



Head Coach Wes Miller
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On the starting lineup tonight and if it will change in the future

“Not sure yet. Honestly, there hasn't been a ton of separation, top to bottom on the roster through the preseason. Some of that's because we got a lot of guys that have played well, we got a lot of depth, we played 13 [players] tonight. So, part of that's because we got a lot of depth and we got to figure how to utilize it. But figuring out the right combinations, the right lineups to start and finish games, that'll be a process. But the guys that started the game tonight they've earned it, whether it's this preseason or overtime or a combination of that and boy, I've been really proud of Viktor [Lakhin]. He's been the best player in the frontcourt over the course of the summer through the preseason on both sides of the ball. And so that's why we went with him tonight.”

On how the pressure on defense looked in the game tonight

“It was good to see us have some success in the full court defensively because nobody on this roster has played that way. So, it's good to create some belief in what we're doing. I think the guys are starting to see that it can be really effective. I thought we took a step tonight because we're working hard on it in practice. But as the competition goes up, there were some errors in it tonight that didn't hurt us, it might actually have helped us. Those are possessions that could hurt you, so we got some work to do. But I did think we took a step forward tonight with our full-court pressure.”

On how well the team shared the ball

“We've really stressed sharing the ball, making this simple play, playing together from the first day of summer until now, and the guys have really embraced that. It was really good to see us share the ball at times tonight, and there was sometimes I thought we got a little stagnant or tried to maybe make the difficult pass instead of the easy pass. But 24 assists listen, anytime your coach and then you get 24 assists you're going to feel pretty good. I thought the willingness to share the ball has been there throughout the preseason, and when the lights came on tonight it was still there and that's a good sign for our team.”

On the impact of Landers Nolley II tonight

“Man, he's so gifted. But we knew that, everybody knew that. If you go back and you watch his freshman season at Virginia Tech, or his first year at Memphis, and even at times last year in Memphis, and you can see the talent his ability to score the ball. I think what has blown me

away with [Landers] is early on, you can see he's better with the ball in his hands than I think people have ever realized. And he still has a ways to go. But he's getting better at this crazy rate, whether it's his decision making in the open floor, his decision making when he's penetrating, and attacking to close out, or his decision making in a ball screen. And I think that's going to be important to our team as the year goes on. But he's embedded with the ball in his hands at a really high rate. And then over the last two, two and a half weeks, he's really started defending at a much higher level. I'm really proud of that, and he just can't stop, and I'll make sure I stay on his butt. I've coached him pretty hard, coached all these guys the last couple weeks really hard. And we've seen some improvement. So, it's been nice to have some guys that want to be coached and want to improve."

On Dan Skillings Jr.

"David's going to walk in the next press conference and say that Sage is going to be Shaq. I love the belief and confidence that these guys have in their teammates and each other. There's a good vibe in that locker room, now it's November, we've got to continue to grow that, it's got to build throughout the year, but there's a good vibe in that locker room and it does start with guys like David DeJulius believing in their teammates."

Miller on Rob Phinisee's impact tonight

"His ability to defend and set a tone for us on that end of the floor is one of the things that really attracted us to Rob, and I thought he did a really nice job of defending throughout the game. Now there was two possessions in the first half where I thought he kind of relaxed when the guy was driving by and I thought he could have kind of got back in front of the ball and made the shot difficult, but it wasn't like a lack of effort. I just think he kind of didn't square it off."

Miller on if getting out in transition is how he wants this team to play

"Yeah, we want to try to create easy baskets that's going to be important to our ability to score this year and one of the ways you can do it is by getting live ball stops and running. I thought we warm down. So, I thought there was more opportunity to do that. And maybe there'll be moving forward, but the more we can get out and get great shots in transition, the better it'll be for our team."

Miller on what he wants to see on tape

"We're going to go right to the tape. I see it pretty good now, I saw a lot of it live tonight. Every once in a while, I'll catch something on the tape I didn't see live, there was some good stuff. Again, we talked about sharing the ball. It was it was really good to see our full court pressure. It was good to see those guys have some fun together. It is supposed to be fun, and it was good to see that, it was good to see us put some defensive possessions together and be in the right position and rotate a little bit. So, it was good to see us defensive rebound at a high level early in the game. There was some good stuff don't get me wrong, but there was a lot of stuff we got to work on and that was obvious where I was standing, I'm sure it'll be really obvious when we put the tape on tonight."

Miller on trying to build good habits going forward

“Listen, I'm not the fun police, I want them to have fun, but the most fun is when you win at a high level. Winning at a high level there are certain habits that you do all the time. We're still learning that not in a bad way. So even if we're up 40, I want us to handle it the right way so we can have more fun. I actually love to see them having fun and sharing the ball, but I wanted us to wait to celebrate on a dead all or a timeout. They could slap five with everybody in Fifth Third for all I care. But while the games still playing we have to make sure we play the next play. But listen, our team handle being up 30, and being up 40, pretty dang well. I have been a part of this a long time and sometimes you get up 30 and 40 with that much time left in the game and guys lose their enthusiasm to play, guys start trying to stop sharing the ball and those things didn't happen tonight. So, other than those two plays, I was really proud of how we handled being up 30 and 40. That's a good sign for our program. Those are winning habits.”