



Pitt Men's Basketball Quotes

Pitt vs. Louisville • Tuesday, December 22, 2020

Petersen Events Center • Pittsburgh, Pa.



Pitt Associate Head Coach Tim O'Toole

Opening statement:

"Good evening guys, we are obviously very disappointed. I don't think we played well. Louisville did a number of good things that hurt us, and one of those things was the backboard which knew about. A lot of that was physically tough to see, and we had to get to rebound but it wasn't there. The reality was we knew this and we needed to be tougher and more physical, that is something we have to keep addressing. We've been pretty good up until tonight and it's disappointing because in my opinion that we played well and to Louisville credit they probably took us out of some of the things we wanted to do. One of the bright spots was Femi because he came in the first half when Xavier [Johnson] got in foul trouble and he gave him a lift. One of the things we knew coming into the game was a lift. Xavier [Johnson] and Nike [Sibande] really had a big night, but obviously Louisville knew that too so they weren't going to let that happen. However, when Femi [Odukale] came in it gave us a huge lift and it was a tremendous thing for us especially going forward because you get productivity out of the young guys. This was another Welcome to the ACC especially for the freshman because it's the news guys that are the next guy up. It doesn't get any easier and so there's a lot to learn and we're going to move forwards and we're excited to get back."

On injuries:

"This is when you learn and always get to take adversity and turn it into an opportunity. That's what we try to do. Both of those guys got hurt on Sunday practice. Then we found out yesterday that they were both not going to play. Then the reality is when we come back after Christmas it just gets hard. That is the one thing for young guys. Louisville is young, but we need to come out and be ready and fight like heck no matter what, but we didn't sustain over the course of the game, and that's something we are going to have to keep working on."

On overcoming current adversity:

"I think we put a lot of stock into it because the reality is third part of the culture is what Jeff is trying to build here. We have been sticking to four major pillars to build this program. We appreciate what we have, especially during the holiday and the opportunities that we have and restore the pride in our city. Number two, we're gonna keep our promises. We're going to build this into a national power house and we're not there yet but that's the goal. We have to show up, which we did today but we were in and out of it, but lastly going back to your question about the game. We will make no excuses. This part you have to be resilient and the word I use especially when thinking of this city is the word gritty. There is a toughness but passion and perseverance combined. It is acknowledged that you can be tough, but grit, you're successful, and that's what kind of hurt me. We weren't good enough to win, and you'll look at this which makes our young guys have a natural tendency to feel sorry for themselves. There's absolutely zero feeling sorry for yourself. These things that we did, we need to correct because what awaits us is Duke. Then after that is Norte Dame and then it is Florida State. It doesn't matter because it does not get easier, and this is a mindset that you have to have. You better be unbelievably tough because that is what this league requires us to the city and the university. So, we are going to have to look through this and find some ways to get better."

Freshman Guard Femi Odukale

On getting in the game and getting in the flow offensively:

"I'm pretty normal to it. My coach TO [Tim O'Toole] told me that he has a lot of confidence in me, so I didn't really pay attention to the sidelines. I knew that I was comfortable with the shots that I was taking."

On what the mood of the team was after finding out about Justin [Champagnie] and Au'Diese [Toney]:

"We were kind of depressed because those are two big players and on top of that, they're like our brothers, so we were torn that half of their season's cut due to injury, but after that we can't sulk. Everybody's got to step up now."

On how tough it is to prepare for a game when two guys are out on short notice:

"That was pretty hard because we've kind of used Justin's rebounding and practicing, Au'Diese's shooting. We all know how to play so we try to like put it all together, crash together, and tonight we did what we usually do."

On what the team does to try and not get off to a slow start:

"We try to start on a defensive end. Defense leads to offense, so we just preach that have everybody gap up so that it can lead to our offense. Just have energy and by supporting each other."

On the situations where he is running point with Xavier Johnson:

"The situations don't really matter, but when me and X are in the game, I feel like we click because off the court, we always talk to each other, play games with each other. So, off the court, I'm just happy to play with him because I know what he can do and he knows what I can do."



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Louisville head coach Chris Mack

Opening Statement:

"Obviously, Pittsburgh's depleted and having their major factor guys being out. We prepared for them to be in there. We knew that it was going to be a hard game to win on the glass. Sure, it's a big blow for Coach Capel and his team but I thought they fought throughout the game. The biggest undoing that we had was just our turnovers. By and large, we've been a pretty decent team. I thought that David [Johnson] and Sam [Williamson] in particular were guys that have to do a better job of taking care of the ball as they become sophomores. We got to expect a little bit more of their assuredness with the ball, but anytime you can win on the road in front of zero people, you got to feel good about it."

On what happened late in the first half that allowed Pitt back into the game:

"Well, I really think that we became just casual, a little soft with the ball at times. At halftime, Pitt had 28 points and 13 out of those 28 were off our turnovers. So to think that 'Hey, they've got 15 points they generated in the half court,' and if we don't give them the ball or drive it in there and lose it, then maybe we go into halftime with much greater lead. Younger guys, being more staples of our team now, they have to become more responsible with the ball, with their decision making and being less casual with the ball. Pittsburgh knocked us back, give them credit, they turned us over and now it's a new game at halftime. I was really proud of our team's response but I think that's where it started because we did do a great job on the glass. We were getting second and third shots and we just have to be able to handle the ball better than we did there, especially in the first half and even times down the stretch here in the second."

On if he is proud of how Johnson and Williamson stepped up in the game:

"I was. They're hard to block out at their position. With David, not too many two guards in the country are going to rebound with the ability that he has. He's got long arms, he's got great timing and he's strong. He certainly gets up off the floor and we train him to go both offensively and defensively to the glass. Sam, I thought, played with a really good nose for the ball and we needed that. I think coming into the game, the mindset was, 'We got to keep guys like [Au'Diese] Tony and [Justin] Champagnie off the glass. They've got younger guys now when those two go out, but nevertheless, we did the job on the glass.'"

On if Carlik Jones' minutes were managed throughout the game:

"He got very winded. He didn't practice for what 9 or 10 days. He wasn't at practice and then we have a return to play where even on day eight, he's not necessarily allowed to practice for two hours. He's on a bike for 20 minutes, he's on stair climber, so he's a gutsy player. He wanted to play but we had to make sure that if it was a very tight game down the stretch, his tongue wasn't on the floor, turning the ball over and not being able to defend because of his fatigue."