

Pac-12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 16 2019

Mike Hopkins

Jaylen Howell

Matisse Thybulle

Washington

Oregon - 68, Washington - 48

MIKE HOPKINS: I think a big part, first half, you know, was going back and forth, they had a two-point lead, made the five threes; that was kind of the difference in the first half. And the second half, we just couldn't make a shot. You're not going to win too many games shooting 22 percent from the field and 25 percent from the three.

And then defensively, we just didn't have it. They went to the foul line, they were really aggressive and had a good shooting night. It was just one of those ones.

We've got to move on. Hopefully we'll be playing next week. And we've got to tip our hat to Oregon. Their defense was really good. And the second half we couldn't make any shots.

Q. If you guys aren't creating turnovers and getting those transition points, do you feel like you're stagnant offensively in the half court? Is that an issue?

MIKE HOPKINS: I thought Oregon did a really good job. When we got good movement, we moved the ball. We were able to attack their close-outs, and we had some good possessions. The three or four times we got the ball around the basket, the Kenny Wooten factor came out. We couldn't get to the foul line, and I thought that was the big difference in the game. 17 fouls shots in the second half I thought was the difference. They were a little bit more aggressive on the attack.

But we just have to move on and get better. But definitely we were a little bit stagnant. The ball stopped. We held it too long and took out the flow of the game.

Q. Do you guys think that this team is just a bad matchup for you? You know how some teams just are that bad matchup?

MIKE HOPKINS: Some teams are. We beat them at



their place. I thought we got decent shots. We got the ball where we wanted to get it, and sometimes the ball just doesn't fall. We tried to be aggressive and tried to get to the foul line. That didn't happen.

And then the second half, we're not going to win too many games shooting 22 percent from the field. And on top of that, them shooting 64 percent, 11 for 17 and 17 foul shots, just not winning numbers. So it was just -- like I said, it was just one of those nights.

Q. Despite the night, can you kind of talk about where you've brought this team in two years, with these seniors and of course with Jaylen coming?

MIKE HOPKINS: These guys have done it. These are the guys the ones that have bought in. These guys are the kids that work hard every day. Our staff works with them every day. They're champions. Bottom line, we got to the championship game here, and we didn't play our best game.

We feel good about playing this next weekend, getting to the NCAA Tournament. They won the regular season Pac-12. They broke the steals record, Jaylen won the Player of the Year, another Player of the Year.

So I'm very proud of these guys. And we say it doesn't matter, get better, DMGB, the coaching staff, I felt like I didn't prepare them the way they had to be prepared tonight, and that's on me. These kids come out, and execute, they play their hearts out, and we just didn't get it done tonight.

Q. This is the second time you've played them where you guys were struggling offensively, and like Coach said, the offense goes stagnant. What is it about Oregon's defense that does that to you guys?

JAYLEN NOWELL: I don't know, they're very long. They've got that -- Kenny Wooten in there blocking shots. So when you get past one person, they've got a lot of help coming, and we just didn't get any shots today.

Q. He mentioned you passed Gary Payton, you're the all-time career steals leader in the Pac-12 Conference. What is it like to hear that you're now past the great Gary Payton?

MATISSE THYBULLE: It's pretty hard to wrap my mind

around, honestly, because you grow up looking up to legends like Gary Payton, and like every kid has dreams of making NBA and breaking records and all that stuff.

To be in that position now having actually broke those records and be able to take a step toward actually achieving my dreams, it's something weird and hard to wrap my mind around it.

He said it best, records are meant to be broken. I'm sure some kid is going to come along and break my record. I'm happy to have it right now. Hopefully I can build on it.

Q. Can you kind of explain, you stuck with this program, decided to stay, when a lot of other people when you were coming in -- and have been rewarded now with two 20-win seasons and a NCAA bid, it looks like, finally. What it's like for you to have that happen for you with this program?

JAYLEN NOWELL: Truthfully, it's amazing. When I met Coach Hop and he talked to my family, I just knew this was going to be the right place, not only to me but for everyone else that was going to be here.

And him coming in, being the type of coach that he is, giving us energy every day, making sure we're on top of things on and off the court, it's more than you can ask for in a coach.

Q. You mentioned beating Oregon in Eugene. What changes have you noticed in that team?

MIKE HOPKINS: I think Pritchard's playing as good as anybody in our league. I think he had a little bit of wasn't shooting great, they had some injuries, the Bol Bol, the guys, Louis King came in, and so they've had some highs and lows.

But it's great like when you're in a tournament setting, you've just got to get hot at the right time. And that's probably the hottest team in our league right now. He's a great coach, they've got a great program. I was sad tonight losing, but I'm happy for them. Hopefully that makes three teams in the Pac-12 getting in the NCAA Tournament.

He's playing at a high level and that changes something. Assisting, making plays, not turning it over. And I think that's why we're playing at a high level.

Q. Do you have a sense as to what tomorrow will be like for you guys, just having everybody over at the house and kind of watching that show?

MIKE HOPKINS: Well, right now we're obviously all disappointed. These guys are winners, and losing stinks, winning is great. We didn't get it done tonight. I

just told these guys, we've got to flush this thing down the toilet. We've had an incredible season, we got this far. We just had a bad game. The key is we don't let it happen again.

Tomorrow will be a celebration for these guys of what they've accomplished in two years, our families, their families, from Washington, from Washington, stuck with the program. It's going to be a celebration for sure.