

GEICO Players Era Men's Championship

Wednesday, November 26, 2025

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

MGM Grand Garden Arena

Syracuse Orange

Coach Adrian Autry

Postgame Press Conference

Iowa State 95, Syracuse 64

ADRIAN AUTRY: First, I want to thank all the people from Orange Nation that came out to support, to watch us compete in this game and compete in this tournament, which is one of the premier tournaments in the country.

For us, I thought we had three great opportunities out here. We came up short, which is very disappointing, but we learned a lot about our team.

The second half of today's game is not who we are. We didn't fight. We fought every half up until this last half of this game today, and those are the things that we continually need to work on and to be able to fight.

For the most part, these guys fought. We fought for two games and a 20-minute half today. But make no mistake about it, we will learn a lot from this. We will get better. We will continue to push.

What I'm asking my guys to do is very hard. It's very taxing. We will continue to get better at it. Level 5 fight and energy and connection is not easy. It's not easy. We will continue to improve on that and get better with that.

Again, I was happy to see the level of fight. Just the last 20 minutes is not who we are, and like I told our players, we understand it, we face it, we do it together, and we'll grow from this. That's what I'm looking forward to.

Q. In the second half, what happened to that fight? Was it exhaustion with three games in three days or playing in a 10:00 a.m. game? Was it just being worn down by playing Houston, Kansas and then Iowa State three in a row?

ADRIAN AUTRY: I mean, I'm not making excuses. We take accountability. I take accountability as the leader of



this program. I just thought we just didn't fight. We just didn't fight. I thought we let some missed opportunities offensively kind of impact our fight on the other end, and we can't do that.

We've got to continually work on that. That's how I see it.

Sure, everyone else played three games. Everyone else did that, as well. We've got to do a better job. Myself, I've got to do a better job. Coaching staff has got to do a better job. Our players have got to do a better job of leaning into that fight.

Q. How concerned are you about initiating your offense? These teams have been pushing your point guard out, been doubling him a little bit, and you've had some trouble getting into your offense and that has led to some run-outs. How concerned are you about that and what do you think you can do to mitigate that?

ADRIAN AUTRY: Well, one, we can't turn the ball over. Our players are better than that. When we get the ball to certain spots, when you play against aggressive teams, you've got to make them pay and make better decisions, and I don't think we did that well this game. That same pressure that was today was the same pressure we faced Monday and Tuesday, and we handled it better.

That's on us. We've got to handle it better. We've got to get the ball to the right spots, and we know who to get the ball to in those spots, and we've got to make better decisions going forward, and we will, and we'll keep improving.

Q. You talk a lot about the orange standard. How do you get your program back towards that?

ADRIAN AUTRY: You know, that's something that we do every day. It's not a word, it's what we do. Even you asking that question now because it's something based on results, right? We'll get the results, but that's not the focus.

The standard is being accountable, relentless determination, grit, and that's what we categorize as level 5 effort every day.

Again, we're in the process of continually getting consistent

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with that.

Q. I know you talk about no moral victories all the time, but it's not crazy to say that you guys might have gotten the most difficult draw of any team in this tournament. What went through you and your coaching staff's mind and even the players last night when you get told you're facing Iowa State which is a top-15 team, top 10 in Ken Pom, all that stuff?

ADRIAN AUTRY: We were excited to be honest with you. That's what you want. You got to play these games. That's why you're out here. Think about it, we walked away with three Quad 1 opportunities and you've got to have those.

We're very disappointed that we couldn't get the results that we wanted, but in today's game, in your non-conference, you've got to put yourself in position. You do.

So we're excited. We're excited to have those opportunities, to be honest with you.

Q. Back-to-back games for Nate George now with five points as a season low. He had seven turnovers today, as well. What made it so difficult for him today?

ADRIAN AUTRY: You know, I think as a point guard, and I was a point guard myself, when you start in a new program, you're taking time -- and you're a leader of those guys on the court. It still takes some time to figure out new system, new players, things like that.

We've asked him to really focus in on both sides of the ball, and he's done a tremendous job of that. So I think some adjusting does need to take place for him. But I don't worry about Nate. He's a resilient kid. He's a hard worker. He'll get it turned around. We believe in him. We believe in all our players, and he'll get it turned around.

Q. You said you learned a lot about this team. What exactly did you learn about this team these past three days?

ADRIAN AUTRY: I think if you watch these last two games and even the first half of today, when we fight and when we have that level of fight and when we're connected, we can play with anybody in the country. That's now, right. But we're fighting to be able to beat anyone in the country, as well.

I think we showed that at times. I think we showed that, that this team, if we stay connected and we play our brand of basketball with that group of men in there, we'll have a

chance to beat anybody.

Q. You mentioned yesterday how games like these are sort of a bellwether for where your team is at this point in the year. What are the things you and your staff are going to go back to the board on in terms of what has to improve for you to make sure those Q1 opportunities become Q1 wins?

ADRIAN AUTRY: Like I said before, it's about us, a level of consistency and our mindset. That's what really needs to take place. We've got to try to minimize our dips and continue to push forward and really -- we play eight, nine guys. Everyone collectively, when we do have those dips, someone picking someone else up, and that's what we've got to continually get better at and continue to work on.

Q. Yesterday the Players Era CEO said there are more than 20 programs that have signed up to play in next year's event. Is Syracuse one of those teams?

ADRIAN AUTRY: I haven't had that discussion yet. I don't know anything about that.

Q. I'm curious what your thoughts were overall about the tournament. Would you prefer it be organized differently? What did you like about it and what didn't you like about it?

ADRIAN AUTRY: Well, I loved the opportunities that we got for this tournament. I think it's a tremendous field, a tremendous tournament. I think everyone gets an early test being part of these games, to play high-level competition.

The opportunities were there. I love the fact that you get a chance to have these opportunities early on in the season and use it as a barometer for what you need to do, what you need to work on and what you need to get better at.

Being in Vegas is not bad, neither.

Q. Just wanted to check in and see how Donnie is doing and if there's any update on him?

ADRIAN AUTRY: No updates yet. When we get back, we'll get back and we'll see where he's at. Again, there's no really timetable. We'll kind of just keep checking in and seeing where he's at. But again, I don't expect him to be out that long. Very hopeful that he won't be out that long.

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