

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Monday, November 21, 2016

John Thompson III

Rodney Pryor

Georgetown Hoyas

Georgetown - 65, Oregon - 61

THE MODERATOR: We have Georgetown, Coach Thompson and Rodney Pryor. Coach, an opening statement.

COACH THOMPSON: We needed that. That's my opening statement.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Rodney.

Q. At the end of the first half when you get 10 in a row to set you up, and what's the change in the momentum when they really got back into it?

RODNEY PRYOR: In the first half to close on that run we were doing great on the defensive end. We were grabbing defensive rebounds, allowing us to get out the break. I think in the second half they came out and threw some blows. We didn't get early stops that we needed and they got back into the game. But then we were able to take a deep breath, get some stops and get some baskets.

Q. What's it been like for you overall since you came to Georgetown and just that transition to a new school coming off Robert Morris?

RODNEY PRYOR: It's been great. The coaches have been doing a great job with me staying in my ear, talking. The players have been great, accepting me for who I am, believing in what I do.

Just competing every day with each other has been a blessing. And the transition has been great. I'm looking forward to making things better.

Q. That second half, they get the lead and there's still about 11 minutes left. Was there any sense of panic, and then you guys kind of scored seven in a row. Did you look up at one point and realize, man, they've gotten the lead and there's so much time left?

RODNEY PRYOR: Coming into that timeout we had to take a deep breath. I think we were a little sped up. We have some good looks early that didn't fall, and I think it withered our intensity on defense. But then once we got to take a deep breath, settle in, we realized that we just need to get stops and get good



looks on offense.

Q. How would you say that the team's response was coming out here all the way out to Hawaii after those two tough home losses and just the overall response?

RODNEY PRYOR: We know we're a good team. We know we let two go early. But we can't hang our heads on that. Can't get too low, can't get too high, so coming out here we knew we had to stay together, stick to our game plan, believe in each other make sure to come out with energy, effort and passion. Once we play that type of basketball we know we can be really good.

Q. That last three of the first half, was that just kind of feeling it there? And what's that feeling as you go into halftime on such a run?

RODNEY PRYOR: That's just riding a wave right now. I saw I got a good look. I got it off --

COACH THOMPSON: We have to get that wave more often.

RODNEY PRYOR: [Laughter] I didn't see it in but when I heard the crowd I knew it went in. But just a testament to coming out with energy and playing hard.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

Q. What is your message to the team with the game's winding down and Oregon is still knocking down big shots, you're not getting out with a victory how you wanted to?

COACH THOMPSON: No, but we did in that we got a victory. But just as important, there were mistakes that we made in a couple of earlier games -- I say earlier games, we're only four games into the season -- that we didn't make today.

And so you play against -- I mean, that team's one of the best teams in the country. You guys know that. So you come out, and we get on that run at the end of the first half, and you have that euphoria going into halftime.

And then coming out in the second half, we got some looks right at the basket that didn't go in. They blocked a couple. And all of a sudden, very, very quickly we're back in what was a normal basketball game.

And I think just the way we didn't get deflated, the way we, for the most part -- there's a whole lot we've got to clean up still -- but we didn't make some of the mistakes we made in a couple of earlier games. L.J. makes his foul shots, which is big.

But just the way we held on. And I saw -- you feel good, you get a win. It's a long week here in Maui. But I saw growth today in our team that we needed.

Q. You're up 17 and almost halfway through the second half, they're already ahead. Are there thoughts, hold them off a little longer and then have to come right back at them there?

COACH THOMPSON: No, the message to the guys was, okay, they caught up. We'll discuss tonight when we go over film why they caught up, and what we can do. But the message is, okay, let's grind it out. Let's grind it out. Let's refocus at the defensive end.

That lead, as much as we talk about what Rodney did, the lead in the first half was because of our defense. I don't know what they had at halftime. We held that team to 21 points in the half. That's a powerful offensive team and I think our defensive focus, our defensive intensity, our defensive communication was very good. So to answer your question, we're like let's get back to that. We're going to win this game if we get enough stops and enough rebounds.

So our guys did a good job not getting dejected and refocusing.

Q. How did it come to be that Rodney joined your program? And did you anticipate him making this kind of difference right off the bat like he has?

COACH THOMPSON: Once we got him, I knew he was pretty good and going to be pretty good. And with him I've said this, this is the first game that he's shown up -- our first game in the season he had a big scoring day. But if you look at his line and you can look at the points and look at the run at the end of the first half -- ten rebounds and four blocks also. I mean, he does a lot of different things. He plays hard.

And so those other things that he brings to the table above and beyond his scoring is what we need from him. In addition to his scoring. But as he said, he's easy to work into a unit because he gives of himself.

Q. How do you think your team responded to Oregon's press especially later in the game?

COACH THOMPSON: We're still a work in progress and we made some mistakes. We made some mistakes. We're a work in progress.

Their press was effective but it's some stuff that we need to clean up. But like I say, you don't -- that seems too good to come out and think you're just going to control the game. They're going to do things to you and it's all about how you respond, how you respond.

Q. Playing Wisconsin has become an annual thing. Do you have any early thoughts on the Badgers?

COACH THOMPSON: Yeah, it's becoming a conference game. Stating the obvious. They're tough. They make you earn everything. Nothing ever is easy against them. And when you make mistakes, they make you pay. And then you take that and you add the fact that -- that's like systemic. Forget the system. They've got some really good players, too.

And so it's a tough game. We have to go hydrate and start to get ready for them later on. But it's a battle. Everything -- everything's a battle. Every offensive possession is a battle. Every defensive possession is a battle and we have to be ready for that. We have to be ready for that.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach.