

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 26, 2019

Bill Self

David McCormack

Udoka Azubuike

Kansas Jayhawks

Kansas - 71, BYU - 56

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

BILL SELF: Well that was a hard team to guard. And early in the game they had us on our heels the first 10 minutes. I really, I told our guys after about the 10-minute mark I don't know if I can remember us locking in and being any better defensively until about the probably 8-minute mark of the second half. That was good, because we didn't make shots and we weren't great offensively, but we still were able to kind of stretch the lead.

So it was a hard game and, of course, it sets up a harder game tomorrow. But that was, from a coaching standpoint, that was fun for me to watch from a defensive standpoint.

THE MODERATOR: Take questions for the players, please.

Q. You guys both got to be back out there and start playing in about 18 hours. How tough is that?

DAVID MCCORMACK: It's definitely tough. It's tough on my body, but I think it's more of a mental thing. As long as we lock in, we know what we have to do. So just making sure we get a good rest and recovery and pay attention to the scouting for tomorrow, we should be good.

UDOKA AZUBUIKE: Just pretty much what Dave said, like, just having a good night's rest, staying off our feet, and that's about it.

Q. David, what was the key to outscoring them by so much in the paint?

DAVID MCCORMACK: Just using our size. As you can see, we have two bigs right here, and just playing to our advantage and playing the height and athleticism. So that's what we did.

Q. Udoka, second game in a row pretty strong second half. Anything similar about tonight from



last night? Your focus or anything like that?

UDOKA AZUBUIKE: Not really. It's about just trying to play my game and just trying to help my team win. And no matter whichever half, in the first half it was a little rough but in the second half we all got it together and we played as a team.

Q. Dok, could you describe the steal and dunk? And David, did that spark the team and how, was that one of the best plays you've seen?

UDOKA AZUBUIKE: Yeah, I think I got the steal and then I thought the ref was going to call a foul or something. But he didn't call the foul so I just took the ball. We work, every day in practice we work on dribbling the ball and all that stuff, so that kind of helped me a little bit. And I just saw the front of the rim and I just dunked it.

DAVID MCCORMACK: I would say anytime we see Dok go coast to coast and dunk it, that's definitely going to spark our team.

BILL SELF: Anytime? That's the first time.

DAVID MCCORMACK: But, yeah, definitely it was definitely a kickstarter for our team. We just got energized behind him and we just started playing with a lot more energy after that happened.

Q. What did you guys think of your defense tonight, start to finish? Both of you, if you would.

UDOKA AZUBUIKE: I think that we played really good defense today. I'm proud of my team and my teammates and everybody. We really locked in today and played outstanding defense. We listened to Coach's instructions and took care of the ball. And so we got to do a better job off the rim, but other than that, I think we did a solid job on the defensive end.

DAVID MCCORMACK: I definitely thought that we did a great job defensively as well. Like Coach said, I think we just got hit in the mouth first at the start of the game and then we realized what we need to do. We need to hone in and just really defend and stick to our principles and that's what we did. And that's how we forced those turnovers and got steals and things like that to translate into our offensive game.

Q. What was the emphasis in tonight's game

defensively?

DAVID MCCORMACK: I would say sticking to the scout and just doing what we need to do. Making all the hustle plays on the floor, getting our hands on deflections. It's just those little things are what caused bigger plays to happen which kickstarts energy and things like that.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll let you two get back to your team. We'll open it up for questions for coach.

Q. I want to continue down here. It felt like you were really pushing them out of their offense and not really allowing them to have as much free movement as they had in the previous game. How were you able to kind of contain that group that can really handle it?

BILL SELF: Well I think that we're pretty athletic on the perimeter and we wanted to play to our athletic ability. And we thought it was really important against them to pressure the ball, and then maybe not deny as much just because they back cut so much. But I think we got beat on one back cut. That was in the second half, that I can remember. So I thought the guys did a good job of in a short amount of time of kind of knowing what their end game was offensively. But they run a lot of great stuff. Mark's terrific. And getting ball and body movement. But I did, I thought our switches were better and I thought our ball screen defense was much better.

Q. Over the first two days, what are one or two things you learned about your team that you didn't have before you came on this trip?

BILL SELF: I thought today was one of those games that reminded me of a Big-10 game in that it was a grind it out, bad, no offensive flow, really for both teams, and you just trying to steal some extra possessions and don't give up any easy baskets. And a ton of Big-10 games when I was in the league, and I assume it's similar, were like that. The game was played fast enough that you could think both teams could score 80 or 90 to start. And then you look at the score at halftime and it's 29-27. So it's one of those games where you don't play great and you look up and you're still ahead. And that was, obviously, very positive for us and that's how you win games consistently is defend and rebound and take care of the ball.

Q. Along those same lines: Ochai, he seemed to do all of that tonight --

BILL SELF: I thought he was better. He gave up our first seven points off of scouting report stuff. And I took him, I think I took him out pretty soon and pretty early and I got after him a little bit. But he responded. He's the best. He responded great. He was also our best post feeder in the second half too. So that's something that you guys have studied us, we have been on him to

become a better passer, so I thought he did a much better job second half.

Q. When there was about two and a half minutes left and Christian Braun got an alley-oop dunk and that, it just set off the crowd. Can you talk about that? It seemed like a play where it kind of put a caper on things.

BILL SELF: Yeah, it was after the game was probably decided, but anytime you have guys that can make athletic plays, we, obviously like everybody, we stress to make them. And we haven't been a very good lob-throwing team. We were a little bit better tonight and, certainly, I think it was Dot that gave him the pass. And Christian's a good athlete and hopefully that does something for his confidence to know that he can make a play in traffic like that. But that was a very nice play.

Q. I think Anthony Grant was on your staff for the USA basketball. Will that be fun to play him? And what was it like being with him all summer?

BILL SELF: Well it wasn't all summer, but we spent about three or three and a half weeks together. Anthony is one of the classiest guys in our business, unbelievable human being. And he's got a terrific team. And it will be a fun, competitive big-boy game tomorrow from a physicality standpoint. I really like his team and I know he does too and it should be a fun game. I mean, anytime -- Dave's been doing this for a long time, and any time you win two, you want to win the third. But the key to these three-game tournaments you got to go home with two. And so tomorrow I bet that both teams play a little bit more relaxed knowing that. Because when you play in a tournament like this and you lose in the semis and you got to flip it and play a third place game with somebody that's, you know, your equal or possibly better, I mean, that makes it hard. So I look for both teams to play very well tomorrow.

Q. Did you give any thought to changing up the lineup tonight?

BILL SELF: I thought about it, yeah. Yeah, I'm glad I didn't. The one thing that BYU had, they had, they could put a four man out there that could hurt us from the perimeter. But they also had a four man out there that was much smaller than David. So we didn't take advantage of it much the first half. But I think over the course of the game we did throw the ball inside a little bit more.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach.