



BYU MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOTES AND QUOTES | NO. 18 BYU AT UCF | SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024

The following notes and quotes are from No. 18 BYU's 63-58 win against UCF Saturday at Addition Financial Arena in Orlando, Florida.

Series Results: BYU leads 1-0

Attendance: 9,137

TEAM NOTES

BIG 1-0-0

With the win on Saturday, head coach Mark Pope become third-fastest coach to reach 100 wins at BYU needing only 144 games to achieve the feat and tie Stan Watts.

Ending the Streak

BYU ended its seven-game road losing streak on Saturday.

Gettin' the Win

Saturday marked the first time this season that BYU won a game without having connected on double digit 3-pointers.

Defense Wins Games

BYU improved to 8-0 this season and 33-2 under Pope when holding opposing teams under 60 points.

Bench Presence

The Cougars are now 13-2 on the season when the bench outscores the opponent as the Knights bench only contributed on Saturday.

PLAYERS NOTES

Sharpshooter

With his four 3-pointers, Trevin Knell moved up to 13th on the all-time 3-point list as the redshirt junior has connected on 144 triples during his career. Saturday also marked the 22nd time in his career that he has hit three or more 3-pointers, tied for the 10th most in program history.

Khalifa on Fire

Aly Khalifa scored a season-high 17 points for the Cougars, marking the first time he has scored in double figures as a Cougar. The junior also had a season-high two blocks.

Ice, Ice, Richie

Richie Saunders went 4-of-4 from the free throw line including two makes in the final seconds to seal the victory.

All Good Things Come to an End

Dallin Hall saw his 10-game 3-point streak come to an end on Saturday as the sophomore missed his only attempt from 3-point range. The sophomore did have a team-high six assists.

SEASON HIGHS

Points: Aly Khalifa (17)

Field Goals: Aly Khalifa (6)

3-Pointers: Aly Khalifa (3)

Steals: Noah Waterman (1)

Blocks: Aly Khalifa (2), Fousseyni Traore (1), Trevin Knell (1)

Free Throws: Aly Khalifa (2), Spencer Johnson (5)

Minutes: Trevin Knell (34)

CAREER HIGHS

Blocks: Trevin Knell (1)

Minutes: Trevin Knell (34)



BYU MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOTES AND QUOTES | NO. 18 BYU AT UCF | SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024

Head coach Mark Pope

Opening statement

"Ton of love and respect for UCF. They are coming off a massive win a couple of days ago and expended a ton of energy then came out here and battled like crazy tonight. Then Johnny Dawkins, he is one of my heroes in college basketball coaching right now. I have so much love and respect for him. I think he's a great coach and I think he is an even better person."

"The venue tonight was incredible, so props to UCF because it was special to play here. Maybe some of those feelings come because we were able to pull out a win but it's legit. I am proud of our guys for fighting. It's a slugfest like we kind of expected coming in. We came away win and we're so proud of that."

Fighting off UCF's comeback

"Credit to UCF, their defensive pressure was outstanding and they just swallowed up the offensive glass. They were really diligent on putting heads down and doing whatever it took to get to the rim. In the waning moments of the game especially in a game, in a gym that feels like that's hotly contested on both sides of the ball. Their aggression was hard for us to handle. We had just enough guys come and make plays. Richie Saunders was great for us trying to handle and attack the pressure. Aly Khalifa came up with a huge rebound late. We found a way to patch work it together."

Holding UCF to 29 percent shooting from the floor

"Our guys did a good job about having the guys that we wanted shooting the ball, shoot the ball. Also, the guys we didn't want to shoot the ball to extend the pressure and make their shots really difficult."

Importance of 3-point shooting

"It just fits us. We really believe in our guys. We are trying to fit the game to our guys a little bit. Credit to UCF that we only got 26 3-point attempts, our goal is to be closer to 35. It's a really credit to their pressure. It's one of our strengths and we can do really well that can be a little bit of an equalizer in the game for us. It's something we work hard on."

Aly Khalifa

Scene in the locker room following the win

"We celebrated coaches 100 win obviously. We gave him a jersey. It was great to get the first one in the Big 12. We're thirsty. We are ready to play Iowa State."

First Big 12 win

"Feels great. We were so close the past two games and just to see us win this game on the road, in a very tough environment against a really good team feels great. It feels like we belong in the best conference in the world."

UCF's late comeback

"I feel like they pressured us a little bit. They got on the offensive glass a lot and that is why the game got closer. We didn't stop believing. Every time we were in the huddle and every time we were going to timeouts we would emphasize what we need to do. It was next play mentality and that's why we got the win because we focused on the next play every time. They were able to get close but never took the lead. I think it shows a lot about us and about our commitment to the defensive side of the game and to get stops."

Physicality of the game

"It was really physical. Ibrahima Diallo is a big dude. I think he is the biggest that we have played in the conference already. It was huge but we were ready for the challenge."

UCF's defense slowing down BYU's offense

"They made it hard just to be able to see cutters. For me, Diallo's pressure as he was all over me on the perimeter. For the cutter, they were grabbing, holding and stuff like that. They made it hard on the offensive side of the game. Our defense was really good and that's why we got the win."

Atmosphere

"It was great. I love playing in these environments. I like when the fans start talking crap to you a little bit when you are on the bench. They had a lot of fans show up today. It was a great environment."