

# Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 24, 2015

## Tom Crean

## Thomas Bryant

## Yogi Ferrell

Indiana Hoosiers

INDIANA - 83 ST. JOHN'S - 73

THE MODERATOR: We welcome Coach Crean, Yogi Ferrell and Thomas Bryant to the media room. Coach, an opening statement?

COACH CREAN: I thought for the fact that we played less than 24 hours completely differently today was a great sign of the aptitude of our team, the attitude of our team, and the desire of our team. I think that's how it played out.

We didn't play great. It wasn't always pretty. They made baskets. But it's not going to be when you're playing against other competitive teams when you're in this environment. But we played with great purpose. We went to a game plan that really was where we needed to end the game yesterday, and we didn't end it that way, but we came at it and established it right away.

I thought Yogi and Rob did a fantastic job of getting the teams centered early and Thomas did a great job of getting the team anchored. And then Collin and Nick were all over the court. That's exactly what it has to be. Thomas came out for a very young freshman, and after a tough day, one where he certainly could have played a lot better, we all could have played a lot better. We all could have done everything better. We came out and did a much, much better job of that today.

Offensively, defensively there are still things we've got to get better at. We're the product right now on that front line of three very inexperienced freshmen and a senior that's transferred in, and our deck is not stacked when it comes to dealing with some of these other teams in low post defense and isolation abilities and things like that. But we made enough adjustments and these guys did a very good job with their teammates of playing with great resolve today.

**Q. Can you just talk about how tough it is to get up and play a 9:00 a.m. basketball game?**

COACH CREAN: Well, I feel like we basically prepared for this, I'd say, just playing AAU. AAU has games as



early as 8:00 a.m. and you can play three or four. So I feel like a bunch of us have done this before.

It is a little bit tougher waking up, you're tired. But you've got to wake up early, take a shower, eat right, get your mind focused for a 9:00 a.m. game.

**Q. Was the game plan to go down to you in the first few minutes? What kind of adjustments did you make from yesterday's game?**

THOMAS BRYANT: The type of adjustments I made was just staying on the attack. Just let the process go through and just play with my teammates and trust Coach and all my teammates out there. I just know if I just keep playing, keep running and posting up, that those guys will give me the ball, and they did. Luckily, I made some moves and got some buckets in there and just took it from there.

**Q. Yogi, Coach mentioned that you kind of centered this team after the loss yesterday. What was the role of getting the team to regroup and focused?**

YOGI FERRELL: We were upset with the loss yesterday, but we looked at this as another opportunity for us to go out and show everybody what we're made of, and I felt like we did that today. We showed a lot of toughness. It starts off in the first half.

Last game we played, we didn't start off with that mindset that we were going to go out and try to beat these dudes. So I think that didn't transition over into this game. I think this game we started off very well defensively and offensively.

**Q. Yogi, just your thoughts on how you guys started getting up 15 and then it was a fight the rest of the way. Was it fatigue? Was it something they did? What happened in the last 25 minutes or so?**

YOGI FERRELL: Well, when they score on, I think it was six of the last eight possessions in the first half, you can't have that for us. That's what we're still working on to this day. It's a matter of us getting up, staying up. Just kind of finding a way to keep that lead playing against such great competition in this tournament.

Teams can make runs, and when they make runs,



you've got to find a way to stop the bleeding.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for coach.

**Q. Coach, the start was really good. You got up 15 within 12 minutes and then they really hung around and got it within four or five. What happened that you guys weren't able to just kind of put the pedal down and put distance there?**

COACH CREAN: I think they wanted to win. I think St. John's came to win as well, and I think that's got a little bit to do with it. But in the scheme of it, they're very good in the isolation game, and they found match-ups.

This is new for Thomas, being in those type of situations. And Chris does an excellent job, and he just kept finding match-ups that he wanted throughout the game. We zoned some, but we haven't spent enough time on the zone to be a good zone team, but we wanted to change it up a little bit.

But he's got very good players, all right, and they're going to grow and become a very good team. He's done an excellent job from the start of the exhibition and now I think Chris has. And I just know him just a little bit, but obviously what he did as a player and as an executive is going to transfer to him as a coach. I don't think there is any question about that.

But we were a little ruffled today. There is no question about that. It's been a short turnaround. We didn't play that well. It's not like we went back and hung around our rooms and played Call of Duty and 2K. And we've had hard feelings. Bottom line, they came out and showed an edge and a level of toughness today, and we had to compete. We'll get a lot better, especially on the front line, as we get a better understanding of how to guard isolations. We're giving up strength maybe and not necessarily size.

But we also turned the ball over. They scored too many points off the turnovers. But today, if it was going to be a 15-round fight, we wanted to make sure we could be in it all 15 rounds, and I think that ended up happening that way. It's not easy to win.

**Q. Can you talk a little bit about the challenge of playing a basketball game less than 18 hours or so after you're done with the last basketball game?**

COACH CREAN: Well, I think you get times in your life, but you certainly get times in your season, and this is one of them, where you can really look at it as a measuring stick. The measuring stick for us is are we going to turn back around and play, because I didn't like what I saw on the court yesterday, and I liked it even less after I watched the film. They liked it even less after they saw the film.

So bottom line, it was about coming out with an edge. It wasn't like we were going to put a lot of new things in. It wasn't about the Xs and Os and the schemes as much as it was coming out with an edge and a resolve. Even though we didn't play great throughout the 40 minutes, and they had something to do with that as well. I thought we played very hard and competitive, and we had a different level of urgency today than we did yesterday.

**Q. I know you don't want to put too much stock into starting lineups. You always said you care more about who is on the floor at the end. But I guess did you get at some level the response you were looking for from a couple guys that were pulled out of that lineup, and a couple guys that went into that lineup?**

COACH CREAN: We need to change the dynamic based on the way the game was yesterday. In all honesty, there really wasn't -- it could have gone a lot of different ways today. It wasn't like you look back.

Collin did a nice job yesterday, but he only played 11 minutes because of the foul trouble. But it wasn't like anybody that we would walk out of there yesterday. None of us did a good enough job yesterday.

So the bottom line becomes we're going to change the dynamic a little bit and make sure that we understand that there's got to be certain standards that have to be met, especially in the hustle game. Those are the type of things. They weren't met yesterday, and hopefully they'll look like they've been met today. That's why we made the changes.

Again, if you're trying to build a two-deep team, then starting lineups to me shouldn't matter as much. The competitiveness of what you bring day-in and day-out should matter much more, and that's what we tried to utilize today.

**Q. What was the process of moving on from that loss in the hours after that game yesterday? When you talked about going back to the hotel and not playing video games and not really enjoying a trip to Hawaii, what was the process of moving on? Do you guys practice?**

COACH CREAN: We had gym scheduled. We scheduled the practice late, but the film session ended up being a little long. Fortunately we're on a break right now, so we don't have to worry about the 20 hours and the 4 hours and things like that. But we needed to get some points across. So really for me and for the staff, it was dive into the films. I did the grades myself yesterday.

Then getting into St. John's to a degree, but it was more about our team understanding how much better we have to play. The flabbergasting news was that we had just put 40 minutes together at a pretty high level against a pretty good team on Thursday night, and I didn't want to overdo the fact that we were only into four games, because at the end of the day we're only into four games and it's still November.

But the level of detail, the level of awareness, the level of effort and hustle yesterday wasn't anywhere near where it needed to be. So that needed to be addressed and it needed to be seen. Then we needed to fix some things, and fortunately we have a very big ballroom over at the Hyatt. We're very thankful that they moved us one day. It was almost like we had a full court in there.

**Q. To follow-up on that. As much as we've talked about this team having more experience, did they see it without being told, kind of watching film, running back through yesterday, what went wrong, what they did wrong? Was there enough recognition without anybody having to point it out to them?**

COACH CREAN: We didn't have a lot of personal meetings, so I don't know. When we really grow up, we'll have guys that will have already watched the film before I get down there. That's not common. There are very, very, very few players let alone programs that are going to have many players that are going to look at it with a real critical trained eye.

But, like I said, I didn't think we played well, and after I watched the film I felt like we played worse. I gave us too much credit for having 16 good minutes. We didn't. We got away from what was working. We got away from what we needed to do, and we needed to grow up in a matter of hours.

So an answer to your question, long story, short answer, I would imagine they did because they came out and played with a different level. It wasn't all coming out and playing hard for me. It was about coming out and playing hard for each other and playing more competitively for each other. My job is to make sure that I provide a level of accountability for them to live up to.