

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

Kevin Ollie

Jalen Adams

Vance Jackson

UConn Huskies

Connecticut-93, Chaminade-82

THE MODERATOR: Coach Ollie is joined by Vance Jackson and Jalen Adams.

COACH OLLIE: I thought our guys played extremely hard. We didn't get down on ourselves, especially in the first half, when they made nine threes. When you have a team like that that can shoot threes, they kind of spread us out. We started switching it at the second half, but we started taking care of the ball, and we shot a high percentage from the field.

Very proud of the guys. We stuck with it. 28 assists, 9 turnovers is big time for us.

Q. Did it feel good for you to get the start today, really contribute well in the victory? How do you feel about your performance today?

VANCE JACKSON: I feel good. I missed a lot of free throws, and I'm a shooter. I've got to make more free throws. But I am happy today we got the "W," and we're on to the next one.

Q. Jalen, you guys get Oregon, two teams ranked top 20 at the beginning of the season, and now kind of a chance to get things turned around. Thoughts on facing the Ducks.

JALEN ADAMS: We're definitely looking forward to playing a top 20 team. It's a good challenge for our team, see where we're at. We think we can compete with the best of them. We're anxious to play that team.

Q. Jalen, can you talk about today's win against a gritty team. Those guys hung tough for a while. After yesterday's disappointing loss.

JALEN ADAMS: I think everybody was just hungry and wanted to get back and prove we can win and compete in this tournament. We definitely didn't come down here to lose. We were kind of disappointed yesterday. We knew nobody was going to feel sorry for us. Today we had to come out and get the "W." We're looking forward to getting to the next game.

Q. Jalen, I think you were out there all but a couple



seconds in a game of 39 minutes. How have you grown in this tournament given the way you started out and how you played the last three halves?

JALEN ADAMS: I think I matured a lot. Just gaining more trust in my teammates, what I can do. If I'm hot, they give me the ball, and if I'm tired, I can rely on them to keep up the scoring, keep up the defense. I think this tournament has helped our team a lot. We're just gaining a lot more trust and becoming even closer brothers.

Q. What was the sense of relief like when Rodney started hitting those threes, to get the three big ones down the stretch and really turned it around when he'd been struggling from the perimeter?

VANCE JACKSON: It felt good see him knock down the threes because in practice he did not miss. Just to see him get his rhythm back, it makes us good as a team. He should be ready for tomorrow as well.

Q. Right before the threes by him, you guys were having success working the inside. A couple of dunks back to back. What did you think of that stretch when you had success scoring inside.

VANCE JACKSON: Just running the offense. We do that a lot in practice. We do a lot of reps. Basically, come off, look to attack. Basically be wide open because we're being aggressive.

THE MODERATOR: We'll dismiss the players back to their team now and take questions for Coach.

Q. Coach, can you talk about Jalen today. He was one rebound short of a triple double. He was really doing everything out there today.

COACH OLLIE: He did a great job leading our team. When we needed a bucket. When we got down there a little bit in the first half in the beginning of the game, he just took the game over. That's what he can do. He showed toughness. He played pretty much every minute of the game. I tried to get him out in the second half for a couple of seconds but had to get him right back in.

I just thought he did an unbelievable job, finding his teammates, scoring. What we really needed him to do was rebound. That's what all our guards did today. We sacrificed our bodies, and it was a great team win.

Q. I don't know how much you get to see other teams in the tournament like this, but just thoughts on the matchup with Oregon.

COACH OLLIE: They've got a good team. They haven't been playing well of lately. Getting Brooks back, getting their main scorer. They made big tough shots down the stretch. Pritchard is coming in doing a good job. Vincent is doing a good job running their team. They've got Tyler Dorsey. They've got a lot of great guys.

We've got to come in, focus on the game plan. Our coaching staff is going to put a great plan for our team, and we've got to go out and execute. We made shots today. As a team, you give up 14 threes, that's a disaster, and sometimes that's a chance for a team like that to win the game.

But I thought our guys just hung together. We played tough. We made shots. We shot 61 percent. So I was very happy with that. I was very happy with our ball movement and our body movement. I thought that was crucial for our game.

Scored points like we've been doing the last two games when we struggled the first three games. It's a great sign for us, and our offense will keep moving forward.

Q. Coach, you were here a few years back when Kemba had that big run. You're familiar with this tournament. What was it like matching up with Chaminade, a team that has a lot of mystique, a history of knocking off teams here.

COACH OLLIE: They did a great job. I think three of their players started as freshmen. They've been through the wars together. They gave us their best punch. I just told the guys to leave the court with our knuckles bloody too. That means we're throwing punch after punch after punch, and I thought that's what we did. That's when we finally got them on the ropes, and we kept them there at the end of the game.

Q. Coach, with the bench short and two guys out, what were you looking to do in terms of who you were going to play and who you were looking to step up in the game when it started?

COACH OLLIE: We just got eight players. We got five starters. Everybody hands on deck and come in the game and have energy, play with effort, and keep believing. That's my motto. You know. You've been around me for a long time. I'm not going to give in. I'm not going to quit. I'm not going to let those guys quit whether we have five guys and we have walk-ons.

We're going to play with toughness, UConn basketball. I thought we started trusting each other better these last three halves. We're getting assists and not turning

the ball over. The offense seems like it's running better, people kind of understanding their shots. We've just got to cut down on opponents shooting the three ball like that, but this team kind of spread us out. It was a tough matchup for our bigs, but we adjusted at halftime and kind of cut them down to five threes instead of nine, and I think that was a big part of our victory.

Q. Coach, can you talk about the way Rodney bounced back after going down hard there in the corner.

COACH OLLIE: Yeah. I guess that woke him up a little bit. I don't know who hit him, but appreciate him. Woke him up a little bit, and he started making some threes. Designed a play at a time-out for him, one of his favorite plays, and you know we haven't ran it the whole tournament. So we tried to save that, and he came off that thing and squared his body up and knocked it down. I think that got him rolling a little bit.

Q. What did Rodney injure when he went down? Also, can you update us at all on Terry and Alterique and what their status is?

COACH OLLIE: Them guys are still out. Alterique is still in the decision-making process. We looked over the MRI. We're going to have him consult with his mother, with his parents, what he wants to do with his future. He's going to be a big part of the decision. We're not putting pressure on him either way. It's his decision.

Terry gets an MRI right now, and we'll find out his status. And I don't know what Rodney did, but he came back in the game. I don't think he's out for any certainty right now.