

# Pac-12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

## California Golden Bears

### Mark Fox

#### Postgame Press Conference

California - 76, Stanford - 58

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from coach.

MARK FOX: Hard fought game, and we have a lot of respect for Stanford. They had beaten us earlier in the year and we knew we would have to be much more physical and play a lot harder tonight than we had earlier. And we did that. We had 10 days to prepare for the game. We spent most of it on ourselves and I thought the hard work that our kids put in paid off and it showed tonight.

THE MODERATOR: Open it up for questions.

**Q. Can you talk about the play that Matt Bradley made at the rim when he blocked Kisunas's dunk? That seemed to trigger, I think you guys went on a little run there. He also then corralled the ball and kicked it to Bentley for the three and got you going there. Can you talk about what you saw for that play and how big that was in the game?**

MARK FOX: Well, there were a lot of big plays. That certainly was one of them. Because I think that -- and we actually talked about, in the previous game, Washington and Utah had a blocked dunk right in the last minute, and I said you got to play every play to the bitter end and finish every play. And Matt kept playing, and didn't surrender the dunk, and it was a big play. And I thought he passed the ball really, really well tonight and made other people better on the offensive end. So certainly really complete game from Matt.

**Q. Can you tell us why he didn't start?**

MARK FOX: No, I can't. But it's nothing major. It's nothing major.

**Q. He made other people better. You got performances from a lot of different folks tonight.**



MARK FOX: We did. I guess that's a question. We had a lot of guys that played well. Grant opened the game with a jumper, made a big one late. Ryan Bentley made a couple baskets. I thought Jarred Hyder did some nice things for us, made a big three late when we were a little bit disorganized. Andre played well. I thought we had a lot of guys contribute tonight to the victory.

**Q. You had mentioned that you had to do a lot better job on da Silva than you did in the two games in February. Obviously you did. This might be hard for you to parse, but how much of that was what you did and how much of it was he's still dealing with his injury?**

MARK FOX: Well, I think that -- I mean he's a great player. I don't want to take anything away from our team or anything away from him. He's had a remarkable career. He's an NBA player. He'll be on an NBA roster next year. And obviously he's coming off, and I don't know what his exact injury was, but we have seen it with Matt and with Grant, Matt twice this year. Injuries and coming back from them and being the same player you were before, it's really hard to do. So certainly I think that probably was a contributing factor to him not maybe being as productive as he was in the first two games.

**Q. Could you talk about the job you did on the rebounding and was that, obviously Andre was a big part of that, but was that a conscious effort to really hit the boards?**

MARK FOX: Well, if you look at it, we didn't rebound it very well the early part of February, and slowly our rebounding numbers have been improving. Slowly they have been improving. But we just had 10 days to actually practice and really, really grind, and I have to give our guys credit. It's hard to practice like we practiced in the month of March. But they did it and they bought into it and I thought it carried over to the game today. We played very physical on the backboards.

**Q. Wanted to get your thoughts on Colorado, your next opponent, and what you guys will have to do to**



**go 2-3 against them this year.**

MARK FOX: Well, they whooped us in the first game and then we played really well at home in the second game. We can't play in the same way. They have got a really complete and experienced team. Obviously a great lead guard, a team that's been together for like three years, obviously a team that's already going to be in the NCAA tournament. They're playing for seeding. They will give us a great challenge. We'll have to play our best game of the year to have a chance to win. We'll have to be better tomorrow than we were today. But fortunately we have that opportunity.

**Q. I wanted to ask about Colorado as well. Matt Bradley had a huge game against them a month ago. He's had several big games against them, similar to what we saw tonight. What is it about that matchup? They have some pretty good backcourt defenders. What's he been able to do against them to have that kind of success?**

MARK FOX: Well, let me tell you, Colorado is as good, they have been as good as anybody on both ends this year. And we were fortunate with Matt in the last game to get him some open looks. I think that he obviously was really comfortable shooting in his own gym.

But tomorrow's a whole new adventure, and Colorado knows he played well also. But I think the great thing for us that we're starting to see from Matt and we have seen it in practice, but we saw it today in the game, is he's starting to make the passes to make other people better and that will probably be important tomorrow as well.

**Q. This was a huge team win for the Bears. It looked like everybody was playing well, Matt Bradley, Ryan Bentley, Andre Kelly, Anticevich. Can you talk about how the team jelled tonight and how they got the win against Stanford again?**

MARK FOX: You know, I think, when we got to March 1st, I think we had only had maybe three or four practices with everyone on our team cleared to practice. So we have been extremely, there's been no continuity, we have been very disjointed. And the last 10 days we have had just about everybody every day. So we started to develop some continuity and some chemistry that's been lacking all year. So we did, I think you saw that tonight. I think you saw several guys play well and play off of each other and hopefully that can continue.

**Q. It looked like -- you held them to 37 percent shooting or something like that. Is that the kind of defense that you were hoping for throughout the**

**season?**

MARK FOX: I would answer the question this way: That's the kind of defense that we expect, not hope for. Our defense this year has been -- as I told the team the other day -- a teacher is only a good teacher if the students learn. And obviously I did a terrible job teaching our defense this year, because it's been awful. Tonight is what it should look like all the time.

**Q. Jarred Hyder, I noticed he went off with a sort of ankle injury. Any update on him or his availability for tomorrow night?**

MARK FOX: I have no idea yet. I haven't even talked to my trainer. So I wish I could tell you.

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