

Pac-12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Washington State Cougars

Isaac Bonton

Postgame Press Conference

Arizona State - 64, Washington State - 59

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for our student-athlete.

Q. Do you want to maybe just give me your initial thoughts on today's result?

ISAAC BONTON: Frustrating. I thought we just gave away one, did a terrible job taking care of the ball. We had 20 turnovers. Just stuff we could control, man, those games are always tough. I thought we fought pretty hard, but it's the little things that we got to do to close out those type of games, especially in the post-season. So it's just frustrating.

Q. I think the biggest play of this game that people will kind of take away is your guys' last chance to try to get the game-winning basket, Noah Williams driving up the court, what are your thoughts on really how that whole play went down?

ISAAC BONTON: I thought we did -- we had the right idea, trying to get the ball on the rim, push it down and throw it. They're a team that likes to come and trap, so it was just being aggressive, doing what a player does. And mistakes happen, stuff happens, got to learn from it. That's all that is.

Q. You kind of took it upon yourself to keep the Cougs in this game, maybe those shooting numbers totally don't resemble that, but leading the team back in the starting lineup, what were you trying to do out there to make sure your team still had a chance in this one?

ISAAC BONTON: Every game I just try to do what I can do as a leader, as a captain. I try to help my team to win, try to contribute in every way I can. There's no question to it. I just go out there and play hard and let the results flow.

Q. What does this say about for you next year and



your career as a Cougar?

ISAAC BONTON: I don't know if our season's over yet, man, so I just focus on one day at a time and when that time comes then I'll figure that out.

Q. Coach Smith had a minutes restriction coming into this game, about 10 to 15 minutes, where you obviously played a little more than that. Did you think you were going to meet that limit, that minute restriction heading into the game or did you kind of tell yourself you would go against that and play as much as you can to help your team out?

ISAAC BONTON: Yeah, it's tournament time, it's time to play. When it's time to compete at the biggest level I want to be there as much as I can, regardless if I'm hurt, regardless if I'm banged up, I just want to go out and do what I can do and that's the only thing as a player that you have control of doing.

Q. It was kind of a back-and-forth game, similar to the last one. Did you almost kind of expect it to come down to the final few possessions to really be a close game all the way through there?

ISAAC BONTON: Didn't know how it was going to play out. We knew what their goal was, is coming and take care of the ball and defend. They have good guards and they're a team full of guards. They like to press you and play a fast pace, so we knew we were going to turn the ball over a little bit, but 20 turnovers is entirely too much, so we just didn't do what we could do to control that. So it came down to that. If we take care of the ball, who knows, 20 turnovers, 24 points off turnovers for them, the result could be a lot different.

Q. Talk about the last two to three weeks of rehabbing and what that process was like for you to be able to get back on the court. You weren't able to play that much against Arizona and had to sit out. What was the last three weeks like for you trying to get back on court?

ISAAC BONTON: It's always tough being hurt, especially



at the end of the season, after last season, and for me I just wanted to get back out there and play. But it's important I take care of my body at the same time. So it's been tough, but it's been allowing me to just support my teammates and try to be a leader in different ways. So I'm glad I got to compete with my guys again tonight and we'll see what the future holds for us.

Q. Talk about what Alonzo Verge did to hurt you guys today and then also the job you with guys were able to do to limit Remy Martin?

ISAAC BONTON: Alonzo is a good player. He made tough shots today and he shot it really well. He rebounded well. He shot a really good game. So players have games like that, but like I said, we just got to do what we can do to control what we can control.

Q. When you do make a decision on next year, what will the process look like for you, who will you talk to, and how will you kind of go through that process when you do need to do that?

ISAAC BONTON: Right now my mind's totally focused on the season. We just got done with the PAC-12 tournament and who knows, like I said, what the post-season holds, so I'm focusing on this right now and then when the time comes, I'll figure out what I'm going to do.

Q. One thing I wanted to ask, a lot of the high ground of this freshman class was Efe and Dishon getting minutes in the last part of the season. Can you describe the growth that you saw in them over the course of the season, as one of their go-to guys, kind of their captain?

ISAAC BONTON: Tremendous. I think it happened different ways for them. Efe came out right away firing and he showed you guys what he can do and then he hit his freshman wall like everyone does, but he's bounced back through it and figured out how to keep fighting through that against competition. And Dishon started off the other way around. We didn't see him play too much in non-conference, but then conference came around and he showed he's a big-time player and I'm excited to see what those guys can do for the rest of their career. I definitely see a big impact here and professionally. So I think those guys are special, along with all our freshmen. Every single one, I think has a really special future.

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