



**Head Coach Wes Miller Press Conference**  
**Cincinnati 85, Bryant 53**  
**Dec. 12, 2023**

***Opening Statement***

"I didn't think we played great tonight. It was just kind of one of those nights where it felt like there was a lid on it from the start of the game. It felt like, how many layups are you going to miss? How many times are you going to have a silly turnover? You have to give Bryant credit. They beat a top 25 team on the road by doing that. They do frustrate you and they do some different things right. They play five guards and pretty much everybody on the floor shoots the basketball first and the guys that don't are really good off the bounce on the perimeter. Earl [Timberlake] is an interesting matchup because he's the one guy on the court that doesn't shoot it most of the time, but he's a terrific passer and playmaker, and he's really good at finishing around the basket. We saw him at Memphis and obviously he's had success in the American at a high level. He's an interesting matchup for our front court. At the same time, I thought we had plenty of chances there early and it just felt like one of those nights where nothing was going our way, and I didn't think we handled that very well. I thought we handled it much better in the second half and it wasn't like we came out of halftime and it just all went our way, but I thought we had a better attitude and approach. Eventually we found a way to bust the game open, but I was not pleased with our play. I'll be honest, we're pretty hungover from Saturday and this group is pissed. Obviously, I'm pissed, and you take those kinds of losses hard. We take them all hard as coaches, but this group took that loss harder than any team I've had take a loss since I've been here. We had one of our best practices of the year yesterday. I thought we'd come out and play unbelievable today. They're pissed off, but I think we addressed some things from that game, and it had us a little gun shy or maybe not as confident tonight. I believe in the big picture this is good because some of those things needed to be addressed. We hadn't quite gotten through that process yet to get confident again, and I think we can and will get confident again. They were angry and deep down I like that about this team because I'm angry too. I'm not going to lie to you, and I didn't think we played great tonight, but I was pleased with how we handled things in the second half."

***On Aziz Bandaogo's night and overall performance this season***

"This time last year was the first time he had ever had success at any level of basketball. He was having some games at Utah Valley, the year before he didn't play, he wouldn't even get in the games. So, his development is still early and new. One of the things that I don't think he's ever been asked to do is guard any position but a center. He's gotten pretty good at guarding a center, but now we're asking him to get out on the floor in a game like tonight and guard

perimeter-oriented players. [Earl] Timberlake played the 3 [small forward] at Memphis, so he's got all the ability to do that, but he's learning it for the first time. That's pretty fun as a coach to see a guy develop in front of you. In the Howard game, he was lost trying to do that. Tonight, he finally had some really good moments there in the second half. That's what's neat when you're working with young people, you can see them improving right in front of your eyes over a short period of time. We're seeing that with some of our young players. I do think of Aziz [Bandago] in basketball terms as a young player. I still think he can play significantly better; you look down and he's got 17 rebounds. He's having an impact and he's a big-time player.”