

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

Bloomington, Indiana, USA

## Coach Darian DeVries

### Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 98, Alabama A&M 51

**Q. Darian, you've talked about, I think, the way you've seen the ball move in practice. We've seen it at times in exhibitions. Is tonight indicative of what this team can do just from the perspective of having the energy, the awareness offensively, the spacing, the understanding of where to be, the ball can just keep circulating like that?**

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, that's what we've been talking about. That's what they've been every day in practice. I was really excited to see it carry over on the game floor. You get fans and stuff, sometimes things can go a little differently. But I thought the guys did an unbelievable job of continuing to just do what they've been doing in practice.

We've got a group that has a really good IQ and feel, and for a group that hasn't been together very long they really play well off of each other and have a great understanding of some of the concepts that we're trying to do, but they're just out there playing. I think that's allowed them to play fast and really trust their instincts.

**Q. You mentioned kind of what you're looking for on the defensive side of the ball, aggressive, physical, defensive intensity. You seemed to check all those boxes in the first half, waned a little bit in the second half. Lamar mentioned they were shooting 70 percent at one point. How do you teach them that the standard is the standard, and even in blowouts against lesser opponents that you have to get there?**

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, it was mentioned a couple times in the second-half huddles, and I know it's challenging. I get that. Human nature kicks in sometimes there.

But it's also great for us to have something to talk about tomorrow. But yeah, the first half I thought defensively we were great. I thought we had them uncomfortable. I thought we had them pushed out, got them in areas that they weren't able to take advantage of some of their

scoring opportunities.

The second half I thought some of those things that we did a really good job of in the first half, we weren't quite as in tune with. They want to get baseline, so in the first half we did a great job with it. The second half they were able to get baseline and they were able to get opportunities.

We worked on a couple things in the second half, but again, we should still be able to execute some of those things on the defensive end even when we make some adjustments just to try to work on some stuff.

**Q. You said at Big Ten media day, shooting the three is going to be a big part of who you guys are. 42 percent for the opener and 16 for 16 from the line. Just your thoughts on how you shot it tonight?**

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I thought, again, a lot of that shooting percentage is a product of ball movement and getting the right kind of shots, the right kind of threes.

But we have a really confident group. They're very sure of themselves, and they know that they have the green light. They put in the time and the work, so on game night, let it rip. That's kind of our philosophy. We don't want them to hesitate even when they miss one. I don't care where they take them from, just know that it's something that you work on every day, and we're good with it.

It is going to be a big part of who we are all season long, and certainly there's going to be nights where they're not falling at a high rate, so you're going to have to go to other things.

But I think our guys are very capable of that. They understand that and can make those adjustments if needed.

**Q. On Lamar, at what point the whole summer did he kind of earn the right to shoot those longer, harder threes?**

DARIAN DEVRIES: If you watch his tape from last year, he didn't even have to prove anything this summer. He



can shoot, and some guys just have that ability. He puts in the time. He's one of those guys you've got to kick out of the gym because he's in there so much.

He works on all those. He has incredible range. He can shoot it with ease from anywhere. We want him to be super aggressive. Whenever he gets a space that he wants to let it go, let it go.

**Q. Darian, you talked about all the threes you guys shot, but if it wasn't a three, it felt like most of your shots were just right at the rim. How much of an emphasis has that been for you not really using that mid-range area as much and just making sure any shot is from beyond the arc or right near the basket?**

DARIAN DEVRIES: To be honest with you, we don't really talk a lot about not taking mid-range shots. It's just kind of how the offense ends up. We feel very confident in our guys when they do come off, if they want to play in a deep drop with a big way back at the rim, they can come off and shoot those, too. It's just I thought tonight they did a really good job because of the spacing, and when you start to make those threes, defense can tend to get stretched, and then we were able to get some slips and some rolls to the rim as guys are chasing shooters out the backside, and they just didn't have a lot of help. I thought the guys did a good job of taking what the defense gave them tonight.

**Q. After the Big Ten Network interview that Tucker had, you kind of had a moment there with him after the 2000. What was that like for you two, especially with his first game here at Indiana?**

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I thought -- again, very happy for him. I think it's a credit to all the hard work he's put in. I recognize the fact that he just doubled me up in points, so I didn't know how to feel about that in the moment.

Yeah, again, like all of our guys, when you get individual accomplishments like that, it's usually a credit to having really good teammates. It's usually a credit to the work you put in on trying to perfect what you do.

So in his case, I just think he's worked hard for all of that, and it's great to see that showcased on the floor.

**Q. What was this night like for you, opening night here for the players who have not really played a lot here? What was it like, and the reaction from the crowd?**

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I thought tonight was pretty special. To be a regular season game certainly has a different feel and different vibe, and I was a little worried tonight our guys were going to be too excited because they

were so ready, so pumped to be out there tonight.

It's just one of these special places that there's not much like it in college basketball. It's certainly a privilege for us to be out there and our team and our coaches to be out there and performing. So thankful we got that opportunity.

It was a fun night, a special night, and hopefully it's the first of many.

**Q. Just kind of going off of that, I know you've been a coach for a long time, head coach, assistant coach, but did you find yourself getting antsy about tonight or getting emotional, or you've been doing it so long, it was just another game?**

DARIAN DEVRIES: No, I always call it like excited nervous, or excited energy. I didn't get much sleep last night. It's just one of those things, just like you've done all the work and then it's like, what about this, what about this, what about this, are we ready for that. You're just anxious to get out there and go play. That's really what it was.

Again, I thought our guys had great preparation heading into this all summer and fall, now we've got to go play games. We certainly understand that Sunday is going to be different than today, so we've got plenty to work on, plenty to continue to improve. But I like this group in that regard. They're all eager to get better. They just want to win. That's what makes this group fun to coach.

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