

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Coach Darian DeVries

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana - 72, Purdue - 67

Q. Coach, big picture, how important is this win? What did you feel were the keys? A lot of guys made contributions, but from the coach's chair, what were the biggest keys to you guys getting this one?

DARIAN DEVRIES: I think I'm going to start off, I'm going to say the biggest key was that crowd out there. I mean, that was awesome. I mean, that's what makes this place so special.

When they're making their run and our crowd kept willing us, you know, to keep fighting in every possession. So I want to thank this crowd for their efforts tonight, because that's a huge deal in college basketball.

When you've got a home court like we have, that's a big advantage. And when that place is loud and rockin' like that, that's a big, big deal for us. So, thanks to everyone that came out and brought the noise themselves.

And then from a team standpoint, I just thought collectively there were a lot of guys that brought fight in a lot of different ways. And it's a tough match-up. They're really big inside. They create some problems there.

I thought Conor Enright, 40 minutes of chasing Smith around, that's not an easy deal, because that's if not the best guard in the country right there, and he creates a lot of their stuff for them.

I thought he gave incredible effort the whole night, and cramping and everything and he continued to fight through it. So made a big 3 late. Made two free throws.

I could go down the list. I'm just proud of this team. They've continued to battle and work like I've been telling you. They had a little tough stretch, but they continue to believe, continue to believe in the work they're putting in. So I'm proud of them to see the results they've had here on a road win and now a big home win.

Q. Could you talk about trying to close out a close game late? You've talked about Conor's veteran savvy. Do you expect him in those moments -- not necessarily a 3-pointer, but making a winning play? Is that something you would think that would come through in that moment?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I've seen it before because we were -- when I was at Drake, we were playing in the championship game against Indiana State. We had a huge, huge lead and they came all the way back. I think we were up 26 and they cut it to two with like a minute to go.

And it was almost the exact same play. He's standing right in front of the bench. Tucker had the ball and Tucker fires it to him and he fires that thing up there and makes it -- basically won the game for us.

During that game, I was trying to tell him to move to create space but he didn't move. He said, I'm shooting this.

But, no, that was a huge shot for us. You know he's not afraid. He just loves the moment and he loves competing and the challenge of everything.

Q. When you look at trying to just lay the groundwork of what you want this place and program to kind of be, how important is a win like this and a crowd like that against that team?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Well, I think it's awesome. I mean, again, that's what this place is. We love our hoops. And having that place full and rocking, and that's, like I said, that's a huge advantage for us as we continue to move forward. There's a lot of tough places to play in the Big Ten.

But we want this to be the loudest, toughest place that there is, not only in the Big Ten but in the country, because it does matter, and it does make a difference in games, and that effort by the crowd tonight was impressive.

Q. Can you talk about the competitiveness you guys showed, especially in the last couple minutes and also



your ability to have -- you had 16 assists and only eight turnovers?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I thought our fight throughout the game, we were exhausted. We were a little shorthanded and stuff and had guys play a lot of minutes. It was hot in there. And guys were giving great effort throughout.

So those last two minutes, for a team that hasn't been in a lot of those situations together as a group, two minutes to go, big game, coming down to the wire, I thought guys made some really big plays.

And like you said, there was a little stretch in there we had a couple of turnovers, but other than that we did what we were supposed to do. We got fouled. We got to the free-throw line, we took care of the ball. We got a couple of big stops in there to finish it off. So I thought their execution down the stretch was great.

Q. Coach, you went to the student section after the game, and you pumped them up. Is that something you planned? Is that something that you also envisioned when you first stepped on the floor back in March?

DARIAN DEVRIES: No, I mean, I want this to be like -- this is us. This is our program. And it's our community, it's our students. I want them to feel their impact matters because it does.

And I want them to know -- I've said it in the summertime, we were very intentional, try to get out and meet students and have them get to know us. And we want them to feel like they're a huge part of it and have an impact on what happens out there, because they do. And they brought it today. So that was just a thank you.

Q. When guys are getting tired late and things are tense late, how much does that crowd sort of give you that last little burst of energy that you need?

DARIAN DEVRIES: I mean, whether it's late, it's in the middle, wherever, like every time we needed that crowd tonight, they were there. They never took a possession off either. So they played 40 minutes tonight.

There's not a lot of crowds -- there's some good ones out there, but this is really, really special when it's like that. And tonight was as good as it gets in college basketball.

Q. Nick mentioned a mindset change, something along the lines of bend don't break. Where did that mindset come from? Who helped instill that? Where

did that come from in the last couple of weeks?

DARIAN DEVRIES: We just felt like in a little bit of our tough stretch, like, we had played well during good portions of games. We just had three- or four-minute stretches, and there's a lot of different stuff that went with them.

But we just had to fix it. And that was our biggest thing. We can't let mistakes compound. And in a few of those losses that's what we did. And it turned into a 10-0 run instead of 6-0 run.

I think the guys have been much better about, mistakes are going to happen. It's basketball. It's not a perfect game. So we have to continue, just get to that next play. If you have a turnover, just fix it, get it back.

We had a play in practice yesterday, Jasai Miles drove. He was going to pass the corner. He left his feet. He was getting ready to turn it over, deflected it. The ball was going out of bounds. And he jumped and saved it and tapped it to Nick Dorn in the corner.

And that was a big part of our film session, was you could have quit and given up on the play but he didn't. And you know what happened tonight? He did the exact same thing.

He had a play, he kind of messed up and bobbed it a little bit. He didn't quit. He got the ball and he threw it to the same guy. So maybe it's a new play we put in. I don't know.

Q. Could you give us an update on Tayton Conerway, if it was the injury that held him out? And then just Miles and Trent Sisley in short minutes provide a big spark tonight. What was your thoughts on their play?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, Tayton's trying to come back from an ankle injury that occurred during the Iowa game. So, you know, he's working hard to try to get back out on the floor. But he just doesn't feel like he's ready to go right now.

And then to your point, I thought the last two games, both Jasai and Trent, gave us some big moments. Even Trent tonight didn't get a lot of time. He came in and made two free throws at a big, big, big time. So it says a lot about him. You know, he's all about the team. He's all about winning.

And when his number got called -- that's what we've kind of been telling the guys, we're shorthanded a little bit, just when you get your number called, whatever amount of time it is 30 seconds, five minutes, 10 minutes, you just leave it

out there.

And I think they've really bought into that and done a good job. And it says a lot about even Jasai. Jasai hadn't played a lot this year. It would've been really easy for his number to be called and him not be ready because he hadn't been putting in the work, but he's continued to work even though he hadn't been rewarded a lot for it in terms of playing time.

And now when his number's called, he's able to go out there and go do the things he needs to do to continue to grow. I love the mindset he's had, and Trent's had, and, you know, they do the work every day. And don't always get the minutes that they want, probably. But when their number's got called, they came and produced. So that was great.

Q. You talked about how day one when you got to campus you knew how big of a rivalry this is. To get your first win against a ranked Purdue team, the first time you ever faced them, how big is that for you, but also this program, as you move ahead to the second half of the Big Ten schedule?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I mean, we talked about it before the game. Like rivalries are what make college sports great. Like, this is just what it is. This is why everybody loves college sports.

These type of rivalries are fun. And they should be. You got fan bases, both care about their teams. They're both close to each other. And that's what it's supposed to be about. You know, it's good, it's competitive. And that's, you know, for us, that's a big win.

It's always -- you know, every win's a big win. But those rivalry games always got a little extra to them. And, you know, we were fortunate to come out on top tonight.

Q. Purdue went 23-19 in the first half. And I think you used a timeout right there and you guys responded. I think that was probably the best stretch of the game. I think you outscored them 21-6 the rest of the half. What were you looking for out of that timeout, and what did you think about your team's response?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I thought we just had a little tough stretch in there. Gave them a little run. I thought we looked a little gassed, too. I thought we needed a quick little breather to kind of hit a reset.

You know, I think the guys came out and they just kept doing what we're doing. We got into a little more space. I thought we were able to free up a couple other shooters on

a couple possessions there and unfortunately knocked him down, that got us going back again.

Q. Nick Dorn has become a dude for you guys, and you've kind of needed that. You had Tucker and Lamar, who was carrying a lot of the weight. But how important is it to have yet another guy step up like he consistently has in these last few games?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, he's been great. And you could see him, you know, from early in the year when he missed the time and stuff, it takes a while when you are out that long just get back in shape, then get into game shape, and then find the rhythm back.

And you can really see here, the last couple weeks, he's starting to find it. And then playing time's starting to come up and increase. So he's finding his spots where he fits in our offense. And our guys know where he is, too. So he's gotten very comfortable in that.

As you can see, he's not afraid. He'll let them go, and you know that's a great another option for us to continue to utilize and even grow into finding more ways to get him free.

Q. Even at your time at Drake and last year at West Virginia, your teams have won a lot of these big games or upsets or whatever. Just what is it about your teams that are always prepared to come out when these big games and big opportunities are ahead of you?

DARIAN DEVRIES: I think the biggest thing every night is just the belief that you're gonna. And you approach every game the same way.

And to be honest with you, we approach every single game we play -- like the exhibition games, to the preseason, non-conference, conference games -- like our work and the way we prepare is exactly the same for every one, and we don't take anyone for granted.

But we also instill an incredible belief in them that they have to believe it first. And when you do that, it's five-on-five, and that's it. You're out there. It will be our fans, their fans, whatever, but those five people on the floor have to go compete and get it done, and we want them to believe whatever five we have out there, that they can go find a way to get it done.

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