

Pac-12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 15 2019

Dana Altman

Ehab Amin

Paul White

Oregon



Oregon - 79, Arizona State - 75 (OT)

DANA ALTMAN: We really had a couple of bad stretches defensively, one right before the end of the first half where we gave up some easy baskets. And then a bad stretch about six minutes in the second half where they went on that 18-3 run and got up nine.

And to the guys' credit, they stayed with it. We got some stops. We finally hit some baskets. We could have made it easier on ourself getting a few more throws, but really pleased with the guys fighting back. We're down six, and two seniors here really hit two big shots, Paul, a little pop play, and Ehab in the corner that got us tied up. And really made big, big shots there. And that's what seniors do, and to their credit they really did.

And then defensively we got some stops there and we ended up out-rebounding them by one, which I thought was important. But the difference in the game was points off turnovers. 25-10. Our activity, you know, was really good. And that was the difference in the game.

Q. Take us through that overtime. You started going to the basket there, and once you got there, it seemed like momentum built. What was that feeling as you were pulling away and moved on to the title game?

EHAB AMIN: Coach told us if we had a layup in transition, take it. And I was just doing what the defense was giving me.

Q. (Off microphone)?

EHAB AMIN: It was great. Our season was on the line. So as a senior, it was a really emotional for me. And just was super happy and excited.

Q. A month ago an NCAA Tournament berth just didn't seem possible. How did you guys stay with it and keep believing that it was possible?

PAUL WHITE: I think in the locker room it never was

out of reach for us. We understood where we were in the Pac-12. It was some things that we couldn't change. But going forward, I think this team, we've really come together. We've really matured. And we really bought in.

And also I think we're starting to really know where each other is going to be on the floor now. And I think that's a big key going into this period at a season. We're all on the same page. I think last month, I mean, things did look a little bleak.

But like I said, in our locker room, we never counted ourselves out. Right now we're just grateful how far, how good we are playing, but we still have one more game.

Q. Third game in three, you're having to rally from behind, going into overtime. Do you sense any fatigue from your guys, or did you feel like it was pretty normal?

PAUL WHITE: The adrenaline carried us through to the finish line. I think everyone was not worrying about it themselves or anything. We just wanted to get the win for the team.

Q. Payton was able to get to work on some ball screen switches there late. What did you see from what enabled that and his ability to do that?

DANA ALTMAN: I thought he did get to the basket. He was 8 for 17. He had some good looks. They contested a lot of them, got through the block. But I liked the aggressiveness going to the hole. I thought he did a great job with eight assists and one turnover. I mean, we'd take that any night.

No, he's playing at a really high level. Lou really had a good second half. We went to him there. When they did get the nine-point lead, I think we went to him three straight possessions, and he delivered.

So we had a lot of guys step up, but these two guys here hitting big shots, Payton did a lot of good things, Lou, Kenny was in foul trouble, I thought will Richardson handled the ball really well for us. A lot of contributions by a lot of guys.

Q. There was a point there in the second half where it looked like guys might be running out of gas a

little bit. How did you find the energy to finish it, and how do you do it again tomorrow?

DANA ALTMAN: I agree. I thought their -- about the 12-minute mark there we were dragging a little bit. But like I said, I thought Lou hitting those buckets kept our heads up. And then we got a couple of turnovers, and that kind of reenergized us. I thought Ehab off the bench gave us a some energy, a couple of stupid fouls, but a lot of energy.

But you're right, we were struggling. Lou's baskets kept us in it and we got going a little bit again and caught our second wind.

Q. There were only ten fouls in the first half, and the second half it just seemed like it was a parade to the foul line. Was that just a couple of tired prize fighters in the 12th round?

DANA ALTMAN: Well, it was a physical game. No, no, it was a physical game. And guys were getting after each other. And they're a physical, athletic team. And you've got to get in an athletic position, bend your knees, and you've got to play the same way.

Again, like I said, we had some reaching fouls I would not have liked to have had, 85 feet from the basket. Those are not fouls we need. But the aggressiveness really did help us. And we've got to be able to risk reward and make a little better decisions.

Q. With what Washington does defensively, as hard as they guard and the zone they play, how much does it help to have played them so recently and had success against them?

DANA ALTMAN: Well, you know, I know that our guys -- it was just a week ago. We'll be familiar with their sets. We'll be familiar -- but they'll be familiar with us. They're a bunch of vets that are used to go being in close games, physical games. So we'll have a good battle with them. The two games that we had both went down to the wire. So I'm sure we'll be ready to play. They'll be ready to play. And it should be a pretty good game.

Q. Ehab, four games in four days, it feels like the way you guys are out there right now, you feel like you can go in there tomorrow feeling physically up to the challenge?

EHAB AMIN: Yeah. I mean I'm pretty sure we're one of the deepest team in the conference. So we've been playing three games in three days but we should be ready for tomorrow.