

# Pac-12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 11 2020

## Mike Hopkins Isaiah Stewart Marcus Tsohonis Washington

Arizona - 77, Washington - 70

MIKE HOPKINS: Yeah, I think the game started off, they made a couple early threes. I thought Arizona was really aggressive defensively. Isaiah got going, as good as I've seen a player play.

They were packing the paint so much that we were able to get some shots. And unfortunately we had a game where we shot 3 for 23, a little bit of us and a little bit of Arizona. But in a game like this, you've got to be able to make some of those.

We kept fighting when we got down the second half. We pressed them. Had a good, valiant effort and just came up a little bit short. I've got to credit Arizona for a really good game plan and a good game.

THE MODERATOR: Coach Miller mentioned it was a little strange, just with Saturday and then now. Did you feel any sense of that?

MIKE HOPKINS: I didn't. We flew from Arizona straight to here. That was the only difference. We had a good practice just like we would in Seattle.

Arizona is a great program. Sean Miller is a great coach. They made shots tonight, and we struggled. So hats off to Arizona.

**Q. Do you feel like Arizona played with more energy and enthusiasm this time around compared to last week?**

ISIAH STEWART: I definitely felt like they were more aggressive defensively. I felt like their goal was to get up on us and basically just make it more tough for us, since we just played them and beat them.

**Q. Marcus, it felt like, again, in the last game against Arizona, you guys were really able to push the pace and score in transition. Was that just not working today, or what were you doing differently?**

MARCUS TSOHONIS: Honestly, we emphasized to



push the ball and swing the ball more. I felt like it was kind of stagnant this game. We weren't able to -- they were playing aggressive defense this one. But their overall defense on both ends was just -- they were everywhere. It was kind of hard. We didn't get into our stuff, really.

**Q. Coach, you guys came out more in a 3-2 than a 2-3 that you typically have run. What went into that decision? Was it a different look or something like that?**

MIKE HOPKINS: No, just sometimes based on how they're playing, based on their alignment, our alignment, shift to 2-3.

**Q. Coach, Isaiah really had it going in the first half, 18 points. Everyone else had 12. Was it just one of those games for everyone else, or what were you noticing in the first half?**

MIKE HOPKINS: Isaiah, like I said before, that first-half performance, he's been Mr. Consistency every night, dominant in the paint, faced up. You saw all the hard work everywhere, every night.

And when they pack the paint the way that they do on him, you're going to have opportunities to be able to score. And tonight we just didn't make a lot of shots.

You asked that question earlier about transition, I felt like in the first half we had four or five, six opportunities where we threw it away or turned it over where we should have scored. I think those are big plays that have to happen in a game and a caliber of a team like Arizona. Those things have to happen.

And sometimes you just didn't have it, and a couple of those plays here and there, they add up, for sure.

**Q. Coach, the play with Isaiah, it looked like it was going to be an and one, and it was an offensive call. It seemed to turn the tide. How big was that?**

MIKE HOPKINS: It's hard to referee. It's a tough call. It's going fast. Great elite athletes, it could go either way. If it goes for us, it's a game changer because you take the lead and you get the momentum; and it goes against you, it's like a kidney punch.

Those things happen. We still had our opportunities. We just -- like I said, you've got to -- we have to be able

to make some more shots than 3 for 23 from three.

**Q. Sometimes shots just don't go in. Was there anything Arizona did, or was it just shots --**

MIKE HOPKINS: I thought we had a good rhythm. I think what Marcus said earlier, this is a little 50/50, a little bit of Arizona, a little bit us, where the ball was sticking too much. In the past two games, we were moving the ball, sharing the ball. When two guys came, we were able to get more rhythm. And that's when you make more shots, when there's better ball movement and rhythm.

And tonight it just -- it just didn't have the same pop. But I also think that has a little bit to do with Arizona's pressure. They weren't allowing the ball to move like that, overplaying, denying, those types of things. So you've got to credit them, for sure.

**Q. Nahz just didn't seem like he could get it going offensively tonight. What was it about his game that you felt could have been better executed?**

MIKE HOPKINS: I think the biggest thing with Nahz, is he's such a talented player. He's had a great year. I think sometimes, he's such a scorer's mentality, when two guys come, he just has to make the simple play.

I think sometimes he gets into his scoring mode. But it's just one of those games he didn't make a lot of shots tonight. He's been a really good player for us all year. And he's going to be a great player for us next year. And just had a bad game, bad shooting game.

**Q. Coach, the guy to your left may be one of the biggest warriors ever to play at the University of Washington. How much thought have you given that this might be the last game you get to coach him?**

MIKE HOPKINS: I don't like to think about that. I know it is. But we'll have a time and place to talk about those things. This isn't the time.

You love your team. And the thing that I love more about coaching is how this team handled their adversity. They kept getting better. They kept fighting. And we played our best basketball at the end of the year, that shows the character of the players, and it shows the credit to our staff and we're family.

I've known this kid since he's been young. And he's going to have a great career. You never want to lose your guys, same with Timmins, Quin Barnard and Jason Crandall. It's hard in coaching, in college they're always flipping. But I've never been around a kid like this, ever. And just honored to have that 12 months that I've had. And we'll be buying tickets to go watch him play. Well, he better give me tickets (laughter.)

Also, another thing, too, this kid, we go through it, you lose Quade, he's red shirt. And this kid comes out, I didn't even know, and has an incredible year. An incredible year. Elijah had to step up, but Marcus, I'm so proud of these guys, I can't even stand it. And I just wanted to say that, because imagine red shirting, and not knowing, next thing you know do you want to play? Want to get out of your red shirt? And he said, yeah. And that kid is out there busting his tail and getting better, and had a hell of a year, and was playing his best basketball at the end of the year. Anyway, Go Dawgs.