Pac-12 Men's Basketball Tournament
Friday, March 15 2019

Tad Boyle
D'Shawn Schwartz
Tyler Bey
Colorado

Washington - 66, Colorado - 61

TAD BOYLE: You know, first off, Washington deserves credit. They played very well, especially defensively. I mean, 13 steals. Their defense gives a lot of people problems. And I just felt like we -- 18 turnovers.

The key to tonight's game was three things for us: number 1 is defend; number 2 is rebound; number 3 is take care of the ball.

We did two of those three things very well. We talk about defense and rebounding all the time. That was good enough tonight. What wasn't good enough is our offense. It started with turnovers, but we also had some really, really good looks, the second half, especially, that didn't go in.

And sometimes -- you don't want to oversimplify the game, but sometimes you have to make shots. And especially when they move around, they fly around. You get open looks, you've got to be able to knock them down. And we weren't able to do that in the second half. And you add that to the turnovers, and it was a rough night for us.

But I do not fault our guys' effort. I don't fault their toughness. I don't fault anything about them. I love this group. I love this team. Earlier in the year I questioned their toughness. I questioned them a little bit. But since January 31st, when we lost to Oregon State at home, these guys have come so far. And we've really grown as a team. I think our program has grown.

And the good news is every one of these guys in uniform tonight are coming back next year. And I hope and I pray that this is not the end of our season this year. I really would like to keep coaching these guys. These guys I think would like to keep playing together. And we'll find out our faith Sunday night when everything settles.

Hats off to Washington. And don't count the Buffs out this year. Don't count us out next year.

Q. I know that you don't like to say you were tired or anything like that. The second half, did some of those shots start falling because maybe you had some dead legs with seven guys out there?

TAD BOYLE: I don't know. I think the players could probably answer that. Again, good looks. Didn't go in. I'm not going to blame it on fatigue. This guy, I mean, 22 points, 16 rebounds. And obviously Tyler hasn't played heavy minutes the first couple of games because of some foul trouble and things like that. But he was terrific. I knew he'd be fresh.

McKinley was the one guy that played really heavy, heavy minutes. And I can't tell you how good a defender he is. He did it again tonight on Jaylen Nowell, 14 points. But took him 15 shots to get him. He just -- he just is a really, really efficient defender. And he expended a lot of energy on the defensive end.

But our defense, our rebounding was really good this whole tournament. But tonight our offense and taking care of the ball wasn't good enough. I don't know if fatigue was a factor not. We're not certainly going to use that as an excuse. I thought we had enough juice in the tank to win tonight; we just didn't make enough shots and we turned the ball over too much.

Q. Kind of an unfortunate irony in the game, Tyler really gets it going, but kind of coming with the caveats of McKinley and Shane having off nights, just in general, how challenging did that make it to get any momentum going in the second half?

TAD BOYLE: One thing about our team is we're very well balanced. And we know - we've got a lot of guys, D'Shawn, Shane, Tyler, McKinley, everybody, Daylen really has grown up this tournament. I think Lucas hit a big three before half. So we've got enough firepower on this team to overcome one or two guys having off nights. But when you shoot 6 for 30 in the second half, it makes it really difficult and you turn the ball over as much as we did. The combination of those two things, you can handle not shooting the ball well. You can maybe -- we've even handled turning the ball over a lot. But when you put those two things together it's a lot to overcome, especially against a team like Washington. But you saw our guys, they fought, they clawed, they...
scratched, they tried to get back into this thing, we tried to lengthen the game the last minute and a half, two minutes, just came up a little short.

Q. Matisse is obviously a finalist, one of the top defensive players in the country, when he's locked in like he is tonight, what effect does he have on that end of the floor?
TAD BOYLE: Even in the first half he made some plays defensively, we're up at six at halftime. But they made a little run because of his defensive efforts. And he's -- you always have to know where he is on the floor. He can effect the game in a lot of different ways. He's a special, special defender, there's no doubt about that. I don't want to take anything away from him. And he was good tonight. Getting him out of the game, I wish we could have done it a little earlier. We tried to get the ball inside against that zone, it was a little difficult for us at times. We weren't able to knock enough shots down from the perimeter to kind of spread them out, which is what you have to do against Washington.

Q. Tyler, I know you would have preferred to win, but to finally have a good game here, obviously your hometown, we've talked about, feel good to have a performance like this for you personally going out of this tournament?
TYLER BEY: Yeah, today was good. I did play good. But we played good. Us losing, I still feel like we could have done better as a team. I don't really feel like -- I'm not really proud of myself because I didn't play as good as I wanted to this whole tournament. But I wanted to win today and that was the biggest game, I just wanted to win.

Q. How much do you want to keep this season going? How much would you like to keep playing?
D'SHAWN SCHWARTZ: I think something that's been kind of a staple of this team has been how much we love each other. I mean we say to each other every day, it's something special between these guys. And the more we can play together I think we'll be happy to do it because we all love each other and enjoy playing with each other on and off the court.

Q. Do you feel like you've done enough to earn a possible NIT bid come Sunday night?
TAD BOYLE: Yes, especially if you look at what this team has done since January 31st. In the month of February and certainly in the month of March we have grown by leaps and bounds. A lot of times you get judged by what you do in November or December. But especially with a young team you see the growth that these guys have made and there's 68 teams in the NCAA Tournament and 32 in the NIT. Top hundred, are we a top hundred team in the country, absolutely. No doubt in my mind now. Doesn't always work, because of the way the automatic bids work, but, yeah, I do think we've played enough.

And I'd just like to -- we talk about character all the time. And I'd just like to comment on Tyler. A true sign of a high character guy is a guy who is more happy for the team when they win and he doesn't play well than feeling good about himself when he does play well. He played his heart out tonight. And he's as down as anybody on our team, and that's a true sign of character.
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Mike Hopkins
Nahziah Carter
Matisse Thybulle
Washington

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MIKE HOPKINS: Well, you know, the first half, Colorado came out like they've been. They came out really aggressive defensively, offensively, and shot 47 percent from the field, 50. They went to the foul line.

You know, down 6, we just challenged these guys to play defense. When you’ve got the National Defensive Player of the Year, who he should win it, it changes things. And our guys battled. We played better defense, held them to 20 percent from the field, 12 from the 3 point line.

That’s why we win, has been our defense all season. And we're lucky, Colorado gave us a great fight. They've got a lot of heart. They've got a great coach. And they just kept coming at you and coming at you, and it's hard to do that when they were on the third day. Got to tip our hats to them. These guys were resilient enough to come out with a win.

MATISSE THYBULLE: I think some guys stepped up huge for us today. Jamal Bey brought us some energy, because we came out flat, and we need someone to be a spark to us. And he came out in a huge way. Nahz did what Nahz does, and he was able to exploit some matchups.

The guys stepping up in that way is huge for us, and every game it's someone different. And we know it's the next guy up. With this tournament, having played back-to-back days, guys are banged up and tired. We know we've got to have each other's backs.

NAHZIAH CARTER: I feel like I came in, gave a lot of energy. Offensively, but more defensively. We held them to five points for the majority of the second half. So I just like how much emphasis we put on the defensive end in the second half and how we came out at the start of the game down 8-0.

Q. You stayed for the entirety of the Colorado, Oregon State game yesterday. What mental notes did you take watching the Buffs play, and how did that help you in preparation taking on the Colorado players today?
MATISSE THYBULLE: Any basketball player knows how important it is to watch film, and to have a chance to be able to sit there and watch some play and see what guys are doing and seeing how they're able to attack Oregon State was -- I don't know, it’s helpful.

And going into a game, knowing guys' tendencies and things like that, I trusted couch's scout, but to see it live helps you even more.

Q. You might have alluded to this a little bit, but going into this, Colorado is a short rotation, they've played two games against your one this week. Was there a sense at all going into this you might be able to wear them down as the game went on?
MIKE HOPKINS: We wanted to keep the energy high. Like Matisse said earlier, we just tried to get guys in the game. We started a little bit slow, a little bit lethargic.

Jamal Bey, like he said, he came out and gave us toughness, played unbelievable defense.

Big thing in this game was transition defense and rebound. And he went right up, a couple, and got two huge rebounds, got us in transition, which was huge. But I think our depth today, we were able to wear them down. And I thought you saw that at the end.

Q. Going off the depth, a theme seems to be could be a different guy every night around here, and I think two guys stood out were Nahz and also Hameir on the defensive side, getting those four steals.
MIKE HOPKINS: It was incredible. I tell you, in the second half, I thought Hameir Wright changed the game on the defensive end in the post. They were trying to post up Tyler Bey and Battey, and those guys are big, physical guys.

Got a couple steals, we were aggressive, we made it a little more difficult for them to touch the ball. That was our adjustment. But Tisse [Matisse Thybulle] touched on it a little bit, we had five guys in double figures, and two other guys, one with 8 and one with 7.
That's a team. We had nine assists in the second half. That's a team. And that's how we're going to beat people, that's how we're going to go far, is by team. These guys did it. They shared, they cared, and they played for each other. And that's what it's all about, and that's why we won today.

Q. You guys opened the second half on a 25-5 run. What's the psychology of a run like that, how do you compound stops, and how does that build over time to build a lead in situations like that?
MATISSE THYBULLE: Something we struggled with is maintaining leads and being able to step on guys' throats when we get going. And I think it showed a little bit today, we weren't going to let up. A lot has to do with focus, focus and energy. And we know what's on the line at this point, and no one is willing to give that up. We knew we had to stay focused and locked in, and by doing that we were able to keep the energy consistent and stay on them.

Q. Over 50 free throw attempts in this game. Is it kind of hard to find offensive rhythm in a game like that?
MIKE HOPKINS: It was a big part in the second half. We saw a lot of threes in the first half. We still want to shoot threes because we've got really good shooters, but we wanted to put more of an emphasis on getting to the line. The second half we went to the line and we attacked. And the guy over there at the end, Nahz Carter, you know, he's hard to guard one-on-one, and he finds a way to get there. It's very, very difficult.
I think at the end of games when you're trying to make them take time off the clock and you don't want to give up threes and they're just trying to barrel into you and go to the foul line, you kind of kill the rhythm. But it's actually a good strategy, because they were the aggressor.
But like I said, the foul shots, I don't think it hurt us, I think it helped us in the second half. We made it an emphasis and the kids executed.

Q. You obviously knew what you were doing defensively, you could feel you were getting a lot of stops in the second half. They shot 20 percent from the field. Did it not feel like it was that low of percentage? When you hear that number, what are your thoughts?
MATISSE THYBULLE: In order to do things like that, you have to be so locked in that it's hard to focus on the numbers like that. When you're in the moment and you're playing that hard, you don't realize really what's going on, you're just reacting and hustling.
And I think that says a lot. I don't think Nahz realized it, I don't think any of the guys realized we were able to string together that many stops and hold them to low scoring. And it's all because we brought energy and stayed locked in. And when you stay locked in, none of that other stuff matters.