

Pac-12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 9, 2023

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Stanford Cardinal

Jerod Haase

Spencer Jones

Brandon Angel

Postgame Press Conference

Arizona - 95, Stanford - 84

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started with an opening statement from coach and then take questions.

JEROD HAASE: Yeah, the end of the season is always a tough one, and with my team this makes it a little bit more difficult because of the relationships and the ability to handle adversity and move on. These guys were phenomenal.

For this game Arizona was fantastic. We tried all of our tools in our toolbox on the defensive end, or at least most of 'em that we thought could work, and it was ineffective. Last time we played 'em a very, very similar game plan that we had and I thought we executed it very well. Again, credit to Arizona and their staff and their players for developing a game plan that countered what we were doing and it was extremely effective.

I thought our guys played with a lot of heart, a lot of passion. Offensively, I thought we were extremely efficient, but on the defensive end we just couldn't get it done.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions.

Q. 54 points in the paint for Arizona today. What did they do differently this time? You know, you held 'em to 22 in Maples.

JEROD HAASE: They had maybe a few different schemes and plans and plays. But I thought they were really good with their passing. I thought we were, in the first game, I think a little bit more physical, probably the more physical team. I think this game we weren't. We were the less physical team. I thought they got the ball in the spots they



wanted to get 'em and the reality is with their bigs when they do get it within six feet of the basket there's not a lot of defense that we're going to be able to do to combat that.

Q. Talk about the performance of Cedric Henderson today. 23 points. I don't believe he had that same kind of outburst last time. What was the, talk about his performance and what made him tough to stop tonight?

JEROD HAASE: Fantastic performance. He was really good. Throughout a season there's plenty of stats and film and tendencies for us to be able to watch and evaluate. I think our game plan was not centered around him. We certainly knew that he was an impactful player, a starting player on a top-10 team in the country. But he was able, we put our focus elsewhere to some degree and he made us pay for that. This is a team that's very deep, very talented, and he's one of those players.

Q. A couple big games from you personally here in Las Vegas and at the end of the season you put up over 80 each time you played Arizona, a lot of the strong offensive showings near the end of the year. How do you take that momentum that you found late in the season looking forward to next year?

BRANDON ANGEL: Yeah, absolutely. I think these last couple games down the stretch we really showed what we're capable of offensively when we as players are able to execute the game plan given us. At the beginning of the year we were all shooting, I know I was shooting 25 percent, which is unacceptable. It's downright unacceptable. It's quite bad for that stretch of time, and that hurt us.

Once we started playing better individually we built momentum and we finished the season, offensively I felt this is the best game plan we've ever had. We all felt so confident going into each game. We're going to score the points, we're going to get looks, and at the end of the day we were playing for each other, which really speaks to the culture of this program, to play for each other, to move the ball, share the ball, and be selfless, which is one of our core values.



Q. For either player, they hit you with three pretty significant runs and each time you came back and made a game, even took the lead at times. How were you able to sort of absorb that and rally like you did?

SPENCER JONES: That's just kind of the growth of our team. We've been talking about that throughout the season, our ability to handle runs like that. Each team's going to go on a run, and credit to Coach, he really instilled that in us, even though we were failing doing it at the beginning of the season. So we started hitting back and that was the key.

Q. Jared, looking big picture-wise on the season, obviously it might take some time to reflect on it, but how would you initially kind of evaluate the season? Obviously it didn't start the way you wanted it to, finished strong, yet kind of finished about what you did last year. How do you feel about this season collectively when you kind of look back on it?

JEROD HAASE: Yeah, there's always a lot of ways to evaluate a season and a team and the reality is the number one way for everyone, really, is your record. And record-wise it's not good enough. That's on me to figure that part out. I think we made tremendous progress from the start of the season throughout the season. The schedule was tough early on, from really good teams to travel, etcetera, etcetera, but the reality is we didn't get the results we needed to early. Early in the year pressure just took us out of everything we tried to do. But I was really proud of the staff, proud of the players because we evolved, we learned, we grew and we turned into a really, really good offensive team. At the end of the day I think our defense was probably the weak link and what we'll need to figure out is a way to do better there. But bottom line, throughout this season I think we made a tremendous amount of progress. The disappointing part we started in a place that we wish we wouldn't have started.

Q. Spencer, this was potentially your last game here. If this was, what do you think that you've put your, how do you think you put your mark on this program, what do you think you've left behind in it?

SPENCER JONES: Shoot, I mean, that's kind of a hard thing to think about. Obviously great shooter, great defender. Just, honestly, I hope my teammates can attest of just being the hardest worker on the floor. Fighting through a lot of adversity and even though we didn't overcome all of it, still came back to practice with a great attitude and great work ethic. That's something that I hope these guys carry on.

Q. Brandon, just what talk about what you've learned playing -- what have you learned from Spencer, you guys both play the same position kind of similar games. You're kind of a stretch forward's stretch forward. You get going to the post. Talk about how much playing against him and playing with him has improved your game since you guys do kind of have similar strengths and styles of play?

BRANDON ANGEL: First off, playing against Spencer sucks. Playing with him is he's probably one of the best teammates in the country, to be honest. He's a lock-down defender, he's an unbelievable defender, the way he uses his length, quickness and that's definitely something I can try to learn from. We would have pick-up, there's a lot of things when we're just playing pick-up that I could try to pick his brain and see how he's stopping me. Hopefully there's more time to do that and keep learning from him go back and watch tape, because as you guys said, he's an excellent player, everyone knows that. The way he approached practice and games his mentality was exactly the culture we want to continue on in this program.

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