



Head Coach Wes Miller Press Conference
Cincinnati 78, La Salle 60
Dec. 17, 2022

Wes Miller Opening Statement

"It's good to win a game where you hold somebody to 60 (points). I can't lie that after the first half I wanted to hold them in the 50s and I thought we had a chance to do that last four or five minutes of the game. So, I didn't like that part, but it was a choppy game, and give coach (Fran) Dunphy credit. He's an elite coach. He's one of the better coaches in our game. I'm glad to see him back on the sidelines. He's been tremendous to me as a young coach without any good reason, just that he's as great of a coach and a better guy. So, I think the world to him, and you know, he's going to have his team playing hard. I thought they made it choppy and scrappy, and it didn't have a lot of flow to the game. But to see us embrace the defensive end of the floor, especially in the first half, I was excited about that, and we got to learn to have as much energy for that, as for the games where you're scoring 100 (points) and the ball is popping around and flying around and you're making shots and getting dunked. I was proud of some of the defense tonight and glad that we won a game we held somebody to a low score, but there are certainly a lot of things that I didn't like, and I didn't like that we let them back in there late. We weren't strong with the ball against the press at times. I didn't like our rebounding. That's the second game in a row we've been outrebounded, and I didn't think we'd finish some possessions. I didn't like us in transition D (defense) all the time. There's certainly some stuff, but as the assistant coaches told me walking in the locker room, 'Coach be in the Christmas spirit and celebrate the positives at least today' in the locker room. So, I'm going to be in the Christmas spirit. We had 38 deflections by the way that we stated it during the game, and we had eight kills, which is how we quantify three consecutive stops in a row and that part's really good. I think we had six consecutive stops to start the game. So, there's some really good stuff. That's what I talked about in the locker room, and that's what we're going to think about right now. But we'll watch the tape, get a day off and try to learn from it a little bit."

On forcing 25 turnovers

"I thought in fairness to them a little bit, they threw a couple of away too. I thought they threw some pitch hits out of bounds and things that weren't there. So, I don't know if we forced 25, but we did force some turnovers and had some deflections. And again, you guys have heard me, we have to become an elite defensive team, we're working on it. I think the guys are getting a better sense of what we're trying to do defensively. And when they want to it looks pretty dang good. I mean from where I'm standing, especially if we can finish the possession a

little bit better in terms of the contest and the rebound. But again, I'm going to be relentless. I want it all the time."

On the Growth of the Freshmen Josh Reed and Dan Skillings

"You look at those two, and you look at him as a 2-3. Like Dan (Skillings) kind of a two-guard even though he's 6'6". Josh (Reed) is your prototypical small forward at the high level. You look at those two, if they keep growing with the gifts they have, you talking about at some point, that's the best 2-3 in college basketball, that's how much I think of them. Now, they're not there yet, but I do think they're capable of that and for this team, you know, especially when you think about losing, you know, Robin (Banks) and John (Newman III), for this team. Like the quicker they get there, the better we are in league play. I am pleased with some of their improvements over the last couple of weeks, but we still have a way to go with both."

On going to the foul line 28 times as a team

"I liked that we get to the line 28 times... that's great, but it was a strange game. There were a lot of fouls in the backcourt, we're in the bonus early. So, I don't think all of that those 28 free throws were a result of us putting this incredible pressure on the rim, but yes, we want to put more pressure on them. We want to get to the free-throw line. So, from a raw number standpoint, it's good to see that. I still think we have a ways to go because, again, there were some calls way away from the basket that got us on the free throw line versus throwing it in the post and attacking the basket, that type of thing."