

PAC-12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 10 2016

Sean Miller

Ryan Anderson

Allonzo Trier

Arizona

Arizona - 82, Colorado - 78

THE MODERATOR: Coach, some opening comments about the game?

COACH MILLER: First, I would like to congratulate Colorado on a terrific season. I know they're going to be a part of this year's NCAA Tournament. Their ability to rebound and score inside and Tad Boyle and his staff, to me they're some of college basketball's best.

They get the most out of their team this year, and they're a hard team to defeat because of their effort level and their togetherness and outstanding on the glass. They really are. They're the best rebounding team in our conference. They did to us -- I don't know if a team that I've been a part of have suffered that type of beating on the glass that we did, especially in the second half. That's to Colorado's credit.

Q. Sean, I want to jump ahead and talk Oregon. I know you've only played them once this year, it was down in Tucson. It's been a while since then. Is there anything you've seen in the way they've been playing down the stretch that you feel like you can adjust to them that gives you an edge against Oregon?

COACH MILLER: Not really. Allonzo did not play against them last time and he's available this time. But Oregon, they spread you out offensively and they have a very high skill level. They put their players in a position to be successful driving, shooting, seem to always be able to pick on the mismatch.

We had a very difficult time guarding them in Tucson, and I think a lot of teams that have played Oregon this year have fallen into that category. They're just an excellent offensive team. They're disciplined with the way they play, but they get you in transition. They're also an outstanding offensive rebounding team. They take care of the ball. They have great balance. On a given night, different players can beat you, but Dillon Brooks certainly always seems to be one of them.



Q. Ryan, you've been in conference tournaments before. What's it like and how reflective are you about the places you've been and how much are you just trying to take in the moment at this conference tournament?

RYAN ANDERSON: Yeah, I think at the end of everything, when everything's over this year, it will all kind of soak in on other places I've been and the moments I've shared with all my teammates and stuff.

But right now, as Coach Miller said, we're focused on tomorrow. We have a really tough test, a tough, really good Oregon team, so I am not really thinking too much about the whole grand scheme of things right now. I'm kind of focused on this next game tomorrow. It's going to be a tough one.

Q. How do you come out of this game feeling? First half you guys at times looked spectacular. I know you were frustrated with some of the changes that happened in the second half. What is your mood about this victory?

COACH MILLER: Well, I really was very excited about our team at halftime. Thought defense was as good as it's been all year. You could see we had a group that was committed and really played with tremendous energy. We decided to trap the post more. Thought it was effective. We were more effective on their ball screens than we were in Boulder. I thought that was effective.

But like everything, it's the players, their energy, shot blocks, guys really -- but they were 0-for-5 from the three-point line at the half, and a lot of that had to do with our defense. My message was very singular at halftime: This year in our best and worst moments, we've been a one-half team. We've sometimes not been very good in the first half, especially defensively, and we have a way of fighting and turning it around. You lose a hard-fought battle, and you leave feeling good because you know you can do it.

But it's really plagued us through 31 games. I mean, if you win 25, obviously a lot of good things have happened, but if you hold our team to the standards of the past at Arizona or you look at us as competing for this tournament's championship, we're not going to be able to advance and be the same team that we've

been.

I question our effort wholeheartedly in the second half. Question -- I think they scored 58 points in the second half. And their second shots, I mean, they shot 45 shots from the field in the second half, and we shot 17. I haven't been a part of a game like that.

But our guys certainly did not play hard. They didn't play together in the second half defensively. We got to the foul line, made free throws against a desperate team that was playing for their postseason lives.

So, I guess if you're the coach, you can look at it this way: Hey, everything's fine. We're in the semifinals against Oregon. Awesome job. We advanced. A lot of teams would have loved to. Or you can really say our effort level is as bad as I've ever seen in the last 20 minutes. I choose to focus on the second one.

Q. At one point you guys had a commitment from Tyler Dorsey, eventually you end up getting one from Allonzo sort of in his place almost. Is it fair to say that's worked out well for both parties in a lot of ways?

COACH MILLER: Yes, it wasn't Allonzo or Tyler in fairness to both of those kids. There was a lot of moving parts, and each of us, Oregon and Arizona, are trying to bring a recruiting class to the table. In today's fast-moving world, players and prospects make quick decisions. Sometimes they do it early in the process. A lot of them wait until the spring.

But we respect, I respect, Tyler Dorsey and his family a great, great deal. I knew that when he made his commitment to Oregon that that would really work out because I think his style of play and Dana Altman's style as a coach and the way the Ducks play is a really good fit for him.

Allonzo has done very well here for us. But it wasn't an either/or. It may look like that, but I'm just happy for Tyler that it's worked out the way it did for him. On our end, obviously, we're very pleased with Allonzo.

Q. In standing with tradition, your fans filled this place. Obviously it's a sold-out tournament. Can you talk about how their influence, how they got fired up at the end when the game was getting a little close influenced you and what that support means to you guys?

ALLONZO TRIER: I think they did a great job today, especially in the second half when we were down. They brought us energy and they brought us passion. It was really key what they did, and they helped us finish out what wasn't a good half for us and helped us finish out the game.

RYAN ANDERSON: Yeah, kind of what Allonzo said. Our fans are our sixth man out there. They really help us out and bring us a lot of energy, especially even in the first half when things are rolling. It's great to hear them loud. And then when we need them in crunch moments, they're always there for us too. So it's going to be nice having them here tomorrow. Hopefully they can come loud again, and hopefully we can play better in both halves.

Q. Coach, I just wanted to ask you about Gabe York. He's obviously been this go-to guy for you. One of the players in the locker room even described him as clutch just now. Can you speak about it a little bit and has he always been that guy or is it something that developed in recent years?

COACH MILLER: Gabe York is somebody that we're very proud of as a freshman. Although he played on a very, very good team, he did not have a role, per se. There were many games where he didn't play, and he stayed with us. His determination, his belief in our program, his family's determination and belief in that what we have is something that is special.

Gabe then worked and became a significant part on two excellent teams, both who had a chance to win the National Championship. Two Pac-12 regular season winners and a tournament winner a year ago. But in his second and third year, again, his role grew. And if you look at him this year, he's an All-Conference player.

What he did in McKale Center this past weekend I haven't seen ever. I mean, he put us on his back and just had two incredible performances. I thought it was a spectacular way for a great kid and a terrific player to end their career. But we're very proud of him.

We need all of these guys -- now that we're in the month of March, we're playing single-elimination basketball -- to be with us on offense and defense and be at their best. We're going to rely a lot on Gabe, we're going to rely a lot on Ryan and Kaleb, and we relied on all three of those guys in the second half of today's game.

Sometimes it works, but sometimes all of us have to take the responsibility that we have been given and know that we have to give tremendous effort. If you do that and you lose, I think, fine, you move on. We're going to play in the NCAA Tournament, which is an accomplishment in and of itself and you feel good about it and you're ready to go. But if you don't give great effort -- question about our fans, I get very disappointed because our players sometimes don't know what it's like on the other side when there aren't a lot of fans there. Our fans are always there. One thing

that all of our fans deserve is outstanding effort.

And our first half was an example of that. Not just because of what the score was, but nobody could accuse this team of not playing hard. That's what we did. In the second half, unfortunately, we put Colorado -- and Colorado deserves a lot of credit, but they had a chance to win the game.

Q. 9-for-10 from the line in the second half. And so many games this time of year are decided by late free throws when you're tired and when momentum is shifting. What is the difference between making a free throw in that situation and earlier in the game for you? Do you have to kind of concentrate more on routine? How do you handle those free throws?

RYAN ANDERSON: Every day in practice Coach Miller always tells us when we're shooting free throws that free throws win championships, free throws win games. So when you put pressure on yourself in practice to make them, you go through your routine, I think Allonzo and all the other players would agree, whether it's the beginning of the game or end of the game, you kind of rely on your preparation and your routine that you've done every single day.

So I think it goes back to our practices. Putting pressure on yourself to make them in practice. When you're used to it like that, hopefully your routine stays true in the moments when you need it to.