

Crossroads Classic: Butler vs Indiana

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Coach Jordan LaVall Butler Bulldogs Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 68, Butler 60

LaVALL JORDAN: I think obviously our guys fought -- when you look at this one, I will look back and learn a lot. Every opportunity right now is an opportunity for growth and an opportunity to learn, especially -- and there's nothing like games, and obviously things we can do in practice and go against each other, but there's nothing that simulates playing Indiana or Villanova or a game coming up. We can continue to learn from those things.

Got a great respect for Archie and the program that they're building, and obviously Indiana basketball, give them credit. They did a heck of a job responding in the second half, coming out and kind of establishing in the first four minutes. I think there was a 9-0 run. We came out early, and it was back and forth. I thought our guys had great energy. They responded.

We have to grow ourselves to be tough enough to respond sooner. I thought we did a little late. We had a middle stretch there in the second half, and those are the things guys are learning as they're getting more and more game experience.

We've got to take care of the basketball. You look up and 15 turnovers the other night, 14 today, way too many to give yourselves a chance to beat really good teams.

So get back to the film room. We'll have to learn a lot through film because there's not a lot of practicing right now with game after game after game. And our young guys are doing a good job absorbing it and our leaders are leading.

Q. Did Indiana do anything differently in the second half to kind of smother your offense? In some ways Butler got actually more post touches than I thought you would get, but you could hardly make a two-point basket.

LaVALL JORDAN: Yeah, I thought we got the ball where we wanted it. Obviously some shots that we feel confident in and believe in our guys, Bryce Golden, Bryce Nze going at the rim. Had some wide open shots for some of our guys that can make those.

And then I think it affected us when we didn't, and that's where we have to be tougher. We had a stretch where we got good looks, had the ball at the rim, didn't finish or they blocked it, and we didn't respond well in that moment.

And then a couple huddles I thought Aaron Thompson and guys were on the bench. John Michael Mulloy and Markeese and Mike Parker, all those guys did a good job in the time-outs of getting their guys back up and talking about that exactly, not letting our offense affect our defense.

Q. You've often addressed this when Butler has a poor shooting game. You seem more concerned about what kind of shots you're getting. Were you fairly satisfied with the kind of shots you were getting? That's usually the way you evaluate offensive efficiency.

LaVALL JORDAN: Yeah, we'll watch the film, but I thought we had the ball at the rim a ton. Now, give them credit. They've got two athletic bigs with good size and good length, so you've got to be crafty. We finally used a shot fake there at the end and got an easy one.

They really loaded. We got a couple skip passes where we had great looks that didn't go down. So we'll watch the film and evaluate. Love to have less turnovers so we get more of those opportunities, and those are all the things we can get better at.

Our guys are going to get in the gym and shoot the basketball, get to the foul line. I thought we had some opportunities missed at the foul line. We've got to step up and make those, as well.

Q. Are you glad to be playing two more games right away? There's not much choice, they're on the schedule, but do you see that as a good opportunity to, I guess, get growth for these freshmen? They're young; they don't get tired, do they?

LaVALL JORDAN: Well, you had the time off where we didn't get games in, and with this whole circumstance that everybody is in in sports in general, we've got to take advantage of those opportunities.

So we'll have to get ourselves back up. We've got an early tip here, which gives us some time to rest the rest of the day today and recover, and tomorrow, and doesn't give us time to practice.

That's where we could really make some adjustments and maybe put some things in, but we'll just go play Butler basketball.

You get another opportunity to do that and have to fight through some fatigue and not let that be an excuse.

Q. Are you optimistic about AT returning for Southern Illinois and Providence?

LaVALL JORDAN: We'll see. It's kind of day by day as he's doing rehab and recovery. What Doc says heading into Monday, we'll find out more tomorrow and we'll see what he says. I know if he can, he will, but we're not going to push it if he's not ready.

Q. From the outside looking in, I think it would be easy to think your freshmen would be nervous playing against a Villanova, against an Indiana. At least on the court it doesn't seem like nerves have affected them. What do you attribute kind of the start that your freshmen have gotten off to against these high-quality opponents?

LaVALL JORDAN: Well, we recruited them to be confident players. They're learning how to play Butler basketball. And they've played basketball before. They're trying to pick up on how we do things here. And they've had moments, right.

They're trying to establish reliability with their teammates and trust and some consistency, and they've all had -- in the three games up to this point, they've had moments. Trying to get them to learn how to practice hard, which is difficult when you don't have as many practices as we just missed, which every freshman in the country is trying to learn how to practice hard.

But then in game, the thing that really stands out is in game them being able to make adjustments, and that speaks to their IQ, in game their competitive nature, which it's hard to teach that. So for Myles to start the way he did tonight, for Chuck to play the way he did the other night, Myles Wilmoth, JaKobe Coles responded tonight. Those guys are competitors and now they're growing every day.

Q. Has there been anything from the freshmen collectively or individually that surprised you a bit this early in the season or not so much?

LaVALL JORDAN: No, I think what they've had to do is -- you get it in practice to some degree because -- the physicality of the game. That's why Villanova the other night and obviously Indiana, just physical teams. And that's what the speed of it and the pace of it, so missing some opportunities earlier due to the pause, and now to getting to learn.

Guys coming at them and how to defend without fouling. I thought we did a better job tonight, Myles Tate specifically, JaKobe Coles defending and holding then his ground in the post. I thought he did a better job tonight than he did the other night.

Chuck Harris putting up no turnovers tonight, putting it all on the deck when their physical perimeter defenders are on you. Those are the things you learn with experience in games and make your adjustments and learn from game to game, try to be better the next time out and be better the next day in practice.

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