



**Head Coach Wes Miller Press Conference
Cincinnati 99, Florida Gulf Coast 62
Dec. 3, 2023**

Opening Statement

"I feel a lot better about the way that we approached the game and played today than I did after the Howard game. I thought we had gotten a little complacent after we played well against Georgia Tech. This is such a good group of guys that want to be about the right stuff. It wasn't like they didn't want to practice or anything, but I think they kind of felt like we've got it now. I think that's the kind of attitude that in basketball, when you get that attitude, you're not going to be any good. I hope we learned that lesson in D.C. last week, so I wanted us to really respond. It probably felt like a loss around here this week after we got back from D.C., because to me you can't miss an opportunity to learn. I believe for most teams it's very normal to not adjust and learn until you lose. I have seen really good teams and good organizations still find a way to win but learn from it and grow from it. That was the approach and I thought we carried that over into this game and I thought our approach was much better. I thought our play was good at times tonight, so I'm pleased overall with that. There's a lot of stuff that we have to clean up defensively, like a lot of little breakdowns and principles. That stuff is not okay. The effort and attitude was there for the most part tonight. I like the fact that we had 23 assists, but I don't like the 10 turnovers and I felt like a couple of them were just really careless. I can live with the aggressive turnovers, but we had a couple of careless ones. I thought Aziz [Bandaogo], Ody [Oguama] and Viktor [Lakhin] up front were very good tonight. We were able to utilize our size in a positive way, which is going to be important when you're trying to play big. Their big guy Keeshawn [Kellman] for them was phenomenal and at times it looked like he was the best big on the court. I like all three of mine that can play right now but we have to do a better job there. I thought our front court for the most part other than dealing with Kellman was good at times. I also thought CJ [Fredrick] was really good. I have been challenging him to be more aggressive, not passing up shots, but it is important for our team that he's aggressive. It wasn't Dan [Skillings Jr.'s.] night but you look down and he's got 12 rebounds. That's pretty dang good there, but I didn't think it was his best game. He had a couple careless turnovers. He passed up shots that he should have taken. He took a couple of shots he shouldn't have taken. He had a great week of practice, and it is great to see him find ways to impact the game even when it's not going your way. Finally, Day Day [Thomas] and Jizzle [James] just continue to improve. I didn't think Day Day [Thomas] had his best week at Howard and it was good to see him have some good moments and bounce back tonight."

On if the ball movement is becoming what he wants it to look like

"Hey, we moved the ball well. 23 assists. Sometimes you can move the ball well, and the assist numbers don't show up because you don't make shots. But we moved it well tonight and we

were able to make some shots, so I thought the ball popped it. I don't look at it maybe the way you do. I like encouraging ball movement, It's got to be a strength for this team. We did some nice things there tonight. It's not where it needs to be yet. We're getting a little too careless and it can continue to get better but there was some good moments with ball movement for sure."

When asked if something switched to make the team play a full 40 minutes

"I don't think we're playing 40 minutes. Gosh, I hope they don't think we're playing 40 minutes yet. I actually think Florida Gulf Coast has some real talent and I think they got a heck of a coach. I've watched Coach [Pat] Chambers coach for years. He's had a ton of success. I really watched his teams at Penn State and they did great stuff there. That's a really good team that will win a bunch of games in their league, they're just in that scheduling gauntlet right now that sometimes you go through with mid major basketball. I'm saying that because obviously we win a game by this kind of a margin, we had to play well because I have respect for their team. But they shoot 50 something percent in the second half. I haven't even looked yet, but it isn't good. They had their way and transitions a couple times with some threes. 55 [Chase Johnston] really got going. The big kid was kicking our butts. I didn't think we put it together at all for 40 (minutes), but we're trying to and we're gonna keep working to do that. And if we ever do put it together 40. We're gonna try to keep working to do it again."