

# Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 24, 2015

## Kevin Stallings

## Damian Jones

## Jeff Roberson

Vanderbilt Commodores

VANDERBILT - 86 WAKE FOREST - 64

THE MODERATOR: We now welcome Vanderbilt to the interview room. We'll start with an opening statement from coach.

COACH STALLINGS: I thought that our guys played, again, very inspired. We got great production from our bench again, and Damian certainly led our charge today, as did Wade. I felt like Wade played very well also. But I thought fatigue might have played a little bit of a part in that game. I thought maybe our team being a little deeper than theirs had an impact. They made a great run after we ran on them at the beginning. They made a great run to get back in the game.

Then I thought from that point forward we were able to establish control and never really relinquish it. I was really proud of our team with that because they hit us with a solid shot. They really made a nice, nice run there in the first half to get back in the game. So just proud. I like how we're playing.

We put them on the foul line too many times. That was certainly a negative and something that we talked about. But nevertheless, I thought that we did a nice job. We did a nice job defending and did a nice job defending the three-point line. So all in all it was a very, very good performance.

**Q. Damian, can you just talk about what a Maui Invitational title would mean to the program and then just you guys and for the rest of the year?**

DAMIAN JONES: I mean, it would be huge for us going into the season, having that under our belt. It would really help our confidence going into conference play.

**Q. Damian, yesterday Coach Stallings basically said that you need to kind of lead the team as far as production if you guys wanted to go where you wanted to go. So what was different for you today as opposed to the first few games this season?**

DAMIAN JONES: Stayed out of foul trouble.

**Q. Jeff, how does it feel the way you guys won**



**decisively today and making the championship game? What does that mean to you?**

JEFF ROBERSON: That's what we expected coming in. We worked hard to get to this point. We didn't expect anything less. We just feel like we're a good group, we work hard and we want it all to pay off.

**Q. Damian, can you talk about the interior defense? You guys really made them shoot the ball not too well. Can you just talk about the inside defense?**

DAMIAN JONES: Just playing hard, walling up whenever the person drives. Trying not to stick our hands out and stuff like that. Just playing solid defense.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach Stallings.

COACH STALLINGS: I know your first thought is that Damian's going to have to stop talking so much.

**Q. Coach, why do you think Damian was able to stay out of foul trouble today?**

COACH STALLINGS: I don't know. Maybe it's because Coach Richardson made fun of him last night, I'm not sure. We talked about running one of our plays for him, and we wanted to get it in early in the game. And Coach Richardson said in our team meeting you're probably going to have to get it in by the 18:30 mark because he'll be in foul trouble. I think Damian played with a little more discipline today.

Wake's big guys are good players. Thomas is a load in terms of a match-up because he can put the ball down, and he's going left, and he's going back left-handed. It's still difficult. He draws fouls on you and he does it to everyone.

But I just think Damian staying in the game and not having to sit out significant time in the first half kept him in the flow and allowed him to play better.

**Q. Can you talk about the defense in and out? You forced him into 3 for 18 from three and 33% or so shooting overall?**

COACH STALLINGS: Yeah, just trying to wall up and get our hands out. Thanks. No, I'm kidding. We've got some length at the goal, and I think that's one of the things that has really been an advantage for us starting probably midway through the season last year.

Luke and Damian are understanding how to play together on the defensive end. They're good about challenging other people's shots. We're not always trying to block our guy's shot that we're guarding, but we want to challenge other people's shots. So I think that -- I do think that interior defense, good interior defense starts on the perimeter, and we did a good job on the three-point line. Though I did think they had a few looks that, again, I don't know if it was fatigue or we were able to rush them a little bit.

But other than that one stretch there in the first half, I never felt like they got into a comfortable offensive rhythm, and hopefully that had something to do with our defense.

**Q. I know it's been a long time, but you were part of two Final Fours at KU. I wondered if anybody's recognized you this week? And if you do play KU, would that matter to you personally?**

COACH STALLINGS: It will matter to me personally no matter who we play (laughing). Somebody mentioned it the other night at the banquet and you had Bill and you had Danny, and you had me. Three guys that had been a part of KU's basketball program. Now let's see which guy kind of came in third in terms of their impact on the program. You've got Bill who has won National Championships. Danny won a National Championship. One of the greatest players to ever play there, and I was just a lowly assistant coach.

But I was there for five great years with Roy Williams and very proud of my time there. Wonderful place. It's just a wonderful place. My son was born there. He's 25 now. And we have great memories of coaching there and Phog Allen Fieldhouse, and having lots of success.

My son was actually on the cover of one of the programs while I was coaching there. Not the program, the media guides. He's a little bitty shorty, and he looked really cute back then. A lot has changed since then. That was supposed to be funny.

But anyway, it was recognized. But, again, I recognize the role that I played, and it was a lot less significant than the other head coaches that are in this tournament.