

Mountain West Men's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 14, 2025

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

New Mexico Lobos

Richard Pitino

CJ Noland

Mustapha Amzil

Postgame Press Conference

Boise State Broncos 72, New Mexico Lobos 69

RICHARD PITINO: Well, terrific battle. Certainly disappointed when you don't win a championship and disappointed when you have such a great crowd that felt like a home game. Traveled to Vegas and squandered the opportunity, but a lot of that had to do with Boise making big plays.

It was a one-point game. Tru gets a deflection, we think we have that loose ball and then Meadow who is 1-for-9 at the time makes a huge three, a big play player. So credit to him. It was a toughness game. We both fought and I think it was a really good battle. Keene did a job on the glass. We need to go a better job there.

Overall what I told them in the locker room was, yes, disappointing, we didn't win another championship. But we're 26-7 and we're going to the NCAA Tournament. So I've got to remind the guys of that.

We'll get back at it, take a little rest and be excited for Selection Sunday.

Q. What do you think you need to clean up? Obviously you know you have to put this behind you as quick as you can. What would you say initially you had to clean up? From a spectator standpoint, it's as exciting a college basketball game you're going to see.

RICHARD PITINO: I wouldn't panic. Boise is a really good team. We were up one with a minute ago or whatever, and they made a big play.

When you're 26-7, 17-3 in the league, I don't think you necessarily panic. CJ is hurt. A little hamstring issue.



We've got to get him healthy. That's why he played limited minutes. Other than that one or two plays that we need to make that they made.

Q. It was physical, really physical, and every rebound was contested. Could you talk about, is that just postseason basketball? Is it what you expect, or was this game any more physical than anything else you've experienced?

MUSTAPHA AMZIL: It was definitely expected. We know Boise State plays hard. That's their way. We know them, and it's postseason. You lose one game and you're out.

So it's a little bit extra to it. It was something, like Coach said, a couple players at the end, we couldn't execute, finish, and they got the win.

Q. Saw you up in the tunnel getting treatment early, and the frustration. How are you feeling, and obviously you tried to go. Where are you with that?

CJ NOLAND: Well, I mean, it's better since the beginning of the game. I think I'll be ready for March Madness for sure. Just a day-by-day thing. I'll be good for sure.

Q. The 18 second-chance points, you saw what they did yesterday against San Diego State. Obviously a big success that Boise State likes to do. How big were some of the put-backs and things they had?

RICHARD PITINO: Yeah, Keene, especially, what great heart, great toughness, great desire. Ugbo, as well, made crucial offensive rebounds.

I mean, we saw it yesterday for San Diego State. They shot 40 threes, and they were just trying to get every single offensive rebound.

Yeah, we battled. It was pretty close, and they kind of pulled away with some crucial ones toward the end.

Q. All-time leading scorer against him the last few years what can you say about Tyson Degenhart and



what he's meant to the league and that program?

RICHARD PITINO: That's what it's all about. Stayed there obviously for four years. Could have left at any time. He's a winner. He's tough. He makes big plays. You can send three, four people out, and he's going to find a way to finish at the basket.

He's a high-character kid. I'm rooting for him. I don't want to see him again, obviously. But he's a terrific, terrific player. A lot of substance as a person.

Q. Is that an NCAA Tournament team over there?

RICHARD PITINO: Darn close. Depending on who they play everything and. Probably a little bit like us last year, them and Colorado State, I would assume, where some things got to go their way.

Certainly they are good enough to be in it. You know, but I'll be rooting for them. Obviously somebody -- there's a couple teams that are really, really close right now. But they could absolutely make some noise if they do get in.

Q. The in-bounds play where they went deep, did they catch you totally by surprise?

RICHARD PITINO: We wanted to switch it, and we just made a mistake on it. Good call by them.

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