

Auburn Basketball vs. Missouri
Auburn Player Quotes
January 10, 2015

Auburn Head Coach Bruce Pearl

Opening Statement...

"First thing is that this was a good environment tonight for college basketball. Students weren't all back and the place was pretty much full. The fans were into the game from the very beginning. We can't beat Missouri without them. The second thing is we have one of the all-time best players in the game and one of the top-50 of all time and a great friend to our program, Charles Barkely was here tonight. For Charles to come back and see the progress that we are making is great. And there is not as much progress on the court as I would like, but from a standpoint of just our program, it was a good night for us tonight. We have our challenges on the boards. We gave those guys 22 second chance points. They do a decent job guarding and then they are chasing them down and pounding on the inside, and they get another shot. That easily could have cost us the basketball game."

On Cinmeon Bowers...

"He guarded better. He had greater effort. He had a different mindset at the foul line, trying to make them all rather than looking at himself. I just wanted him to look at himself more as a forward rather than an undersized center. Forwards guard, make free throws and take threes and make them. I am not surprised. I think the other motivating factor was Keanau Post had a big game against LSU. He is a big kid in there. Obviously he had that big flagrant foul. There were some people in the media that thought he would out play Cinmeon. That was nice motivation for Cinmeon."

On defense...

"Tahj (Shamsid- Deen) was out there a lot at the end. That was a decision that Coach Tony Jones and I made to go with the defensive lineup. That effort and energy was significant. I started Jordon Granger for that reason. We needed a little bit more size. When Jordon defends and protects the rim a little bit and makes shots, it really helps our team. That group guarded out there and that was huge for us. That is how we got some rebounds and some run outs. It was great to see Tahj step up and make some baskets and score. He has not been rewarded much with many numbers. So it was good to see him break out a little bit and get a little healthier. He made a strong contribution tonight."

On Tahj's shoulder...

"It is better. It hasn't come out in weeks."

On coming back...

"I felt like we wasted possessions and I felt that they were pushing us around. They were more physical. They had more effort and energy. I thought our conditioning showed late. Our guys felt that they had more in the tank late. Part of that is conditioning. Part of that comes from Coach Damon Davis, our strength and conditioning coach, part of it is the crowd and the emotion and adrenaline. What is the identity of this team? I think the identity of this team has to be on the defensive end. Tonight we made 10 threes, and we had to because 2-pointers are tough to come by."

On Cinmeon's defensive energy...

"We obviously needed stops. They shot 42 percent in the second half. They only scored 39. It was just better. If not for those guards knocking down 3's, tough 3's, we maybe could have taken control of this

game a little bit sooner. They did not hurt us in the offensive glass in the last 10 minutes of the game, that was the difference.”

Forward Cinmeon Bowers

On the energy of the technical foul...

“It sparked me up. I can’t stand for our team to play silent.”

On the effort on the defense...

“I responded well. I had three steals tonight. I gave a lot of effort to play defensively.”

On playing SEC teams...

“It feels good. We just locked-in and practiced the whole week and made it happen.”

Guard Tahj Shamsid-Deen

On the effort and energy in the game...

“We got out and transitioned from playing defense, and that’s when we were most dangerous on the court. That sparked us a little bit.”

On playing with the shoulder injury...

“I have been doing rehab everyday with our trainer. I’m staying strong as possible throughout the season. I play out there without really thinking about the shoulder. I play as hard as I possibly can and do what I can for this team.”

On the energy in the arena compared to last season...

“This time last year I don’t think we would have had a crowd like tonight. I think our crowd is giving us a good home-court advantage.”

Missouri head coach Kim Anderson

Opening Statement...

“It was a great basketball game. I thought both teams played extremely well. I was really proud of our guys. We got behind, came back and they made a run. We did not make the plays we needed to at the end. I was really proud of the way we fought. We have been a little banged up and a little short at the guard spot but we hung in there. We could not stop the dribble penetration and could not keep them off the line, which hopefully as a young team we will learn from this and get better next time.”

On the second half...

“I really thought they kicked it up a notch on both ends of the floor. Probably more offensively than defensively because we were trading baskets there for a while. I really thought offensively their guys started making plays at the basket. We had trouble containing them. Cinmeon Bowers was so good. He shot the ball really well from the free throw line which he normally does not. He missed some late, but he made them early and I think that gave him some confidence. I thought we kicked into another gear at the beginning of the half and I thought they kicked into another gear and they did a great job. They really did.”

On the technical foul...

“That may have sparked them. That is a tough play. He was going for the ball. It was the right call, do not get me wrong. I am not disputing the call. It was a hard foul. I do not know if it motivated them or not.”

On offensive rebounding...

"We did not miss a whole lot of shots there until the end and we get a little bit frazzled. I thought our offensive rebounding was pretty good for the game. We talked a lot about that going in. We thought that you had two of the statistically lesser rebounding teams in the league, we thought that might be a spot we might have an advantage with the exception of Cinmeon Bowers. I think we played hard. It was a tough environment. We came in and gave it our best shot and did not execute well enough down the stretch on either end of the floor."

On the freshman...

"I think we are so much improved from where we were a month ago. I still think there are times where we reverse back to our instincts and maybe our instincts are not quite what they need to be. We talked a lot about defensive transition, not staying down at the other end and challenging the ball, and we did that three or four times tonight and they took off because they are pushing the ball and taking the ball to the basket. We are getting closer but we still obviously have a way to go."

On defending Johnathan Williams III...

"They did a really good job on him. I think he will learn from this game. I think they did a good job of being physical with him. I think there are some adjustments he needs to make. I know what they are and he knows what they are."

On Tramaine Isabell's injury...

"I think he cramped up. We were playing guys a lot of minutes because we are a little bit shorthanded. But that is not an excuse. These kids are young and they want to play. We played a couple of nights ago and we will have the chance to rest up for a day or two and get ready to go play Kentucky."

On the team's emotion...

"I am really proud to see that we are fighting until the end. There were a couple of those games early where we wilted. Now we fought these guys until the end. This is a good team. This a good basketball team. They are going to win their share of games. We just have to get smarter and do a better job at the right time and we did not do that at the end."

On Cinmeon Bowers...

"He certainly makes a difference. When he misses he almost always gets it back. He plays really hard. Not that we do not. Not that everybody else does not. He just seems like he has another gear. Shot goes up, he gets it back. He throws it up again, he gets it back. You have got to tip your hat to him. I have seen him play on video, but I thought he played with an unbelievable amount of emotion tonight."

Guard Wes Clark

On the last couple of minutes...

"Their energy took over the game. They played a little bit harder than us in the last few minutes."

On Auburn shooting 3-pointers...

"They have some confidence in their jump shots and knocked down shots."

On Kentucky...

"We have to come to play. Another road game, another big one. Another SEC game. We have to come and play our hearts out."

Guard Keith Shamburger

On the loss...

"I still think we turned the corner. I do not think I see a difference with our team. I still think we played with a lot of energy and a lot of effort. We are still playing hard. We have just got to keep getting better and better. We have practice tomorrow and we have got to get better for Kentucky on Tuesday. That is what we have got to look forward to know."

On whether fatigue was a factor...

"No. We run a lot in practice. I do not think fatigue was a factor. I think they played harder the last three minutes."

On Cinmeon Bowers...

"He is really the heart of the team. That is their leader right there. When he gets going that pumps up the crowd and he pumps up everybody on the team. He is a leader."

On playing Kentucky next week...

"I saw them the last two games. We have just got to play hard like we have been playing the last two games. Or the last four games to be honest. We have been playing hard. We have just got to come out with the same intensity and we have to finish the game strong and we will be fine."