

Pac-12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 13, 2024

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

California Golden Bears

Coach Mark Madsen

Jaylon Tyson

Jalen Cone

Postgame Press Conference

Stanford - 87, Cal - 76 (OT)

MARK MADSEN: Disappointing loss. We had some great opportunities to take control of that game and win it. They got going. They were able to come up with some loose balls late and they made key shots. And our execution late wasn't great.

This being our last game, I don't want to dwell on the toughness of this loss. I want to choose to dwell on just how proud I am of our group, where we started, the progress that was made during the season, and these outstanding young men and what they mean to our program and to the university.

Q. Jaylon, you had 16 points in the first half, two in the second. What was Stanford showing you in the second half that maybe cut into that?

JAYLON TYSON: It was a good team, didn't come out as aggressive as I should have been. Hats off to them, the defense.

Q. Mark, you managed to get a lot of good open looks in the first half and then the opening minutes of the second half. What changed about being able to get those open looks? Because it seemed like every shot that went up was highly contested?

MARK MADSEN: I think it was probably a combination of a two things -- I'll go back and study the tape and look at it. But probably a combination of two things.

No. 1, they amped up their defensive energy and intensity. And our ball movement in the first half was probably 10 out of 10. The ball didn't move as well in the second half as it did in the first. We'll go back and look at that. But a



function of not as good of ball movement on our side and better defense on their side.

Q. How much of a difference did it make for you guys late in the game having Fardaws out? How did that change things for you defensively?

MARK MADSEN: That hurt. That hurt. Even with that, we've had guys stepping up all year. When someone goes down with an injury, when someone goes out fouling out of a game. And so that definitely hurt because Fardaws does such a great job of controlling the glass and great voice on the back line. Even with that, we fought, we battled, we came up a little bit short.

Q. Jalen Cone, that second half drive you had, as Mark said, functioned so smoothly on offense for most of the game. What changed? How did it feel when you guys suddenly couldn't make a shot?

JALEN CONE: Like Coach said, the ball kind of stuck in the second half, and we wasn't playing with as much pace getting out in transition that second half. And we slowed the game down and it worked to their advantage.

We're just a more athletic team than they were and faster team. So I definitely would say the pace of our offense definitely slowed down a little bit.

Q. Mark, talk about what's been the key to you kind of bringing new energy, a life to this Cal program. They were in a different spot a year ago. What's been the key to your turnaround and instilling belief and just kind of your culture and imprint on this program in year one?

MARK MADSEN: I would say there's many different factors that go into that. But number one, Cal as a university and as an athletic department has a huge desire for excellence, to be great, to compete at the highest level. So I felt that. I felt that support, number one, from administration, number two, from the university and, number three, from the great players that were here at Cal and the great players we brought in.



And so it's been an absolute team effort, and we made some modest strides this year, and we want to take this thing to a much higher level, a much more competitive level, but I'm incredibly proud of these players. I'm incredibly proud of them.

That's what I told them in the locker room. There were a lot of naysayers at the start of the season. I think they predicted us to finish 11th or 12th, and we finished much better than that. That's because we had a lot of guys with a lot of heart that battled and fought and had some success.

Q. You played in this conference. You've now coached in this conference as the conference comes to where it is. What do you think about when you look back on just that experience and being part of the Pac-12?

MARK MADSEN: I think we went through all the emotion earlier in the year when we got word that the Pac-12 was going to dissolve, and we all have feelings on it.

I have great memories in the Pac-12. I grew up watching a lot of these schools, UCLA, USC, Stanford, Cal. I played in the conference, made a lot of good friends on the teams I played on and on the teams that I played against.

It's funny, I see a lot of the guys I played against in the Pac-12; you run into them randomly. So it's a shame that the Pac-12 is coming to an end, but every university is going to go their own way and blaze a new path.

Q. How will you reflect on this season? Obviously as has been written, and Mark was just asked, the program made significant strides but it obviously didn't end the way you want, not just tonight, but the last four games. How does that affect the way you'll remember this season?

JALEN CONE: I'll definitely say the program took a step in the right direction. And this season, I mean, for me personally and everybody on the roster, it made everyone better. Everyone on the roster grew at some point in the season and became a better player and a better teammate.

So I just look back at the season as a positive. Even though it didn't go the way we wanted, everybody grew in some shape or form.

JAYLON TYSON: I'd like to add on that. With this team, this is probably the closest team I've ever been a part of. Just off the court. I built lifelong friendships here. Not only players, but with the staff. This is the closest staff I've ever

been with. I've been to three universities and this is the best head coach I've ever played in my life.

I know for a fact with this man in charge here that this program's going to go to heights it has never been to. I can bet the bank on that.

But from an individual standpoint, just keep taking strides, just keep getting better, keep God first and just keep going. That's really all.

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