Southwest Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 24, 2026

Lahaina, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

Ole Miss Rebels

Coach Chris Beard

Ben Henshall

Adam Clark

Postgame Press Conference

Ole Miss - 73, BYU - 63

Q. Down 14 at half, came back for a big win. What did you see from your team this morning?

CHRIS BEARD: Yeah, I think from a coaching standpoint, just trying to explain to the guys coming into this tournament that it's not going to be a matter of if adversity comes, it's going to be when. And then just always looking forward to, as a coach, how your guys respond.

We create a lot of adversity internally in practice and situations like that, but this is the first time we've gotten popped this regular season.

I thought our guys did a good job at the end of the first half not panicking, didn't let it balloon up. We won the last two possessions of the first half. Then the message at halftime was to kind of reset, get back to our original game plan, which I thought we did.

So tale of two halves. BYU gave us all we could handle in the first half. I thought we flipped the script on them. Low turnover game for us, combined with multiple guys in double-digit scoring. That kind of offset the rebounding disadvantage.

But it's a good win for us. We came to Maui to win three games. And so I'm pleased that we'll have an opportunity to do that tomorrow.

Q. Going in, as Coach said, in the second half you guys put gas to the pedal. What would you say to your first-half self? If you could go back in there, what would you switch your mindset to going into that first?

BEN HENSHALL: I think we had the right mindset coming in. We wanted to set the tone defensively. I think we gave up too many easy points early on. I think that's something we could have cleaned up.

But I think really liked the way we came out and competed in the second half. I think if we can bring that from the start, like we did in the first game, we're going to be a tough team to beat.

ADAM CLARK: Just like Ben said, just come out like that from the start. Just always carry that chip on our shoulder. We are all guys with a story, we all want to carry a chip on our shoulder the first four minutes, just come out with an intensity, energy, and be ourselves, cause turnovers on defense, that's who we are.

Q. You already said it. You're proud of your team in the second half. They kind of talked about the first half. But what would you try to do differently to coach them to start right away? Because first game yesterday, you guys were on fire going right at the jump. Today, did you relax a little bit because you went so hard? What was that difference? Because BYU gave you a run for your money. But I saw a different team than I saw from yesterday in the start?

CHRIS BEARD: Yeah, respectfully, I don't see it like that. I've never liked a coach who gets up here and talks about what they didn't do or couldn't do. Let's talk about the opponent.

The way BYU played in the first half, especially a little undermanned without their playmaker, that's a Big 12 championship-contending team.

Obviously there's some things we can clean up. But I think a lot of our mistakes were because of BYU. So I give them a lot of credit in the first half.

Q. Was there anything specific you saw from BYU in the first half that you could go into halftime knowing you could attack in the second half?

CHRIS BEARD: Yeah, I thought they were the most aggressive team. Coach Knight said it best: "Victory favors the most aggressive team." And they were.

They were going downhill, they were putting a lot of pressure on our defense and the officials to make 50/50 calls. And so I thought for the first four minutes of the game, five minutes of the game, BYU was the most aggressive team.

So at halftime, it was just a calm reminder to our team that we're in a big boy game here. We're in the Maui Invitational. We're playing against a team that is in the Top 25. Let's don't have any regrets here. Two types of regret -- regret of discipline, regret of discipline.

We don't have regret. So that was the big message at halftime. It really wasn't a yelling, screaming, kicking trash cans. It was just, like, especially to the veteran players, let's calm down.

We knew how important the first four minutes of the second half was. I've always thought that you got to win those four minutes. I don't have a 15-point play. But if you can just win that first four minutes by a basket or two, then it can settle down into a game. And that's exactly what we do.

Q. You always talk about player-led teams. This looks like a player-led team. This is outside looking in -- Budd Clark, Roman. Can you speak about how player-led teams just work out better in this world?

CHRIS BEARD: Yeah, I'm enjoying coaching this team so far and our leadership comes in a lot of different ways. Budd's an alpha, controls the game. Ilias is a calm personality, playmaker. Roman's a competitor, a fighter. Ben's a fighter. Many other guys, guys that aren't in the rotation right now are leading this team as well in how they practice every day and their attitude, effort and body language.

It's early in the season. We're a work in progress. But we do appear to be a team that we'll really rely on player leadership as the season goes on.

Q. Have you discovered the roles just through practices or some of the preseason games? Because the team really had strong roles -- Roman hitting the boards, Ilias scored well yesterday but just had these beautiful fast break assists. The roles are strong coming in different forms. Is it just now or have you been kind of slowly discovering it?

CHRIS BEARD: I appreciate that question and that compliment in the question because that's really what we strive for. This is college basketball. It's a team sport.

We've got a team very similar to most teams in the country where we have a lot of players that maybe were last year's leading scorer, last year's leading rebounder. We've asked these guys to check the ego at the door and let's play for Ole Miss.

One example, off the top of my head, I thought Roman Siulepa played like an absolute warrior today. Although scoring wasn't in his neighborhood today, the way he rebounded and defended.

So we've got a lot of guys that are unselfish. We've got a lot of guys that play for Ole Miss. We really don't care much about the stat sheet. Our teams are a work in progress. It's early in the season. We work on role definition every single day. But I agree with you and I appreciate the compliment; I thought our guys played like a team today in the second half.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports