

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Wednesday, November 23, 2016

Brad Underwood

Oklahoma State Cowboys

Oklahoma State - 97, Georgetown - 70

THE MODERATOR: We have Coach Underwood from Oklahoma State. We'll open it up for questions.

COACH UNDERWOOD: Got off to a very slow start. Was very, very pleased. I made kind of a line shift adjustment and took four starters out. And then really got an unbelievable lift from our freshmen.

I'm very high on this freshman class. I thought Brandon Averette, Thomas Dziagwa those two guys in particular were fantastic, and pushed tempo. But more importantly we got it going defensively. And that helped get us on a run.

When I think of Georgetown, I think of elite defense. And to put 97 on them, I'm shocked that we were able to do that. And I'm very pleased with our performance, in a night where Jawun was not stellar, by his standards.

It was very, very good to see our bench and our other guys get going. And, you know, tough shooting night for Phil again. But again our other guys were very good.

And I thought Lucas N'Guessan, to start the second half, two offensive rebounds, a couple of put-back baskets, really got things going there in the second half for us.

Q. 19 steals and you outscore them by 30 in points off turnovers. That seemed to be the story of the game.

COACH UNDERWOOD: Well, there's two stats I look at. And one is field goal attempts. 71-47. That's a good number for us. We try to be -- we try to be on the plus of that as well. We only had 12 offensive rebounds which is a little lower than I like.

But when you force one of the top teams in America into 28 turnovers, we're going to give up a layup or two every now and then. But that was, those differences were great. And I think we had 18 steals the first night. I don't know what it was last night. It wasn't very good.

But for the most part, yeah, very, very pleased. We're getting better defensively. We're still making too many silly fouls, but we'll clean that up.



Q. What bothered you the most about that start, and what did you say to them? Because it seemed pretty needed that huddle.

COACH UNDERWOOD: We didn't guard anybody. We didn't do anything we talked about. We were flat emotionally. We played with -- I don't know if it was fatigue. I don't think so. There was just no energy. And the one thing I know I'm going to get from my bench is energy.

I left Jawun in, and, man, the tempo was slow. Jawun wasn't himself pushing the ball. And I thought Brandon really set the tempo for us offensively. He had a couple of drives where he went 94 feet.

And then Thomas Dziagwa, a guy I've got to find minutes for because he's a tremendous shooter. And those two freshmen guards got us going.

Q. You talked about how good North Carolina was yesterday. How good can you guys be and how much can this tournament maybe help you guys get on a flow into March like you talked about yesterday?

COACH UNDERWOOD: Well, my opinion, Carolina is the best team in the country, and we got throttled pretty good by them.

But I think the one thing that we know is we played three good basketball teams in three consecutive days. If nothing else, we now know what we have to go home and work at getting better at.

We're still a long ways -- we're ultimately still trying to lay and establish our culture. I'm six and a half, seven months into this thing, and that's why I'm proud today. But execution-wise, in our half-court offense and our spread stuff, you saw a little bit of it late. It's probably the best we've run it.

We've got to get the ball moving better. We've got to get better flow. We'll continue to work on those things. And then probably our biggest challenge right now is keeping our front-court guys out of foul trouble.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

COACH UNDERWOOD: Thank you. Wonderful event.

