

# Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Wednesday, November 27, 2019

## Bill Self

## Devon Dotson

## Udoka Azubuike

Kansas Jayhawks

Kansas - 90, Dayton - 84

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from coach.

BILL SELF: Well I don't know how people felt, maybe not the most artistic at times. That was a great basketball game. Two good teams competing against each other and in a terrific atmosphere. Proud to be a part of it and certainly very fortunate that we came out on top. But that was a lot of fun and it was probably the least control I can remember having from the sideline because it's so loud. And our place is loud, our place isn't any louder than that because you have space in our place. There's no space in this one. And so I thought our guys competed and of course, these two were absolutely terrific.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks coach. We'll open it up for questions for the players.

**Q. Udoka, can you talk about the battle inside there with Obi? All game long, it seemed like back and forth. It seemed really fun.**

UDOKA AZUBUIKE: Well, Obi is a great player. He was really good down the stretch for their team. It was a battle between me and him. I mean, he was really good. I mean, they tried to play inside out with him. And then when he got the ball he tried to make plays for his teammates. And also my teammates trusted me enough to give me the ball and I did the same.

**Q. Your third game in three days and you played all 45 minutes. You still had the burst at the end, you were kind of turning the corner on the pick-and-roll and beating them to the rim. Do you just forget about the exhaustion out there or how is it at the end of a game like that?**

DEVON DOTSON: Yeah, at that point you just got to tough it out. I mean, I really didn't feel it. I think I could have played a little bit longer. But with that much intensity and that much adrenaline going, you don't really feel tired. Your whole focus is to try to win that game. I'm proud of the guys. Every one of them stepped up and so I'm happy.



**Q. When you came back you talked about not winning the trophy last year. You've got one sitting right next to you now. Doesn't look like you're letting it go.**

DEVON DOTSON: I'm not. I mean, this is the start of it. Yeah, the first of many. I mean, so we're not satisfied. Looking to, we're going to enjoy this one, though, but we're looking to get back to work.

**Q. I also wondered what you thought of Dok's start to OT? Not just inside but he knocks in free throws. We're always on him about that, but got to talk about them when they go in?**

DEVON DOTSON: Dominant, man. I mean, they threw that one at him and you know the result when they do that. So he's the most dominant big in the country and he imposed his will today, knocked down some clutch free throws. He played awesome.

**Q. For Devon: The way that you were attacking and getting your offense, and then also with Udoka when you think of the two-man game and things like that and the perimeter and the inside, was this today maybe the finest example you've seen of kind of the height of your potential of you two playing together?**

DEVON DOTSON: Yeah, right. I mean, when he has it going and the attention is on him that opens up for other players. So it's just kind of a 1-2 punch. We read the defense, take what's given to us. We know that if we can get the ball down low, we're going to go there every time. We know if they're doubling, we got to look for some other things. So my job is to put pressure on the defense to make plays for others and myself and try to get the win.

**Q. Who is going to keep that trophy?**

UDOKA AZUBUIKE: I'm keeping it. (Laughing).

DEVON DOTSON: Those guys. (Laughing).

THE MODERATOR: We'll let the two of you get back to your team. Thank you. Congratulations. Open it up for questions for coach.

**Q. At a time when folks are talking about position-less basketball and, like, yesterday you were**

**talking about it felt like a Big-10 game. You went Patric Ewing today. You go low to the big guy and he delivers. Talk about his development and what that meant offensively in terms of helping you.**

BILL SELF: Well, he gets more touches when we play four guards around him as opposed to another big just because the floor's spaced a little bit. But he's a, he wouldn't be here if he hadn't been hurt two of the last three years and only play -- he's only played a year and a half going into this year and he's a senior. So he hasn't caught many breaks health-wise. But he has developed and he's worked really hard on his touch and his free throws, and even the ones he missed actually looked good tonight. So I'm proud of him for a lot of reasons. But the biggest thing is just I thought both teams competed and my guys really competed when we really didn't play very smart in some certain areas. But we made up for it by trying really hard and I got to be very happy about that.

**Q. You mentioned having the least control from the sideline, yet in overtime I think you went perfect from the field, like 5-5. You did execute in the half court. What do you chalk that up to and what did you think of their kind of their poise in key moments?**

BILL SELF: I did. We actually, I thought they were better than us for about the first 32 minutes or 33 minutes, even though we maybe had a lead in there. I thought we were on our heels and they had five guys that could stretch it. But the last eight minutes or so when we got down eight, I thought except for a couple of bone-headed type plays, I thought we played probably the best ball we played in a while. I thought we got the ball where it needed to go. I thought we exercised some patience offensively and we got the big guy post touches which we hadn't been great at doing. And defensively I thought we guarded well and rebounded well down the stretch. So I couldn't be happier with how we performed. Not very often does a team outscore you 36 points from three and you outscore them by six from the free-throw line. That's a 30-point differential and you still have a chance to win. So we need to, obviously, shoot it better and be better beyond the arc. But I guess old fashion ball, throw it inside, prevailed today.

**Q. How big was the zone you threw at them today?**

BILL SELF: Well, we went zone and then we forgot we were in zone, like, the next three possessions, and two guys were in zone and three were in man and I think it totally maybe screwed them up or something. But it wasn't great. They scored six straight points on, against it, to go up eight, if I'm not mistaken. And then we started switching ball screens, which we should have been. That's my fault, we should have been doing that the whole game. After they made their first four or

five threes to start the game, we should have been probably doing that. And that had as much to do with us winning the game as anything is was just switching ball screens the last 15 minutes or so.

**Q. You talked about getting the ball where you wanted to go. How much did Marcus contribute to doing that?**

BILL SELF: Well we're so much better with him on the court. That was a big loss. For us to be down, what were we down? One at halftime? And Marcus only played, what, nine minutes or whatever it was. That's a big deal for us. Because if you can't play Marcus, then Ochai and Devon can't get a break, because you need two of those three in the game all the time. So I thought the second half, I would have to watch the tape and I'm not nitpicking or anything because that was a great crew on the game, but he got a couple that I thought maybe, maybe that was all ball and he went to the bench. And but we kind of piece it together until he was back in there and then after he was back in there we were, obviously, a much better team.

**Q. You won this thing in 2015. You made it to the Elite 8, if I'm getting it right here looking at your schedule. What does winning this tournament do for you guys going forward?**

BILL SELF: I don't know. I don't think, I don't know if it helped us a ton last time, because we lost it in '11 and went to the National Championship game here. So, but I think what the tournament does more than anything it exposes your weaknesses and allows you to prepare and get better for really big boy games. Because we that was a big boy game. And so the tournament is tremendous. And, of course, if you win two games, just like Dayton feels, I'm sure you're going to play a third, you might as well win it. So we would much rather win it than not win it. But I'm not sure the win will have a ton to do with what we do going forward. It's still November and I would like to think that that automatically puts us in a very good or favorable position. But if you don't play well against Colorado, who is a Top-20 team, next Saturday, then this probably didn't mean as much. So hopefully it's just a springboard for enthusiasm and energy to excite our guys that we got a chance to be good if we just continue to get better.

**Q. You can see in Devon's face the excitement he has just winning this tournament. There was a lot of chatter kind of going into this season about what was going to go on with KU. Is there a message you kind of have to those doubters and detractors and those haters that were coming into this, to kind of answer the bell and get a win?**

BILL SELF: I think there's a -- I could be wrong because I'm not a big social media guy and I don't read what's out there -- but I don't think there's been haters

about this team. I think there's been some haters about maybe our program, because we have been under a microscope or under some scrutiny, obviously, the last 18 months or so. So, but that doesn't have anything to do with this particular group and we don't even talk -- I'll be honest, we don't even talk about that with our guys. We talk about it amongst ourselves all the time, but not with our guys. And we try to distance from that as much as possible. But this team isn't perfect and obviously we got to shoot it better to have a chance to really have a really good team. But I do think we got some competitive pieces that, if we improve a little bit, this could be a pretty dangerous team down the stretch.

**Q. Curious, is that the best that you've seen Devon and Udoka play on the same day at the same time?**

BILL SELF: Yeah, yeah, I would say so. I don't have all the stats, but they both got their career highs tonight, didn't they? So, yeah, I would say that's the best. I was excited. You look at different things, Dok didn't turn the ball over. And so he was patient on the post, he didn't dribble as much, so there were some positive things that he did that was very good. And Dot, I don't know how he has the energy to play that fast. He's a welcome addition too. But that's the best 1-2 punch we have seen maybe with anybody in awhile in our program.