

# Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

## Roy Williams

## Joel Berry, II

## Justin Jackson

North Carolina Tar Heels

North Carolina - 107, Oklahoma State - 75

THE MODERATOR: Let's start with an opening statement from you.

COACH WILLIAMS: We feel really good. That's the best way to put it. But I told Brad this and I believe it -- we gave our team a very honest evaluation of their team. I was really impressed with their team yesterday. I was really impressed watching them on tape.

They played at an energy level much, much higher than anybody we've played this year, and they made us play with an energy level much higher than we've played at any other time this year.

I think that they got our focus. That's encouraging to me to see how we can do when we really focus and play at that same energy level. But I will say it again. Oklahoma State was so good, we felt like we had to play extremely hard and extremely intelligent and really well to have a chance. And we did for the most part did that all night.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the players.

**Q. This is for both of you guys, at times sometimes during the early season it was difficult to raise the energy level to the desired level. Why was that not a problem tonight?**

JOEL BERRY II: I think it's because our coaches did a great job of, like Coach said at pregame, they weren't trying to scare us. They were just trying to get us prepared for what's to come. And we knew that they were going to come out and try to hit us first. And so we had to hit them first. And I think we did a good job of doing that.

We were diving on the floor. We were getting after it. We were taking them out of what they wanted to do. And I think that was something that we wanted to do.

And so we did a great job preparing and getting our minds right for what was to come.



JUSTIN JACKSON: Yeah, I'll echo exactly what Joel and Coach said. We knew they would come out and play extremely hard. They were averaging, I think, they said, what, 103-4 points coming into the game. So we knew we had two guys, Jawun and Phil that we really had to key in on. But everybody had to come and play as well. So I think everybody picked up their game. We could tell even on the bus ride over here that everybody was ready.

COACH WILLIAMS: Let's be honest, I think Phil had some cramps. That was a problem for him out there tonight. Jawun was really good, but it hurt them with Phil not being able to play the way he normally plays.

**Q. Justin, you seemed to be consistently attacking the rim. I know you talked about in the offseason that was a focus for you. Was tonight the fruit of those efforts?**

JUSTIN JACKSON: I guess, if that's what you want to call them. They were just open lanes, and I took advantage of them. You can call it whatever you want to call it. But they were just open lanes and I just took advantage of them.

**Q. Don't quote me on this, but I think this is, like, the first time you guys have scored 100 points consecutively since 2011. Do you all think that you're clicking on all cylinders right now, and what do you need to do tomorrow to beat a very good Wisconsin team?**

COACH WILLIAMS: Want me to answer that or the players? Or all of us? You know, I love scoring a lot of points, but more importantly I like shooting a really good percentage. And the team you're playing has a great deal to do with how many you score because they need to play at a fast pace. And needless to say, Oklahoma State wanted to play at a fast pace, too. I didn't realize that, that we hadn't scored 100 twice in a row since 2011. But we won a heck of a lot of basketball games since 2011. So it's not only our focus but our focus is to get good shots.

And last year we had Marcus and Brice, our two best players and they're gone. And Joel and Justin, I challenge them over every press conference, every radio and TV interview, I said it sort of remains to be seen, can they do it when the defense is aimed at them? And I think they're showing they can do it so far.

But we don't ever talk about getting 100 or anything like that.

**Q. Would you consider yourselves to be clicking on all cylinders?**

JUSTIN JACKSON: You know, clicking on all cylinders, that's a scary term because it's only the sixth game of the season. So to look down here and see, I guess, six people in double figures, you know, that's pretty crazy against a really good team. So I think we can still get a whole lot better. I know Coach thinks the same exact thing. But I think right now we're playing really well, but we've got to continue this into tomorrow because we've got a really good team again tomorrow.

**Q. Can you both talk about what a win here, a title here tomorrow if it comes would mean this early in the season for your guys' development?**

JOEL BERRY II: I think it would mean a lot to us. Just like they said, we can get better especially on the defensive end, and I think tonight we did a great job. And I know the first couple of -- the first five games, they were mediocre games. But tonight I think we showed that we have the team to be able to compete with high caliber teams.

So going into tomorrow, I think that we'll be ready and if we come out with a win, I think it will be great for us, and down the road just to show that we can play against top teams.

JUSTIN JACKSON: Yeah, it would be great. For us, Wisconsin knocked us out two years ago. So, of course, the title would be great. But right now we're trying to just focus in on Wisconsin. We know they're a really good team. So we've got to focus in on them. But obviously a title would be great.

COACH WILLIAMS: You know, you think about it, too, I've been around it a long time. I remember sitting at a tournament, end-of-season conference tournament one time, and we beat somebody by 41. They said, God, isn't this great playing at the top of your game; we got our butts beat the next day. It's basketball.

Villanova beat Oklahoma by 30 or 40 last year, and Villanova lost to Oklahoma by 20-something earlier in the season. It's still so early. I like the way we played. There's no question. And I love -- I think the more you win, the more you win. It's like putting, the more you make, the more you make. So I'd love to win.

**Q. Joel, with six guys scoring in six figures tonight, five are averaging double figures on the season, how does that balance help open things up for you?**

JOEL BERRY II: Just being at the top of the scouting report going into each game, I think me and Justin, that will be something familiar with us. And so seeing that we have six guys scoring in double figures, they just can't key in on us. They have to be ready for everybody else. That just opened up more opportunities for us.

We're just out there playing. We're out there, like Coach said, get lost in the game. I think me and Justin did a great job of that tonight on the defensive end and offensive end. If we continue to do that that will just help us out a lot.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

COACH WILLIAMS: Make sure everybody understands Justin was 7-for-7 from the foul line tonight, but his little brother was 10-for-10 during one of the breaks.

**Q. You talked in recent years about trying to get these guys tougher and to play with more energy and effort, and the first half they were diving all over the place, that kind of thing. Does that come more naturally to this group or is that a result of you harping on it for so long?**

COACH WILLIAMS: I think it's a little bit of both. But I was ticked about the first eight or ten minutes because they got every loose ball, every loose ball. And every offensive rebound, it was a 50/50 ball. We got after them a bit. And Justin dove on the floor one time. Tony dove on the floor one time.

After that I thought we're really into it. But at one point we outrebounded them 44 to 32, but at one time they had seven more rebounds than we did on the offensive boards. It ended up at half three more rebounds, I think.

Again, the more you do it the more it becomes infectious, but if we didn't come in with that kind of attitude against a team that plays like Oklahoma State, we would not have been successful.

I was really impressed with Brad's team. I go way back, some of the greatest games I ever coached in, was Kansas against Oklahoma State when Eddie Sutton was there. And Eddie Sutton played for Mr. Iba. Brad's college coach was Jack Hartman, who played for Mr. Iba.

I used to say they were all hand-to-hand combat. Nobody had any guns or knives or anything like that. It was just hand-to-hand combat, and it was a viciously intense game. And that's what I saw coming out of Oklahoma State. The problem was Phil wasn't full of speed, and we started the game really well. And

basically they made the three right before the half to cut it to 13.

But it was 16 and then we scored the first four points the second half and it opened it up because we started making a lot of shots.

**Q. I asked Justin about his style of play tonight. Have you seen him in practice playing a little more aggressive and attacking the rim more?**

COACH WILLIAMS: It's one of the biggest things in the offseason. I wanted him to get to the free throw line more and not just be classified as just a shooter. And I think he did that. Opened the second half, I think he's the one that made the first two baskets of the second half.

When you have a big league like that at halftime and come out and score early, then it really makes it hard for them. I think they scored eight in a row at one spot and gave us something to be concerned about. But other than that time period, I think we were aggressive the whole game, but Justin particularly.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.