

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 21, 2017

Mike Brey

T.J. Gibbs

Notre Dame Fighting Irish

Notre Dame - 92, LSU - 53

THE MODERATOR: We now welcome Notre Dame to the media room, Coach Brey and T.J. Gibbs. Coach, give us your opening thoughts on tonight's game.

MIKE BREY: I wish I could bottle that up the rest of the season. Thought we really played well on both ends of the floor. Our experience, I think, showed. I'm just thrilled with our defense. They score 90, and they shoot 58 percent last night. We hold them to 36 percent. They had 17 turnovers. Again, I think the difference with our group is how we're playing defense.

Q. T.J., you guys jumped on them early. What was going so well for you guys offensively?

T.J. GIBBS: I think we just really slowed down, and we were playing within ourselves. We were leaning on each other early. We were just seeing the open man and making the extra pass, which was really big for us. We just did what we usually do.

Q. When did you start feeling like, hey, I'm pretty hot tonight? Did that start early for you? When did you say, hey, tonight could be my night?

T.J. GIBBS: I don't think it was really that type of feeling. I think it was more so trusting my teammates. They were doing all the work. I just happened to hit the easy shots that they were giving me. That's not something that I can really say.

Q. How much would a Maui Invitational title mean tomorrow?

T.J. GIBBS: Oh, it would mean a lot. It really would be a momentum push for us leading into the rest of the season and ACC play, and another two tournaments that we're looking to win. I think it would mean a lot to us.

Q. Getting more into the defense, why were you so effective? What were you doing so well?

MIKE BREY: I think it's the makeup of this group. In our first practices this summer, this group was better defensively, especially with a Pflueger and a Gibbs on the floor, with what we have out there. And they, you know, want to be a defensive unit. I don't have to sell it or put a whip on them to do it. They talk about



defending, so there is an identity. But we do have some quick hands and we get a lot of deflections, and that gets us some easy buckets in transition.

Q. You were in the title game here in 2008. What's going to be the difference tomorrow night?

MIKE BREY: I told our guys when we practiced in here on Saturday, with what our program has done and what it's thought of nationally, we should have our name up on that wall. We've talked about that. And I think Mattie and Bonzie have really talked about that. We play a heck of a team in Wichita State. I think it's a great match-up. They're really good. We're excited that we get to play for a trophy.

Q. What have you seen from Wichita State?

MIKE BREY: There's a toughness about them. I think, like us, there is a unit of guys that belong together and expect to win and play with great edge and intensity. I think you've got two really hard-playing, competing, older groups that know who they are. I think it's a fabulous match-up early in the season. And it's the one Dave Odom wanted.