

**NEW MEXICO 66, UTAH STATE 68
JAN. 26, 2019**

WINSTON STITH (REFEREE)

“Front court status is attained once all three points are across (ball and two feet). A ball that is not in contact with a player or the playing court retains the same status as when it was last in contact with a player.”

HEAD COACH PAUL WEIR

Opening statement:

“It’s disappointing for us to fight back like that in the second half and come so close to a win. Unfortunately, often one play does mean a lot for us. Sometimes, we need calls that might be 50/50 to go our way.”

On changes made to make the comeback:

“I’ve had a lot of talks with these guys about playing basketball the right way, and in the first half we just didn’t do that on either offense or defense. We just weren’t doing the simple, fundamental things that are independent of style of play, scheme or technique. Things like blocking out, passing, getting it to the open man and defending in a stance were all things we struggled with.”

“We had to find a way to fix some things up and fortunately, I thought we did that in the second half. The mental errors went down drastically, and it was enough to get us right back into the game. There at the end we had to question if the backcourt call was a mental error, but after looking at it, he didn’t cross half-court. It’s a bitter pill to swallow from a coaching perspective.”

On defense during the final Utah State possession:

“He (Abel Porter) made a heck of a shot. Part of our plan was that we wanted him to shoot since he’s not a guy who usually shoots very much. It was a contested shot, you have to give him credit. I thought he made a tough shot to win the game for his team.”

On getting Anthony Mathis to start scoring:

“It really wasn’t much. We finally just started sharing the ball and I thought Utah State started to wear out a little bit from the intensity of the game. The game started trending our way from halftime on and I think Anthony really started to get going in the second half.”

On the backcourt violation call:

“Initially, we thought that they were going to play it straight up. Our rule is not to cross half court when you think you’re going to get doubled. It was close. At the time I thought that maybe he did cross the line, but when you watch the clip it didn’t seem as though he did.”

On the close game and progression of the team:

“To me, it’s better to be process-oriented rather than win-and-loss-oriented. Unfortunately, losing is taking a toll and we need to find a way to win some games while we’re process-oriented.”

#35-CARLTON BRAGG

On changes made in the second half:

"We just tried to keep fighting. We work hard and grind in practice and we try our best to have that carry over into the game and that's what we did tonight. We're growing and we just have to keep getting better and better."

On the mental state of the team:

"It's pretty sad, we get down, but we try to pick each other up every day at practice. We see each other every day and work with one another at practice which is going to help us to be better."

On getting the week off before the next game:

"I don't think we need any days off the way we've been playing. We just have to keep going and keep grinding so we can keep getting better."

#2-VANCE JACKSON

On the loss after the comeback:

"To me, a loss is a loss even though we did show some fight and were competing. As a unit, we all agree that we need to keep playing hard and not give up. I don't feel that we we've been playing to the best of our ability in our previous games, so I do think that we have to keep fighting."

On improvements made in preparation of the game:

"Coach Weir never gives up on us at practice. He helps us to improve our strategy and execution, we just have to keep getting better."

On confidence going into the Conference Championship:

"I think that we could still beat any team in conference play. We still have a lot of games left in the season (until the tournament) ... I feel very confident that we will get it together by then."