

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Coach Darian DeVries

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 77, Minnesota 47

Q. Darian, I think it was Nick who just sitting here, you're up 15 at halftime and your message was to just to kind of keep hammering away to not relent and you said it was even to the point of tracking ere single media time-out segment. How proud were you tonight, I guess, of the way once your team got its food down on the pedal, it didn't seem to let up other than that little stretch there in the first half?

DARIAN DeVRIES: Yeah, something, to be honest, we talked about all year we just haven't been able to always do it. I was proud of the guys. We talked a lot about that lead is at 15 and being able to extend it and push it out so you don't get in a situation where now it's down to eight with 14 minutes to go in the half and now you're in a fight.

I thought the guys really had a complete 40 minutes tonight from start to finish on both ends of the floor. I thought defensively that was about as good and connected, I thought, as we had been just with our communication and taking away some of the things we felt like we needed to do to limit them. So that was a really good performance and happy for those seniors to go out the way they did tonight.

Q. Yeah, speaking of your seniors, a number of guys contributed, but I just want to get your thoughts on Sam Alexis and the game he played and the force he was in the interior, especially early.

DARIAN DeVRIES: Yeah, Sam was great. He was someone when there's zone we wanted to really try to focus in on trying to throw it in there. Let him play on an island one-on-one because they hadn't doubled much on the interior, so we thought we could get in there and let Sam go to work a little bit and then space our shooters out around it. But he's been playing at a high level here for the last few weeks and certainly shows that again today.

Q. Yeah, with the losing streak, did you do anything different or try to shake things up at all or everything

was consistent and did you since anything from the players in terms of trying to get them loose a little bit? Did you feel them feeling pressure at all at this point in the season?

DARIAN DeVRIES: No, like we talked about, it was just the next game for us. Obviously had an importance with senior night and had family and things, but our whole is just keep preparing and put yourself in the best position possible to go out and play well. They did it again and we were able to, like I said, complete that full 40 minutes tonight. So that was good.

Also, I thought offensively they moved it, shared it, really got in some good spots. Got some good looks from the perimeter.

Q. On Lamar, last spring when you watched him, I imagine you knew he could score. Are there ways he surprised you from when let arrived here to now, just how much has he helped his whole group this year in your opinion?

DARIAN DeVRIES: Yeah, he's been great. I would say if he's surprised me, it would be his ability, at this level, to be able to get into the interior of the defense, get to his midrange, getting a little more of his post-ups. He started to utilize that a little more late in the year.

We all knew he could shoot it. We knew that would translate at any level, but the other things that he's been able to do with being a really big featured part of the scout every night has been pretty impressive. You through this league for 20 games and put the numbers up with the time of attention that he's getting every night, I think that says a lot about his versatility as a scorer.

Q. You had two long embraces with Tucker and Conor both before the game and when you took them out. How important are those guys? How bittersweet was it, those two guys from the class of 2021?

DARIAN DeVRIES: Yeah, it's been, obviously, really important for us to have two guys that understood the system when you got a whole new team and all that.



They started out together as roommates at Drake, so certainly a special moment there for them, for me as a dad, you know? So, yeah.

Q. Coach, I know it was a tough stretch there with the four games, but how important was it just for these guys to get some confidence back? I know the Michigan State game in particular, seemed like they fought but maybe just ran up against a better team that day. But to see them get rewarded, get some confidence back headed into this last stretch, how important was that as the outcome tonight?

DARIAN DeVRIES: Yeah, and hopefully it's something that just propels you, you know? To that next game and next hopefully group of games. When you lose four games in a row, it does put things in a little different perspective, the importance of this game, right?

And like you said, I thought they fought their tails off against Michigan State, just came up a little bit short. They continued to stay focus, continued to put in the work like they have all year and their approach has been terrific. I think a lot of that is those seniors making sure that they stay focused on what's next and not looking in the rear view for very long.

Q. Yeah, Coach, looks like you went to Conor a little but more heavily in the second half on Cade Tyson, 16 points in the first half, only three shot attempts, though, after halftime. Was there anything else you did or saw at halftime that wanted you to make those adjustments after halftime?

DARIAN DeVRIES: We had Conor on him the whole game. I think what happened in the first half was we got caught up in some switches and the guys that got switched onto him went to their normal help position so that gave him a little bit of space when he came off. At halftime, we made the adjustment of when you get switched off to him, you got to beat Conor now. You got to take on that role.

Also the next guy when he's coming off the screen, because now we have mismatches everywhere, being ready to switch up to Cade so he couldn't come off clean, get a three, get downhill, get to the free-throw line and I thought the guys did a really good job with that.

Q. In the first meeting, Minnesota had a lot of success at the rim. Tonight only 7 out of 20. You talked about the defensive communication, but was there anything else that lead to them struggling around the rim from a defensive standpoint?

DARIAN DeVRIES: I think, again, I don't know the stats completely but a lot of those were off of back cuts the first time around so we did a much better job on the back cuts so they weren't getting uncontested layups.

We had better wall ups as well. To be fair, them not having Johnson out there as a space five allowed Sam now to be down in the interior a lot more to really go get a ball, go deflect it. Reed had a good block in there, so our bigs were able to stay a lot closer to the rim in this game because they didn't have a stretch five out there.

Q. Darian, it looked like you got a little choked up on the court when Tucker was walking off there at the end and obviously you choked up a little again just now. That's not something that many dads are really able to share so intimately with their son, that moment of them walking off the floor on senior fight. What went through your mind in that moment just seeing him walk off the floor, fans going crazy and you embrace him?

What goes through your mind? What did you say to him? How special is that for you two to share that?

DARIAN DeVRIES: Yeah, I think like all these guys, when they're seniors, you have a special connection with them, as you know, this is their last time on the home floor. When you get that opportunity with your son, it's a different feeling. I'm one of those guys, I fought it all day and I'm not giving in now. (Laughter) There's just a lot of emotion tied to it. Some special times are about to end.

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