



Mizzou Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes vs. No. 5 Tennessee

Mizzou Arena - Columbia, Mo.

Final Score: Mizzou 67, No. 5 Tennessee 72

Whitten Family Head Coach Dennis Gates

Opening Statement...

"What a great, great team we played tonight. Unbelievable team. I think the best team Rick Barnes has ever had. So when you look at their program, you look at where they are compared to last year. They're healthy. Right? I think Zakai Zeigler and his injury last season impacted their progress in the tournament but they're healthy now and they're doing a great job. Our guys played hard. They played really, really hard, especially in that first half. Thought the second half, when you saw that basketball go in and we knew Dalton Knecht was going to come out and make some shots. He made some tough ones. I thought our guys got discouraged. At that point, we got to do a better job of not fouling."

On Tennessee's lineup change at half...

"Well, I think they had to put Tobe back in the game because of what he did in the first half. He was the spark. I think he had eight points at that point but he also had five rebounds. He was just picking up different loose balls around that area, jump balls, dunks. Didn't see him do anything else out the lane when he did a few things inside of it. Jonas did the same thing. They got some easy baskets. But again, the big picture of it all was our inability. We've got to do a better job drawing fouls."

On opening the floor for Dalton Knecht...

"Dalton was what he was in that second half and he made some tough shots. When you look at the difficulty of the shots that he took, our guys' hands were right there. They just went in. In the first half, I thought we did a better job of contesting passes that led to the accuracy of where the catches were. Some of them were off the dribble, but those catch and shoot or those threes that he had, I thought he was in rhythm, and like a great player, he's gonna make the right plays."

On Dalton Knecht's impact

"SEC Player of the Year, at least he's got my vote, and that's what he is. And when you have an SEC player of the year candidate, a guy that it's not even close, in my eyes, what he's been able to do for his team. You look at how important he is to that team. I don't know outside of unbelievable point guard play at Alabama. Those two guys are some great players who are able to get to that foul line but also they're able to score baskets when their team needs it. They can run, funny enough, I think we did a great job of taking them out of sets. But when you have a guy that can score at all three levels, which is what he did, and an explosion he was able to do that with the strength and the balance. He was able to do that and he did a good job. He got involved in rebounding, but also driving and drawing fouls. Our guys did a great job throughout the game. I don't know the overall stat but it seems for 16, he was six for 16, three from six from three. Our guys did a good job."

On Mabor Majak...

"I think he's given of himself a very unselfish attitude, he's given his body, he's given whatever it is, it's not even about the offense. He's just out there fighting and giving us an emotional boost that most

leaders do. He can do a sigh of relief. He can do it through action. And it can be the smallest things that stand out. He's very, very connected to all of his teammates. He's endured a lot in his life. But when you look at what he's able to do, he came away with five rebounds, most likely within the first half. But, I thought he did a tremendous job.”

Graduate Student Noah Carter

On the slow offensive start...

“We talked about it, we said, if our offense wasn't there, that the defense has to pick up even, it's got to multiply, so if we weren't making shots, we weren't gonna let them make shots. And that's kind of what our mindset was. I wasn't expecting it to go that long. I think the score was two to one for I mean, at least to the first media [timeout] and a little bit after that, but yeah, I mean, it was just about getting our defense together. And if we're not scoring we can't let them score.”