

# Southwest Maui Invitational

Wednesday, November 26, 2025

Lahaina, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

## North Carolina State Wolfpack

## Coach Will Wade

## Quadir Copeland

## Ven-Allen Lubin

### Postgame Press Conference

Texas 102, NC State 97

#### **Q. Coach, what did you think about your team's performance tonight?**

WILL WADE: Well, I just thought in the first half it got away from us. We shot too many turnovers. They're one of the best teams in the country converting off missed shots, and we shot a bunch of mid-range jump shots, shot turnovers, got ourselves down 10, fought back.

We missed four straight free throws, including the technical and then the two before that. It would have given us a little bit of a cushion.

Just not good enough on any facet. I didn't have us prepared like we needed to, and just very disappointing game today and quite frankly just an incredibly disappointing week for us. This is not our standard. This is not what we strive to be. This was extremely, extremely disappointing week.

#### **Q. You finished with 28 points today, your high in an NC State uniform, but clearly it's an emotional one for you. Your thoughts on this game and your performance as a whole, too?**

QUADIR COPELAND: We've got to be better. We've got to be more disciplined and we've got to lock in more. I feel like our preparation wasn't the best. I don't feel like we was focused, and I don't feel like us together as a whole was mentally prepared or ready for this. I think we didn't take this serious. One of the worst feelings, really.

#### **Q. Ven-Allen, second game where you've had 16 plus in this tournament, but again, the struggles on the defensive end of the floor, just your thoughts on this**



#### **one and what you take away from Maui?**

VEN-ALLEN LUBIN: I just always do my best to help my team out. It's not really about scoring. It's just whatever I can to impact on both ends of the floor.

I think we've just got to do better defensively, whether that's communicate, flying around, being more aggressive, putting pressure on the ball and giving the team more shots at the rim so we can go out and play our game on the other end.

But that's something that we can learn from this while we head back and just continue to develop and take some days to rest and then come back and get better.

#### **Q. Obviously the defensive issues were one thing, but how much did the fouls contribute to that for both of you, but the fact that you weren't able to have some of the more familiar faces out there, Darrion Williams with two in the first half, Tre Holloman, and then Alyn Breed fouling out there late, too?**

QUADIR COPELAND: I feel like that affected us, but we didn't -- we wasn't prepared. We wasn't mentally right from the start to the finish. We started off down 10 and then we tried to fight back with the last 20 minutes left. We should have had that grip from the beginning of this whole tournament I feel like.

Of course guys know and stuff like that that we've got to step up, we've got to stay together in these moments, and when we get back, this is going to be a real -- this should be a real rude awakening for us, and I feel like guys, me included, should want to get better from this, should want to get way better from this.

This is a disappointing feeling. We let a lot of people down. We had so many fans here. Apologize to the guys that came here and supported us. We had so many people here. We let them down. We let ourselves down. We let the staff down. We're going to be better from this.

But this should be a rude awakening for the guys, and me included. This should definitely be a rude awakening for us to want to be better and pick up the urgency with everything.

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**Q. Coach, I know it's a disappointing loss. When you look at it, there were a lot of things -- you think about the points in the paint, but it seemed like defending on the three-point line, they shot well from there. What was happening defensively where folks were breaking down around in terms of the perimeter?**

WILL WADE: Well, we're going to have to look at some of our defensive stuff. These guys, we just -- we're just not where we need to be defensively. I've got to look at all that when we get back and start watching on the plane tonight as we're flying back.

But Pope hit some tough ones off the bounce, which he's a career 36 percent three-point shooter. That's going to happen. But we left 5 open a couple times. We just had too many mistakes, some of it in the second half. When we had five or six guys we really trusted to play, so we had some guys out there that were very worn down, and so that was certainly disappointing.

But just all systems breakdown defensively.

**Q. Just your thoughts on how the fouls contributed where you're having different personnel --**

WILL WADE: Oh, I mean, that had nothing to do with it. We've got good players. We've got depth. We expect those guys to be able to go in and perform, and we don't have guys right now that can turn the page quick enough when things go well or things go poorly. We don't turn the page.

Look, we've got -- it's good and bad. We've got really, really nice kids, players, men, young men. We've got great people. But we don't have the edge that we need. And we don't play with the edge that we need.

I've been trying to instill an edge, and just haven't been able to get through to them. This is on me. It ain't them. They're good kids. They're trying. But we don't have the hard edge that you need in these type games, and we just don't have it and we've got to develop it and we've got to develop it quick because it's not going to get any easier Wednesday night.

In fact it'll probably be one of the three or four toughest games on our schedule Wednesday night, and if we don't figure some things out defensively and we don't figure out some things, it could be on the record books on the bad side for the Pack.

We've got a lot of work to do these next few days. I still believe in our guys. I like the character of our group. But

we just don't have the edge that we need.

Our teams usually play with an edge, and we don't. So maybe now that we've been knocked down, everything has been pretty rosy for the last seven, eight months, maybe now we'll be able to get to work.

But we've got tough ground to plow now. We've put ourselves in a really, really difficult spot, and we've got really, really tough ground to plow. As we move forward, it's going to be hard dirt. We've got a lot of work to do to see how we're going to respond.

**Q. How good is it to have somebody like Quadir on your roster that clearly is already taking that accountability and somebody that wants to help move that throughout the locker room, too?**

WILL WADE: We'll see. I mean, it all sounds good sitting up here. We'll see.

But we'll get it right. We always figure it out, and we'll figure it out with this group. The problem is we're in a little bit different situation where we have to make some hay in the non-conference, and we've really given away some great opportunities here. It's really put our backs against the wall and put us in a corner.

We'll come out swinging. But I thought we played much better today than we played Monday in terms of effort, but when you play against really good teams and they're giving their best effort and you're giving your best effort, you can lose.

We don't understand that right now. And look, we could go to Auburn on Wednesday and play an A+ game and not get the result we want. But all we can focus on is playing the best that we can play, and we've got a lot of stuff -- we're going to look at everything. We're going to look at the rotation, look at who we're playing.

I thought the one positive from this tournament was Alyn's catching -- Alyn can help us. I thought that was a positive. I thought Ven did a nice job, too.

But outside of that, we've got a lot of work to do. I agree with Q; I apologize to our fans. We had the most fans here. People sacrificed. People paid hard-earned money to watch us play, and they should be pissed. That's why we've got passionate fans. That's why we've got great fans. They're upset, and they should be. This isn't how we should be playing. This isn't the standard which we play at.

I just feel like we've got to somehow capture an edge. I'm sure dropping out of the rankings will be good for us. I



don't know if that had anything to do with it. We just haven't -- even against VCU we didn't play well. We took over 50 percent of our shots off the bounce, and we took a bunch of off-the-bounce shots in the first half against Texas, and they ran out with it. VCU couldn't quite do what they did with it, but Texas could.

Just disappointing and disappointed for our program, disappointed for our fans, disappointed for our players.

But it's not on the players, it's on me. It's my job to lead the program. It's my job to get everybody right and get us better, get us moving in the right direction, and we haven't done that as well as we need to.

We'll move forward from here and we will certainly improve and get better, and hopefully we'll play with more of an edge.

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