

Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gainbridge Fieldhouse

Oregon Ducks

Dana Altman

Jackson Shelstad

Kwame Evans Jr.

Postgame Press Conference



effort? What, if anything, helped just recently having played them?

JACKSON SHELSTAD: Defensively we really started to come together towards the end here. Ball screen, Nate's been giving us a really good effort, just affecting shots when guards get downhill. I feel like we're in the gaps more like weak side help and all that. I think that's kind of causing the team some problems.

Q. Jackson, they got within one or two points, maybe five, six times in the second half. What did you guys do to consistently kind of fend them off and keep them from ever really getting momentum?

JACKSON SHELSTAD: We knew they were going to go on their run. They had the crowd into it. We played in a lot of situations like that this season where games have come down to that towards the end of the game. We just know how to stick together towards the end and keep trusting our teammates and coaches to finish the game.

Q. Jackson, when you played Michigan State, looking ahead now you'll get them again, it was crazy, really two games in one. What did you learn from that, and how is your team better? These are the two hottest teams in the league.

JACKSON SHELSTAD: When we played Michigan State the first time, we played really hard the first half, we got a lead. Then the second half we kind of laid our foot off the gas, and they went on their run. We just know we have to play a full 40 minutes to compete with them.

They're going to play physical, play really hard, so we're just going to have to bring that same energy.

Q. Jackson, every time that they kind of got on a run, their crowd got into it. What is it like now to have to play silencer in what should be a neutral site game?

JACKSON SHELSTAD: We knew their crowd was going to be involved with it being here in Indiana. I feel like we play good on the road, and with crowds involved, we're kind of the away team. We just brought that energy and

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THE MODERATOR: Oregon is now with us. We'll begin with an opening statement by Coach Altman.

DANA ALTMAN: Hard-fought ballgame. Both teams really needed a win. I thought our ball movement was pretty good. I thought our offense looked good. I thought we took some quick shots that kind of took us out of rhythm.

Guys made a good effort. Jackson made some great individual moves. Nate was great on the defense, and six assists is great. So overall really good effort.

KJ's been giving us tremendous minutes. I thought he challenged a lot of shots today again. Was on the boards. Great effort again, seven rebounds.

I liked our togetherness, and we found a way to finish.

Q. KJ, Coach a couple weeks ago mentioned you were the X factor in this team with the eight-game win streak. How much does it mean to you to increase your activity that much?

KWAME EVANS JR: It's great to know I'm impacting the game at all levels. Coach is always saying we got to rebound and play defense, and that sticks to me because I've got to find a way to play out there.

I think me rebounding and playing defense and playing hard has really gotten the team going off the bench.

Q. Jackson, you guys played just these guys nine days ago and held them to 59 points and 36 percent shooting today. Can you talk about your defensive



stick together for the full 40 minutes.

Q. For either one of the players, Luke Goode played their second highest minutes for the Hoosiers today. No doubt he was a player you wanted to stop today especially from getting hot behind the arc?

KWAME EVANS JR: When we went over their scouting report, he was their top shooter. We've got to shut him down and not let him get going. If he got one, it was going to be a tough night. We had to stop him from getting any shots off and make it hard for him to get baskets.

Q. With this being a noon eastern time tip, 9:00 a.m. pacific time tip, I was wondering how much prep time you had in Indianapolis and how much that time zone shift factored into your preparation for this game?

DANA ALTMAN: None. We left Tuesday morning, got in and stretched the guys out, tried to get them loose. Got up yesterday, went and practiced at a high school and got ready to go.

This is our fifth cross-country trip this year, so our guys are used to it. The school's been great. We've got a great plane that gets us where we need to be. So we didn't change our prep in any way.

Q. Can you just talk about the offensive production you got from T.J. and Brandon tonight?

DANA ALTMAN: Brandon gave us a big lift that first half, had a couple threes and got to the rim. Then the second half, I thought TJ did a good job of getting to the basket and really taking his time, making some plays, nose to the goal, got to the free-throw line. Needed to hit a few more, but he got to the line.

Those two guys are old, and you expect your experienced guys to make plays, and those two guys did. I thought Nate showed great maturity. He scored 36 the other night, and you think, okay, he wants to come back. You wouldn't have known if he scored 30 tonight or 2. He just played. And 6 assists, 1 turnover, he just played.

Shows great maturity. When a guy gets 36 and 12 as a career game, and the next doesn't get the looks that he wants and the shots that he wants and just plays through it, that's a sign of a winner. I thought he played really good without scoring a lot.

Q. Dana, as you mentioned, this is your fifth trip east or to the central time zone. I think you're 5-3. You've been pretty successful most of these trips. How did you have to acclimate yourself, your team to these

types of trips, and then coming back home, which sometimes is even more difficult to play that single game after that? How much mentally tougher do you think this team is because it's had to face all those trips?

DANA ALTMAN: We talked about it before the season, and I told him we're not going to talk about it anymore. We didn't discuss it. We didn't talk about it one time. I said, I don't want to hear anybody making excuses. I said this after the Wisconsin game, we wanted to be in the Big Ten. You guys aren't moving. We're not moving Oregon. So we knew there were going to be trips.

Fortunately for us, like I said, our school's been great about making sure we can compete. So we try to get the guys up, try not to let them sleep the whole four-hour trip, tried to get them up so Tuesday night they'd get a reasonable amount of sleep and we'd get acclimated a little bit to the eastern time zone.

Other than that, we do not talk about it. No excuses. If we get there and we don't play well, it's just part of it.

The guys have handled it good. Probably harder on the old coaches than it is on them. They've done a great job.

Q. Ballo had five offensive rebounds, and so did the Ducks. What kind of went into that margin?

DANA ALTMAN: I thought Nathan was coming off the first half to help on drives, and then we had nobody cracking down on him. We talked about it at halftime, and he didn't play a lot the second half. He was given us problems with those offensive rebounds in the first half.

Again, Reneau was playing so good, he was giving us fits. He had 19 points on 15 shots. He did a great job. His offensive rebounds in the first half, I can remember two or three came on Nate going to help in penetration, and then the guard not cracking down on him to block him out.

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finding looks hard to come by? You shot only 36 percent from the field.

MALIK RENEAU: I don't think it was because we were getting open shots. We had plays at the basket. We missed a couple. I don't think it was not having the shot. We've just got to be able to have confidence and know we're going to put the ball on the rim every time we shoot the ball. I think that was the case there.

TREY GALLOWAY: They're a good defensive team, but I think just being able to finish around the rim, we had a lot of open, easy looks that we normally make, and we didn't.

Then 50 percent from the free-throw line, we didn't shoot the free throw well, same thing from 3. It's just being able to make shots and shoot them with confidence.

Q. Trey, it seemed like a lot of times in that second half, you guys had it down to one possession, kind of one or two points. What led to finally not being able to get over that, get through that, and take that lead in the second half?

TREY GALLOWAY: We were right in it. Multiple times we kept cutting the lead. But you've got to give them credit, they were able to make big time shots.

Like I said, the execution on defense, we just had some miscues that we can't have. Like I said, they made some tough ones. Just got to give them credit.

Q. Malik and Trey, I saw you beat the Big Ten champion on their court. Can you make the case to the selection committee why Indiana should get a bid to the NCAA Tournament?

MALIK RENEAU: I think we should be in the Tournament because we got some big solid wins not only against Michigan State, but we got Purdue at home, then we swept OSU too. I think we had some solid wins.

We also had some not bad losses, but we had some good losses where it came down to the wire and we just couldn't get over that hump. I feel like they give us a chance, we'll

Oregon - 72, Indiana - 59

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Indiana. We'll start with opening comments from Coach Woodson.

MIKE WOODSON: You've got to give Oregon and their group a lot of credit because they come all the way across country and they played great tonight.

It's a tough loss. I thought we competed in stretches, but we just couldn't finish it. They were the better team tonight, I thought.

Q. For Trey and Malik, one of the things you guys struggled with this year, scoring droughts that hit four minutes or so. What do you think were the issues when those droughts came in certain games?

TREY GALLOWAY: I would just say just not executing. There's a lot of times where even today there's just some missed execution opportunities that we have. So I've just got to be able to clean up on that, and that's the biggest thing.

MALIK RENEAU: I think when we go on our little scoring droughts, it's definitely just execution where you've got to go out there and execute the play at a high level. We failed to do that in a couple of spots, and they got steals, blocks, et cetera, and they came down court and was able to execute on their side. So we've got to be able to execute and defend on our side too.

Q. You had 59 points tonight, the Oregon guys mentioned, having played you guys last week, defensive preparation for them, they felt like they had a good handle on what you were doing. Were you guys

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try and make a run in the tournament and give it our all every time we step on the court.

TREY GALLOWAY: We know that we should be a tournament team. There's a lot of opportunity for that. I think just those crucial losses that we had that were just so tight, one-possession games.

The way we've been playing the last month and a half, we've been playing like a tournament team. I just think us just coming together and finding ways to get better. We haven't played our best basketball until now. So I think it's been good.

Q. Mike, same question. Can you make the case, a good case for why you guys belong in the NCAA Tournament?

MIKE WOODSON: I think we're playing some of our best basketball. This afternoon wasn't an indication of how we've been playing. We've been very competitive. Even in the games that we've lost -- I can go back to the Maryland game at home, the UCLA game, the Michigan game at home -- they were all competitive, one or two possession games.

We beat Purdue, had a shot to beat Purdue at their spot. So we've had a lot of close games that we just weren't able to make the play here or there.

But these last two weeks, I think we've been playing some pretty damn good basketball. Again, I've got to give Oregon a lot of credit because, again, they played well today.

Q. Mike, you give up 10 straight points in the loss to them just a week ago, and they went on a 10-0 run to end the first half and a 16-5 run to end the game. Is there any one thing you can pinpoint as to why those sort of stretches and droughts happen to you guys?

MIKE WOODSON: We've had them off and on in this seven, eight-game stretch, we haven't had -- our defense has been the one that has carried us. But you've got to give them credit. I thought right before the half, that was a big momentum builder for them.

Then we regroup, we came out after the half, and we were back in the ballgame. It's just the little things. We missed two front ends of a one-and-one, a two-possession game, those are huge. They come down, and they make us pay for it on both possessions.

I tip my hat to our guys because they have been competitive these last two, three weeks and has put us in

position to even be talking about a tournament bid.

Q. I guess to follow on that, whether it's talking about this game or talking about a lot of these close losses, how do you keep this team focused when they are kind of getting themselves to those moments and just not quite getting over the hump, whether it's a string of close losses you talked about or it's a game like this where you get a lot of shots at the rim, force a lot of turnovers, you just can't quite create enough off of those moments?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, they have been focused. We were dead in the water 2 1/2 weeks ago, so they have been focused. When you go 5 out of your last 7 games, and the Big Ten is no joke. We ended up winning 10 out of the 20 games. We expected more this season, but we didn't get it done.

Coming down this homestretch, this team hasn't quit. They've been very, very competitive.

Q. When you know you'll be done at the end of this season and you aren't quite sure what the selection committee is going to decide on Sunday, how does this weigh on you just not knowing what's next?

MIKE WOODSON: All I'm concerned about is the players. It's not really about me. It's been a good run since I've been here, and I'm just hoping that it's not over with yet.

But I'll spend time with our players until the selection committee makes a decision on what they're going to do. So I'll still be in Bloomington.

Q. Shooting percentages today not up to standard -- 36, 2, 25, and 50. Any idea why, and did you like the looks you were getting?

MIKE WOODSON: No, I thought they had a lot to do with it, although we missed a lot of chippies around the rim with Ballo and Malik. I thought that was a big difference.

Them not leaving Goode and Mack and giving you the looks that sometimes we've been accustomed to getting with those two guys, you got to make plays around the rim.

Again, a two-possession game, we missed two front ends of a one-and-one, that was huge. Getting back into it, I thought that was the big difference in the game because they made us pay both possessions back down the court offensively where we couldn't get the stop.

Q. How do you feel like -- this team was under a lot of pressure throughout the season, whether it's the

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pressure to win, the pressure to stop losing, however you want to put it, external pressures. How do you feel like this team handled it through the course of the season and as you may continue playing?

MIKE WOODSON: All basketball seasons are dealt with ups and downs. It's just a part of the sport. I've been doing this a long time, and I've seen it go all kinds of ways. I've seen it go in your favor sometimes, like we've had this season, ups and downs.

But when I look at how we've been competing the last 2 1/2, 3 weeks, I tip my hat to our guys because they could have thrown in the towel and they didn't. It hasn't been easy for them based on what we've gone through as a team, but I'm still pushing for the committee to see fit to put us in. If they do, we'll prepare and get ready for that.

Q. When the Oregon players were out, they said one of the things they looked at your stats and saw Luke Goode, no doubt a very good shooter percentage-wise and all that, and they definitely wanted to shut him down, which they were very successful at doing. Also your comment on Luke's play today and Anthony with eight rebounds out there for your senior guard.

MIKE WOODSON: I thought Anthony, he's been competing extremely well.

Goode, he just didn't get very many looks tonight. I wouldn't leave him either. The way they defended tonight and forced us to make plays inside, which I thought we got the ball inside and had opportunities, but we just came up short.

I didn't think Ballo and Malik played particularly well. They carried some of the load, but I just thought some of the chippy shots they missed around the rim were huge in a low-scoring game like this.

Q. Do you feel like you need to campaign for your team the next couple days to the committee?

MIKE WOODSON: I'm going to always campaign for my team. That's how much I love my team. Like I said earlier, we're playing some of our best basketball. I don't think that there's a team in the country that we can't beat if we come ready to play and compete for 40 minutes.

We've had a lot of dry spots this season, but here of late we've been playing some pretty good basketball. I don't think today's game is an indication of how we've been playing the last 2 1/2, 3 weeks.

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