

Nov. 26, 2021  
Miami 69, North Texas 63  
HP Field House | ESPN Wide World of Sports | Kissimmee, Fla.

## **JIM LARRAÑAGA**

### ***Opening statement...***

"I thought our physical effort in the first half just wasn't good enough at the defensive end of the floor to stop them. They had 40 points, they shot the ball great from three, they shot it great from two. But at halftime, we just talked about how important pure, physical effort is. We did a fantastic job in the second half holding them to 23 points after giving them 40 in the first half. At the same time, our guards really started to share the ball and get some better looks. Charlie Moore was in double figures, Isaiah Wong had 21, Kam McGusty not only had 18, but he had double-digit rebounds with 12. Our defense in the whole second half was drastically improved. Our offense then started clicking and it's a great come-from-behind win."

### ***On changes made defensively in the second half...***

"We didn't change anything strategically. We came into the second half with a great focus and intensity and were able to sustain it. It was very hard to even sub because the starters were doing such a great job."

### ***On the 24-8 run in the second half to grab the lead...***

"Coach [Bill] Courtney, who is our offensive coordinator, had mentioned a few things that he had observed. So, we ran a couple of plays to get Isaiah [Wong] a basket, to get Kam McGusty a basket. Every time one of them worked, our confidence grew. So, you've got to give coach Courtney a lot of credit for identifying areas that we could attack them."

### ***On the confidence in a comeback with guards Kameron McGusty, Charlie Moore and Isaiah Wong...***

"The guards, including our guys off the bench, can really help us offensively. What we need is to figure out how to get some help scoring-wise from our front court. I thought Jordan Miller had a very good game defensively. And I think Sam Waardenburg is doing an incredible job at handling the ball on offense and then defending on defense, but we really need some scoring."

### ***On the team's emotional investment despite being down at halftime coming off a loss the day before...***

"Well, I thought the guys on the bench starting chanting, 'defense, defense.' That's when you know your team is into it. It's the level of commitment that you have to make. We talk about four levels: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Today, we got to the spiritual level. That's the hardest; where everybody is cheering, where everybody feels like they're included, everybody is involved and committed to us playing well."

### ***On Kameron McGusty's performance...***

"I thought yesterday Kam struggled a good bit and he didn't play much in the second half because of it, whereas today I didn't even want to take him out. He had to ask to be taken out two different times because he was going so hard. That's what you want from your leaders. You want their effort to be so good that they need a rest and then go back in and sustain it again."

### ***On what the two-and-a-half days between games now looks like...***

"I think, right now, the whole key for the players is to enjoy the victory; enjoy it with their friends, relax get a bite to eat, get a good night's sleep. And then we'll start preparing for whomever our opponent is, tomorrow."