. What did you think of those two at the point guard shot?

DAN HURLEY: Ahmad in the first half -- I liked Ahmad in the second half. He showed his inexperience, but he plays

with some physicality out there. I think he's going to be a good player. I think we have to play him.

Listen, we could not afford Hassan and Alex to be in foul trouble in the first half. They put us in a very compromised position by sitting that whole first half. I was really impressed with how we played considering that first half, and at halftime I felt like we were going to do what we do at UConn, which was get it to double figures and then surge in that game.

It just didn't happen for us. But it's early, and we're going to have a lot of chances to get these ones that we've given away, we're going to get a lot of chances to get these back.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports