

Pac-12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 11 2020

Wayne Tinkle Ethan Thompson Tres Tinkle Jarod Lucas Oregon State

Oregon State - 71, Utah - 69

WAYNE TINKLE: What can you say? What a way to particular off the Pac-12 Tournament. 8-9 matchup. We got off to a really good start, and they really got into a rhythm. We couldn't score forever, and individual performance by the Plummer kid, unbelievable. Only time I've ever seen something like that was my daughter was in city league, but that doesn't really matter. That's a joke.

And I am just really, really proud of the resiliency our guys showed. I don't know what their biggest lead was. We called a timeout, our guys responded. What we needed to do was find a group of tough guys. And we identified that group, Gianni Hunt was big for us in that stretch off the bench. We were wanting to go to our 1-3-1 in the first half, but with Plummer hitting shots with blindfolds on, we were worried.

The coaches did a great job of saying he's hitting them against man, against our 2-3, let's give it a shot. Credit to the staff for selling that to me. And then the guys, we put them on their heels and we got some momentum going. They stretched it out a little bit again. And our seniors in the last couple of timeouts said: We're winning this game. Keep believing it, we're winning this game. And what a finish, just incredible.

JAROD LUCAS: My teammates did a great job setting me up, especially on the last two shots, most especially the last one. Tres hit me and trusted me. Previously there was a game where he trusted me and I missed it. I remember telling him I'm sorry, it's never going to happen again. Tres trusted me again, and I was able to knock it down.

Q. You had the ball, the senior driver, you might have had a look, what was going through your head, thinking can I get this up or pitch it out and



give Jarod an open look?

TRES TINKLE: Yeah, I felt like originally, supposed to be in E's hands. But one of the guys was on him. Did a good job denying. And so it was tough.

Six seconds left, I tried to make a play, whether it was going to be for me. I know when I drive, teams load the paint, and I saw Jarod step over, jump stop. And told him I trust him taking that shot every single time. I made the right play, and he came through.

Q. (No microphone.)

TRES TINKLE: It was tough. Credit to him. But I think we let him get off too early. And then we kept the rhythm like that, the hoop looks way bigger. He's hitting man zone, try to get him to good off the three-point line, but we were short closing, he was confident.

We kept battling. Tried to make adjustments, and slowed him down a little bit in the second half. And again we were just rallying. Made an assist to rebound, and then offensively we were playing with a lot more energy, guys were knocking shots, and that's when the tempo stepped up.

Q. During the game, it was announced that the NCAA Tournament will be played without fans. And that struck me, especially with a great ending like that where you've got your fans going crazy, the band blaring, what would it be like to imagine having that game being played in front of an empty stadium, and what are your thoughts on this is actually happening now?

WAYNE TINKLE: We just kind of caught wind of that. We've got to stay focused in the Pac-12 Tournament right now. If it gets to that point, we'll deal with it. But really we can't comment on that, we've got so much right in front of us, we have to handle our business and move forward day-to-day. Thanks.

Q. I believe the shot Jarod was talking about earlier in the season was the Arizona State game. And you mentioned to us back in Corvallis, you told him we're going to give you that shot again. How much trust do you have in him and seeing it replayed tonight?

WAYNE TINKLE: Tremendous amount of trust because he's such a confident shooter. He got down, missed two in the first half, and his dumb coach yanked him

out. But when we pulled him out, we said: Hang in there. Just hang in there we're going to go to you again.

But he's a great shooter. And we told him early in the year that he's the one guy that we have the most confidence in shooting that shot. Part of that was just to make a freshman feel good about himself during some dog days. It's true, we have a few guys we have a lot of trust in at any time taking those big shots, and he's certainly one.

He learned from that Arizona State game. He hit it on the head. One of our seniors trusted him in that game for the game-winning shot. That's the game. It just was in and out. And it came back to him when it was crucial in the postseason. What that says is what we talked about the life lessons we teach the guys from the start to the finish of the season, how you deal with adversity, how you handle things, you don't try to cut corners to get instant gratification, stay true to the process.

We've been through a lot. And that's just in a nutshell. We trusted him. He did things the right way. He handles his business on and off the court. One of our senior leaders trusts him to make that play in the postseason when it's the pinnacle, and he knocks it down.

Big credit to our guys, just for their wherewithal and sticktoitiveness, I'm proud because of the group of guys we have and how we've handled adversity.

Q. Ethan and Tres, when you have historic performance on the other side going with Plummer knocking down these threes, how difficult is it for you on offense to not get ahead of yourself and feel like you have to match what he's doing to stay with him?

ETHAN THOMPSON: I feel like we've just got to stay in the team. They're going to be able to hit shots, and credit to him. He hit a lot of tough shots. We also gave him some open looks. But that's behind us now. But when we're on the offensive end, just stick to our game plan and just stay with it.

TRES TINKLE: Same thing. When a player is hitting shots, you can't worry about that. You have to worry about yourself. Stay focused to our game plan, our principles. If we get that get ahead, that's going to take us out of our rhythm offensively, and we'll press, and that's a snowball effect.

Try to make adjustments with him and worry about ourselves. We amped up the effort defensively, and we came out on top, fortunately.

Q. Tres, you kind of talked about your trust in Jarod. In a moment what could be your final -- could have been your final moment playing a college basketball game, to trust a freshman to hit that shot, what was going through your mind in that moment?

TRES TINKLE: We talked about he hit two threes last minute, I think his fourth in a row, I believe, in the second half. So he was feeling it. I know Jarod, he's passionate, he loves the game. Again, as he mentioned, the ASU game, he felt terrible about it. He texted me. I told him I trust you taking that shot every single time.

So game on the line, I'm going to make the right play. Sure enough, he was wide open. I know how he shoots it. I know his confidence, and he followed through.

Q. With the format, there's talk if you win that first one sometimes that can help you in the second one. You saw that last year what Colorado did. Thoughts about the matchup? This would be something to keep you guys --

WAYNE TINKLE: I just think the more important part is we've gotten a lot of momentum in the last few weeks, even that road trip to Arizona, you know, we had a tough deal at Arizona, our guys bounced back, we came up short to Arizona State, we had a lot of good moments, especially defensively at Oregon.

Then we took care of business this past weekend. We've got some momentum. We're playing our best basketball. That's going to be the message going into tomorrow. Not hope that our opponent is going to be sluggish because it's their first game. There is something to be said, we ironed some kinks out today. Luckily it didn't cost us like it did a year ago.

Let's just keep doing what we're doing and take them as they come. We know what we're facing tomorrow, a heck of a team, great coach. And we've got now a short window to prepare to get ready for them.

Q. When he grabbed you after those first two misses, and hearing it from the press row, it sounded like a lot is mental. Can you walk me through how you got more comfortable in your first ever Pac-12 Tournament game and what you had there at the front that was able to contribute to the success on the back?

JAROD LUCAS: I think in the first half I kind of got in low and had a couple of shots that I missed, but this isn't the first time Coach Tinkle has been the first guy that told me to stay locked in. It wasn't just the Coach Tinkle, it was a lot of my teammates, just telling me I need to stay locked in. He told me I need to be ready for my next opportunity. He gave me another

opportunity in the second half, and I made the most of it. I couldn't be more happy or more thankful.