

# Pac-12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 11 2020

**Sean Miller**

**Nico Mannion**

**Dylan Smith**

**Josh Green**

**Arizona**

Arizona - 77, Washington - 70

THE MODERATOR: Josh, what can you say about hanging on for a good win?

JOSH GREEN: We lost last week to Washington, so our biggest thing was coming back to practice, working on what we've got to work on, come to the tournament all guns going.

I think our team did a great job. We really locked in last week at practice. And I think we're going to keep it going.

**Q. Looks like you got started off early offensively. How were you feeling at the start of the game?**

JOSH GREEN: I felt great. I think the biggest thing was coming to the game with energy, whether it's on the offensive end or defensive end. My biggest goal was trying to get the team pumped and ready to go. It's March, and we're ready to go.

**Q. If they decide to close this tournament off to fans, what do you think about them doing that?**

DYLAN SMITH: It's crazy, March Madness, you always see big games, big arenas. But it's a safety precaution. The coronavirus is a serious thing. You've got to wash your hands and bathe and hope not to get it.

**Q. One of the aspects of this is that with no fans, no players' families and friends will be able to come and watch you play. What does that mean?**

DYLAN SMITH: A little bit of the same thing. Everybody dreams of fair family coming to those games. I know my family was looking forward to it. I'm sure these two families were looking forward to coming.

It's a big blow. It's going to be awkward playing in a silent gym without the crowds. It comes with it, we'll just have to work through it.



SEAN MILLER: It was a very good win for our team. Kind of unique situation in that we just played Washington on Saturday at home. And they beat us. They outplayed us. I think it speaks to the depth of our conference, being that they were a 12 seed. I don't think there's a lot of 12 seeds in college basketball that are better.

Mike Hopkins and his staff, they did a great job of playing their best here at the end. And we knew that it was going to be a tough, tough fight here tonight. If we played Washington seven times, every one of those games would be very, very difficult.

So we're thrilled to win. We had three turnovers in the second half versus ten in the first half. That was a big deal. And I really think all three of these guys played well here today.

So we're excited to advance and have a chance to play USC tomorrow, and they're also a very good team. It's one of the exciting parts of this year's tournament. It's always a great tournament, but the quality from top to bottom has never been better.

**Q. Sean, Washington really struggled from the perimeter. Can you just talk about the way you guys defended them from the arc and kind of forced them to run their clock and take some shots they probably didn't want to take.**

SEAN MILLER: You know, our defense has quietly grown this season. These guys know it. We've been hard at work. If you watched our team around the Thanksgiving period of time, we were much further along on offense.

But to these guys' credit, our defense has really, really improved. Statistically, if you look closely at our team, we probably have won more games with our defensive effort than even our offense.

And these three guys have a lot to do with it. They're our heart and soul here on our perimeter. And they did a very, very good job of defending a very good team.

Isaiah Stewart was fantastic today. When he makes those turnaround jump shots and 15 footers, made a three, he's really difficult to defend. But he had a great

game. It wasn't lack of effort for us, but we defended him well. But he's one heck of a basketball player.

**Q. Nico, is there a concerted effort early in the game to focus on the jump shots to pull the defense out since last game inside wasn't working as well?**

NICO MANNION: I think the big thing for us was using ball fakes, whether you shoot it or not, but just trying to draw the defense out so we can hit the same passes, get it to the high post. We know they guard an area, not a man. So using our ball fakes to get them out of position and get the ball where we needed to get it.

**Q. Sean, can you talk about the youth of this team? With so many freshmen in big roles, it's the first time on this stage and the way they responded to a loss to Washington and came back and were able to get the win today?**

SEAN MILLER: Yes, we have a really unique mix on our team. We have Dylan, who is in his last go-around in his fourth year. He's clearly the old man of the group.

To these other guys' credit, I think Dylan would also echo what I'm about to say, I don't think we've ever had a group of three freshmen we've been so dependent on every game.

We've had really talented freshmen, but as they grew and learned the game, there were times when they didn't play well, yet we were still able to win because maybe they were surrounded by more guys like Dylan.

On this year's team, these three, Zeke, Josh, and Nico, and then Christian as the year has gone on, they have to play well for us to win. To their credit, they show up every day.

But Josh, this might have been his overall best game of his year today, and it's great to see him play well in March, especially because we missed him when he didn't go with us to LA. You could see how much we missed him. So it's great to have him back.

**Q. Josh, speaking of that, I was wondering if you could walk us through the last few weeks for you, missing that trip, and was your confidence lacking, and what did it feel like to get on track out there today?**

JOSH GREEN: As far as that goes, it's bad whenever you don't travel with your team to give the support, it sucks, just being with them for the moral support. It was bad. But at the same time I think we have a great training staff, Justin, and the rest of the medical team at Arizona. I was able to rehab back at home. I feel a lot better.

As far as confidence goes, it was all good. I think the biggest thing was coming into March and being confident and coming out with a win, just giving it your all.

**Q. Sean, your reaction to the NCAA's decision is to not admit spectators to the tournament? Arizona travels very well, traditionally. What would it mean if you get into the tournament to play in an empty gym?**

SEAN MILLER: No, it will be definitely different. And obviously it's not going to be just different for us, anybody that's ever watched the tournament or participated, it would be different.

But obviously there's some brilliant people in our world. If that's the decision, I'm sure it's very well thought out and it's in the best interests of these guys.

And at the end of the day, that's what counts the most, to protect our players and student-athletes to the best of our ability.

And I'm sure that decision was one that was hard to make, but we'll show up. And if we're part of that tournament, I don't think it will affect our effort. Clearly it will be different for everybody that's a part of it.