

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Monday, November 23, 2015

Tom Crean

Robert Johnson

Max Bielfeldt

Indiana Hoosiers



WAKE FOREST - 82 INDIANA - 78

THE MODERATOR: We now welcome Max Bielfeldt and Robert Johnson to the interview room.

Q. I guess for either of you, but Max, maybe for you, you guys are up nine there. You kind of had them back on their heels and then I guess what happened after that?

MAX BIELFELDT: Yeah, we got a little bit of a run there. Just didn't execute. That was the point we tried to emphasize all year. Unfortunately, it came up again where we get those runs going in that eight-minute span, and we have to beat a team that pushes that out.

It's tough to say exactly what happened, but I think just being able to come together and run our offense to perfection at that point is really what we need to do.

Q. Robert, I know defense has a lot of components to it. But they were able to drive on you, got inside a lot, 50-something points in paint. What was the issue on the perimeter defense and not being able to stop the drives?

ROBERT JOHNSON: I think it came from, first off, a lack of communication, that was a big part of it. And second thing, I'd just say a mindset. For myself and everybody else we've got to continue to build a defensive mindset that we're going to go out there and stop you.

Q. Max, with 3.2 seconds, Collin had the ball out of bounds. What was the plan there and what went wrong with that play?

MAX BIELFELDT: The plan was to throw it to me and find someone cutting. They threw it up and had a lot of hands in there for that long pass, and it just didn't quite work out as we wanted it to.

Q. For either of you, they were really the aggressor from, it seemed, the outset. Were you surprised by the way they came out pushing?

MAX BIELFELDT: No, I mean, we knew they were going to be a physical team and it was going to be a test of our physicality as well. Just a lot of those

rebounds kind of came off short and they used their physicality to push us under the basket. And we've got to adjust to that and get better and not let that happen again.

Q. I guess just to follow up on that, at some level do you feel like there was maybe just y'all not being able to match them physically, particularly in that rebounding game? Not that you couldn't, but you weren't able to get that up today?

MAX BIELFELDT: I think today stats show that we didn't, but I think we had the potential to. I think developing some of these younger guys and really embracing the physicality can really push us to that next level.

Today we learned a hard lesson and we're going to learn from it and do everything we can to next time we see a team like that, that we're going to embrace it and push back as much as we can and hopefully do the same thing to them.

Q. Max, how stunned are you that you're playing in the loser's bracket and not the winner's bracket come tomorrow?

MAX BIELFELDT: It obviously wasn't something we planned for. We were hoping to go all the way, and the first obstacle is tough because it just didn't go our way today.

Wake Forest is a great team though. They've got some really good players and they capitalized on some of our weaknesses, so you've got to give them credit there. But we feel as a team we could have played better and done more things offensively and defensively to make this a game we could have won.

Q. Max, give me your take on all their points in the paint. It was 52 for the game. All the penetrations, Devin getting inside. What wasn't working for you guys?

MAX BIELFELDT: I'd have to go back and watch the film, but from what I saw, they crashed a lot of guys to the paint and they've got those 50-50 balls. We were sometimes turning our head to look at the basket and wait for the rebound instead of going to find the man and hit him out and clear out some space. We kind of resorted to some bad habits there.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, your opening thoughts on today's game?

COACH CREAN: Wake Forest deserved to win because they played a better game for a longer period of time, and it's hard to beat anybody when you play 15, 16 solid minutes, and that's what we did. From the start of the second half to where we got up 7 or 9, we were playing very well.

In the first half we weren't as committed to what we needed to do with moving the ball at an accurate rate, and we were not as committed as we needed to be on the glass, and we weren't hitting anybody, which was disappointing. We were trying different guys in that situation.

But in the second half, we played like a team that's really capable for about 16 minutes, and then we had some costly turnovers. We had some quick shots. We got away from what we needed to do, and we gave up the dribble too much, and we're not going to beat anybody with 16 good minutes, especially when you come to Maui. So we've got to turn around and get ready here in a hurry.

Highly disappointed in some of our efforts, and disappointed in some of the toughness, and disappointed in myself and some of the substitutions, and we'll go back and look at the film and make some decisions from there.

But we can't -- Troy Williams can't play 36 minutes and get no offensive rebounds. He can't do that. And we can't be a non-factor. This team outrebounded people by 18, they outrebounded us by 14. In the second half they didn't, but those stats are a little skewed for us, because in the first 16 minutes or so in that half -- no, I guess the first 14 minutes of that half, 14, 15, we were really good, and then we weren't so good. We lost this game on offense as much as we did on defense. They made the big plays, and we didn't guard Thomas the right way.

Still waiting for one of our guys to remember that we're supposed to take away his left-hand, and we let Bryant have too much room to penetrate. We did not guard him well at the last play, on the ball or even with the help.

Q. Forgive me for being a little blunt, but you talked about those turnovers and bad shots. How concerning is it to you that it seemed like it was the more experienced guys that were committing some of those mistakes in the last four minutes?

COACH CREAN: I'm going to blame myself. Because if we're not going to be able to play and read the flow of the game and try to make things that aren't there, then

we're going to have to play much slower and much more half-court oriented offense. So I'll blame me. But it's not good. So that's what we have to look at.

But we want to play with great freedom, but we don't want to play reckless. Again, just disappointed, big-time, that we got away from what was working. Because we had momentum going at such a high rate. As well as they played, when they made offensive plays, I think we hurt ourselves as much with half-court basketball offensively as much as they did defend us well at the end. And they deserve the credit. They played a great game.

They beat us at their strengths, and for a while we were taking away their strengths and playing to our strengths, and we got away from our strengths and we let them have their strengths back, and you can't do that against anyone.

Q. You mentioned some of the substitutions. Were there one or two you might want to take back?

COACH CREAN: Well, you can't play guys a lot of minutes that aren't being productive on the glass, and aren't being productive with their decision making. So I think that's what it is. I'll look at the film and kind of figure it out from there. But it's not about the statistics. It's about the effort statistics and the hustle statistics, and you can't give the ball away and not take it back from them, especially when it comes to the defensive boards or comes to getting offensive putbacks and offensive rebounds.

I've got to watch the film before I look more at that, but we'll come back with a game plan tomorrow to play a hungry St. John's team.

Q. Are there points in the paint, were you more concerned about the things Devin was doing or the dribble penetration they were getting that led to some things?

COACH CREAN: It was both. We didn't play the post-up game the right way. No question that should have changed defenses on them and just gone with some of that. But, again, it was things that we needed to take away a little bit. We just opened up a little bit too much in our coverages on the side pick-and-roll, which was the penetration, and we didn't get up on the strong hands.

So I'm not sure if it would have mattered, zone or man. The zone was a concern because we haven't spent a lot of time at that yet. But you don't want to let them get a running start at the glass. We were much more physical in the second half on the glass, but not to the point of winning the game. But we'll see. I have to look at the film.

Q. That last possession, did you intend to throw it that far down the court?

COACH CREAN: Yeah, we wanted it. The first look was to get it in there, if we got the match-up that we wanted in the front there. Then we have a play set, and they covered it well. We didn't make a great pass, and we missed the second option. So we threw it rather than waiting for the second option to be there.

Q. At that 9-point lead, what caused a transition in momentum from you guys back to Wake Forest?

COACH CREAN: I think I just covered it, to be honest with you. We had some turnovers, we took some tough shots, and rather than getting it through the paint and we were in the bonus, I believe, at the 8:00 minute mark, and we shot five free throws the rest of the game. That's what it is on the offensive end.

Then we just gave up too much room on the drives with Thomas, and on the glass, and we gave up too much penetration to the guards.