

Mountain West Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

Grand Canyon Antelopes

Coach Bryce Drew

Nana Owusu-Anane

Jaden Henley

Postgame Press Conference

Nevada 84, Grand Canyon 80

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THE MODERATOR: We have student-athletes Jaden Henley and Nana Owusu-Anane and Coach Bryce Drew. Coach, start with your thoughts on tonight's game?

BRYCE DREW: Really proud of these two guys, two tremendous players, all-league players. They were the heart and soul of our team all year, so I hate for them to go out obviously like this. Proud of their effort, away what they've done all year.

For the game, really good game back and forth. I think the difference was free-throw shooting. Especially you get to March, you got to make free-throws. We had that stretch in the second half. We went 2 for 9. It was a front end. You're 2 for 10.

You know if you shoot like you should and 7 or 8 of those you make, you know we have a five, six point lead and we have momentum and they're chasing us.

It was devastating for us not only from missing them point-wise, but also emotionally when you go two for ten with a one-on-one in the meat of the game when you're trying to take control of it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. I'm curious from a playing perspective how hard is it to 6play in a game like that? Obviously a lot of pressure, but with the constant stoppages and all the fouls, I think they said it's the most free-throws in a conference tournament game for the Mountain West.



How is that to stay in rhythm offensively and defensively?

JADEN HENLEY: I don't think it had a big affect for us, the stoppage and stuff. At the end of the day you got to be able to knock down free-throws in crunch time, like Coach said, in March.

Tonight we were about 65%, so yeah.

Q. Can you guys just talk about the fan presence tonight? A lot of fans obviously traveled, traveled well, in your first game in this conference tournament ever, it really did rival the best that this conference has it offer.

NANA OWUSU-ANANE: We can speak all day on our fan support, our school support, the support from the community. Words can't describe what they do for us as a program.

The way they travel, the way they support us when they see us, even when they don't see us, it's tremendous. You saw it. For them to come out the way they did, it's spectacular. It's amazing.

THE MODERATOR: We'll dismiss the student-athletes. Questions for Coach.

Q. You touched on it already, but how does the way that you coach your team change when it turns boo game like this?

BRYCE DREW: You know, it doesn't. You know, you still coach the same way. Obviously the fouls. You know, it's hard to get a rhythm, and you hate it when the best players are out of the game.

Price is all-league. Henley is all-league. You're hating when you are sitting them on the bench, and especially in the conference tournament and they're not playing.

That stinks. I think from a coaching standpoint and from a spectator standpoint you want to see the best players in



the league on the court for most of the game.

Jaden getting his second call really hurt us. We were building a lead and he was playing really well. That second call that we had to bring him out, that let them kind of get momentum going into halftime.

Then it comes down to free-throw shooting contest. Again, this is where the game was won. You can take every stat out the window. You can take play calling out the window.

It turned into a free-throw shooting contest, and their free-throw shooting was better than our free-throw shooting tonight.

Q. Can you just reflect on the challenges and what you're most proud of for this team and this program, joining this conference and doing what they were able to do in this conference that's very, very talented?

BRYCE DREW: Yeah, great league, and we're thankful to be in it. I think we climbed up -- we're the sixth best conference in the country. I want to say last year we were 14 to 16, so it was a big jump.

We tied for third, and we were, like I said, less than five minutes away from being the No. 1 seed and winning the league if we win that game at Utah State, which we had a lead under five.

I'm proud of these guys. They showed great resiliency all year. Just when we looked like we were out, they would come back and win games, so I really credit their character and their resiliency to bounce back. Unfortunately, this wasn't one of our finest performances tonight. You hate that to end on not one of your finest performances, but sometimes it's not meant to be.

There are a lot of things, roles, different things that somehow found the bottom of net for them, and ours just seemed to hit the back of the rim and go out.

Q. It seemed like first half you guys come out and you throw a punch. A ton of energy physicality. That second half it seemed a lot different, especially at the start. Kind of what do you allude that to? Was it just a bit of a dry spell for you guys?

BRYCE DREW: We've been really good coming out at halftime. I know we exerted a lot of emotion in the first half, and they hit a three right away. I think we had three turnovers in those first few minutes that we dribbled into guys and we weren't strong with the ball and kind of let them get a rhythm.

Again, our guys have bounced back. They really bounced back. During that stretch, it was a one-point game for them, one-point game for us, and that's where we missed seven free-throws, where if you make those again, we have a couple possession lead coming out of that around that ten-minute mark. It probably plays out different just emotionally and how you call your game offensively and defensively at that point.

So that stretch, again, really I think the determining factor.

Q. Also, Camper obviously had a great night. Can you just talk about maybe the challenge kind of with guarding him. I know you gave him some problems for a few stretches, but just how good he was.

BRYCE DREW: Yeah, he had some tough shots. I thought our guys did a really good job trailing, contesting, being there. Credit him for being super efficient: 8 for 13, 3 for 5, 8 for 9 from the free-throw line. Not only did he score, he was efficient in how he did it.

He has not been shooting the ball that well lately. Weems has been playing, been their leading scorer in their last three games. So, you know, credit him for making tough shots for most of the night.

Q. With Breidenbach out and Caleb Shaw back for one game, how much did you feel like the lack of depth affected you? I think the starters were in for at the 13-minute mark on?

BRYCE DREW: That's been something we've talked about since we've had the injuries going out. Caleb wasn't himself. He couldn't move really like needed to in a game like this. That really hurt, limited some of his minutes.

Then Will has that veteran experience. He knows how to guard ball screens. He knows how to box out. He could have drawn a lot of fouls how physical he is and his defensive presence just seeing actions, he's seen so many actions for years.

It definitely hurt, but it's not the reason. It definitely hurt not having him.

Q. Where did you think most of the fouls came from? Was there over plays and reactions or the rotation issue?

BRYCE DREW: I would have to go back and look at it. Again, there were some key ones. I thought Makaih had some really good drives that we didn't get free-throws on. I thought he was really good.

And sometimes just wrong place, wrong time, the ball bounces the wrong way. I would have to go back and look at all the calls. It ended up being a free-throw shooting contest, and they made more free-throws than us.

Q. Coach, I know it's early. I know it's fresh, about the I'm curious just from you for the program, the interest level of potentially playing in any other postseason basketball with this group?

BRYCE DREW: Yeah, it's something we'll talk with Jamie Boggs, our athletic director, President Mueller, and see what's the best for the program, you know, moving forward.

Obviously the goal is the NCAA Tournament. You know, in this day you don't know how long you're going to have guys on your roster and, to be honest, how many guys really want to play if it's not the NCAA Tournament. So we'll evaluate all that.

But, again, our KenPom is as high as it's been. We were in the high 50s coming into this game. Our NET was in the 60s. You always want to go out on a higher note, but again, a lot of good that this team did this year.

Q. My final question, just obviously a full season of Mountain West play. You fall a little bit short here in the tournament. Just how fired up are you to be a part of conference, such good basketball and kind of to get right back at it?

BRYCE DREW: We definitely learned a lot during the league, just travel. Again, you know, the style of play, the physicality. Again, we had a whole new group of faces of referees that we haven't seen in five years.

There's a lot of newness. Even newness coming here and being in this tournament. So I think it will definitely help next year in the preparation before and also as we roster construct to see what type of players we really need and what type of lineups we need to be able to play against teams in this league.

Q. The same big picture, accomplishment-wise in a transition year to win 20 and tie for third and that Utah State game separating you from first, how much does that help moving forward in the program?

BRYCE DREW: You know, really thankful. I thought our seniors came in. They were all first-year guys. It's hard when you have all seniors that are first-year guys. I thought they really loved GCU. I thought they played for GCU. They represented GCU in the right way.

I think retention is big. We want to retain guys, get them

back for next year, but so many things. I think eyes on GCU help so much with the TV, the TV exposure we got this year. We've heard from people all around the country that didn't realize how good our crowd was, they didn't realize the players that we had, and I think that exposure is hopefully going to kick-start us to even better things next year.

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