

# Players Era Power College Basketball Tournament

Tuesday, November 26, 2024

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

MGM Grand Garden Arena

**Oregon Ducks**

**Coach Dana Altman**

**TJ Bamba**

Postgame Press Conference

Oregon - 80, Texas A&M - 70

**Q. What did you feel like you guys did defensively there late, (indiscernible) kind of pulled away?**

DANA ALTMAN: I thought our activity -- we put them on free throw there for six free throws in a row when we got the lead, which was really disappointing because we really held them for a long stretch there.

I thought our defense was much more active. We got them to turn it over a little bit which points off turnovers kind of evened up a little bit of their rebounding advantage. They killed us on the boards, 25-6 second-chance points. But we evened that out with points off turnovers, 20-8.

I thought that little stretch there, Jackson got a steal and the layup, Bam got to the hole. We got an and-1 shot. I thought that was the turning point of the game after we had gotten down by 10 with 10 minutes to go.

**Q. Where do you feel like you are with this group? And what do you feel like you have this year that maybe you didn't have last year with the guys you brought in?**

DANA ALTMAN: The biggest thing right now is we've got depth, which we played nine, 10 guys tonight. But we can go even further. So I do like our depth, which is big for us.

Supreme Cook gives us a big boost off the bench with some physicality and size. So, no, I like our depth and we're going to shoot it better. We've got to take better shots. And we've got to get a little bit more inside/outside than we did the first half. But I think if guys keep working we can be a lot better.



**Q. (Question about the event experience)?**

DANA ALTMAN: First of all, we've been really well taken care of. It's been a first-class operation. We get here and the rooms, no hitches. The food has been outstanding. Everything's been first rate.

So from our perspective, you know, I was excited because of the quality of teams that were in the event. When Seth called and talked to us about coming, we hadn't entered any exempt tournaments. So we were looking.

But with the quality of opponents, we didn't know at the time how it would be divided, anything. But I thought really good teams, really good coaches. So we were excited about the opportunity to play. But since we've been here, everything's been first-rate.

We had three high-level NCAA Tournament officials out there tonight. So I said everything to this point has been first-class.

**Q. Did you get a chance to watch the first game? And what are your thoughts on San Diego State?**

DANA ALTMAN: I watched parts of it. I'm not smart enough to start looking ahead, worrying about another team. But I did watch part of it. San Diego State shot the heck out of it. I think close to 50 percent or over 50 percent from 3 and right at 50 percent from the field. I hope they got that out of their system. But they really shot it well.

Dutch always does such a great job defensively. They had Creighton kind of bottled up inside. So they did a tremendous job.

So we know we'll have our work cut out for us. San Diego State is always really athletic, competitive, do a great job on the defensive end and today they shot it so well. That makes them really tough.

**Q. They are using the Wilson Evo ball. Did you practice with this ball all week? I know San Diego State practiced, (indiscernible) Wilson gave them balls to practice with for eight days just to get --**



DANA ALTMAN: No, we didn't practice for eight days. We had a game last Thursday against Oregon State and they use a Nike ball. But then Saturday, Sunday, Monday, yeah, we have some Wilson balls. We prefer the Nike ball, but the Wilson ball is pretty good. So, no, we've been practicing with it.

It's a little different feel, but I don't think it's any different.

**Q. What's the difference between them?**

TJ BAMBA: It's a different feel, of course, but to be honest, it's not bad. It's got good webbing on it and stuff.

**Q. How has it been to see the evolution of Vegas as a basketball town. You've been coming here since your summer AAU events, conference tournaments to something like this now for the holidays?**

DANA ALTMAN: Well, we moved the Pac-12 Tournament here in '12-'13. My first two years we were in L.A., but then we moved it and we played it here. We had great success. I love this building. I think it's a really good basketball building.

Everybody's pretty close. But we played the tournament here in '13, '14, '15, '16, and won a couple of them and went to the finals another year. So we had pretty good success here. But I like the building, basketball-wise.

And Vegas, it's great for the fans. That's what our conference figured out. There's so much to do even if your team loses. I mean, you don't have to go home right away. It's an easy town to get to. There's so many flights coming in here.

I think it's a good basketball destination. Last year we opened up the season against Georgia here just because it's easy for us to get to. But I just think it's good for the fans. Again, there's so much for them to do.

So when you're in a tournament atmosphere like this, you're going to be playing two, three, if our fans stay until Saturday, they'll be here a long time, it just gives them an opportunity to do some other things.

It's been great for basketball. I just think it's great for fans. Our attendance in the Pac-12 went way up when we moved it here from L.A. And it's driving distance for Arizona, which was convenient. But Utah could drive. So there's some driving. L.A. could drive. Not driving from the great Northwest, but there's some schools that could drive so the attendance went up.

I think our fans just like Vegas. And it's a good basketball

town.

**Q. Will you go home on Thursday and Friday?**

DANA ALTMAN: No, we're staying. We're staying. A lot of the families came in. And so we'll have Thanksgiving dinner here. We're going to stay.

**Q. What is it like participating as a player, one, with yesterday spending a lot of the day doing NIL films, be able to get paid, and obviously there's an incentive if you win the whole thing.**

TJ BAMBA: I mean, we're grateful to be in this event. It's the first of its kind, so it's unique in its own way in that sense. But, I mean, if you look at the field it's a bunch of great teams, teams that are projected to be in the Final Four and make (indiscernible) tournament teams.

So for us to have the opportunity to be here and compete and show what we've got, that's the greatest thing we can ask for because we feel we belong here. So we just want to go out there and compete and play hard. I'm grateful for it.

**Q. Is it a little weird having (indiscernible) stuff yesterday?**

TJ BAMBA: It's different. It's a new era. The Festival is new era. Nobody had ever done this before. College basketball has definitely taken a shift and is changing and it's continuing to change.

It's unique. It's different. It's cool to be a part of the first group of people first event ever.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

