

Pac-12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Oregon Ducks

Dana Altman

Postgame Press Conference

Oregon - 91, Arizona State - 73

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

DANA ALTMAN: I thought our ball movement at times was pretty good. We didn't have a lot of turnovers. We kept it to 10, which was a big concern because they had turned Washington State over last night 20 times. So I was a little concerned about that. But I thought our guys did a good job. Will really handled it well, made plays for guys.

So, no, I think it showed the depth of our team with different guys being able to score and on a night where they really worked hard to keep Chris out of it we were able to get some other guys some shots.

Q. How about the depth of Amauri Hardy with 11, Lawson with 10, got to be pretty happy with those guys off the bench?

DANA ALTMAN: Oh, yeah, I thought they did a good job. Amauri really took it to the hole strong, Chandler if would have hit his free throws, he would have had a heck of a game. So, no, I thought we got some really good play out of some guys.

Q. 2-10 shooting, but did you feel okay about the shot selection? Did you feel like early shots might start to fall and you would get things going or were you concerned at that point?

DANA ALTMAN: Oh, we were going a little fast. Kind of excited. We have seen it before in our first game. The guys really want to win, and they all want to make the play. So I just thought we were going a little fast. We were a little straight up and down, went through some nervousness there, nervous energy. So yeah, we got a couple threes early and then just, I thought we went quick and took a couple bad ones. But this is an experienced group and I knew they would bounce back.



Q. You touched on it a little bit, but just, can you stress the importance of having a veteran guy like Will Richardson to control the game there at this time of the year?

DANA ALTMAN: Oh, absolutely. It's so important to have a guard that knows what we want to do, how we want to play, nine assists, he just did a tremendous job. Guard play this time of year, because turnovers lead it easy baskets. If you're turning the ball over, if guys aren't in the right spot to execute, things don't go well. So Will's organization of our team, his ability to get people in the right spot, that helps our whole team. So his leadership, he's been really good, and we just hope we can keep him going.

Q. Earlier in the first half they were beating you guys on the boards and you kind of got on them on the sideline. Overall energy about 10 minutes in kind of changed. Was that just the effort on the boards kind of fueled everything else?

DANA ALTMAN: Yeah, we were down on the boards at one point 13 to 7. We ended up winning by three. But, yeah, I just, to come out, I thought their energy was better and I think part of that they were just relaxed and had played the night before, won a big game. So that's what you always worry about in that first game is the other team just being real relaxed and getting off to a good start and putting you in a hole.

So 13-7, I'm not sure which TV timeout that was, but we were a little concerned because we just, we weren't getting on the boards.

Q. You touched on it a little bit with Amauri playing well off the bench today back in his old stomping grounds, but what value has he brought to the program this year from coming over from UNLV?

DANA ALTMAN: Well, Will didn't play the first nine weeks, I'm not sure exactly how many games, and Amauri did a great job of leading us through that. Now his role has changed and his unselfishness and him being all about the



team has helped us. He's our first guard off the bench, and tonight he really got to the hole strong. He took it in there strong. He was a little down in the first half because he had a couple turnovers, got a little straight up and down on those, but second half he really came back and really made solid plays.

Q. Getting him some substantial minutes, getting Frank and Jalen in there a little at the end, I know you said adrenaline takes over in these tournaments, but what do those minutes mean to those guys and what can they mean to you as you progress through this month?

DANA ALTMAN: Well, we really want those guys, being eight, nine deep really helps you. You never know about foul trouble. We have kind of got a rotation set now, but it's something that is important, that we do have guys available. And we got good rest period now. We don't play until tomorrow at 5:30, so we have a little time to rest, but when you play three games in three days, your bench is really important.

Q. Taking into consideration that stretch that you guys had at the end of the season and now, like you said, three games in three days, how nice was it to be able to sit some of your starters there at the end and have them not play high-stress minutes, knowing the stretch that you're about to be on?

DANA ALTMAN: Well, Arizona State's such an explosive team. They knocked down a couple threes. They, did they get it down to 14, or 14 and the ball, I think, there, with two minutes to go yet. So we had missed those free throws, so I was a little concerned there.

But, no, it's good to get some guys some rest. Everybody played around 30 minutes, except for Will. Will did get 35. But Eugene 30, Chris 30, LJ 30, Eric 30. I think those are manageable minutes. And we got Amauri and Chandler in there some. So developing depth, Frank's got to be ready and so does Jalen.

Q. Last couple of games LJ's been really good on both ends and his three-point shooting has gone up as well. What have you seen from him that's clicked over these last couple of weeks that seem to elevate his game?

DANA ALTMAN: His activity and he's made some really good cuts, which have got him some easy baskets. He's being aggressive, he's looking for his three, he knows he's shooting it well. So he continues -- he's always looking for his shot, which we want him, we want him to be aggressive.

So, no, I think LJ's playing really good. Defensively, every now and then, he gets a little carried away, trying to go to too many steals, gets himself out of position. But he's giving us some great minutes, no doubt.

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