

**March 27, 2012**



## STANFORD CARDINAL

COACH DAWKINS: Just really proud of our guys. I thought they did a great job on a night where we didn't shoot the ball extremely well, just found a way to win. I don't think we shot it well, because they do a terrific job defensively.

I thought they have a lot of fight, a lot of heart, and they are really long, but our guys just pounded away, free throws and making plays when they had to. It was a great game and just really proud of our kids.

**Q. Were you pleased with the way after they came back and pulled ahead briefly, you guys kind of answered?**

JOSH OWENS: Yeah, I think that was something that bothered us a little bit during the early part of the season, responding to changes in the momentum and I was really proud of the way the guys fought back.

**Q. Playing earlier in the season, two games, how does that help you guys with a young team coming back here and dealing with the Garden and the atmosphere and everything?**

COACH DAWKINS: Well, the atmosphere is terrific here, as you know. For our kids to have already experienced this, there is an advantage. We are not, you know, looking up in the rafters. We have already done that. We have played in Madison Square Garden a few times already. That's helped us for our kids to be comfortable. The rest is their effort and their heart and going out and competing.

**Q. Can you talk about Aaron in the second half, running the offense and the decisions?**

COACH DAWKINS: I thought Aaron was terrific. I thought in the second half, he made a lot of good plays for us. Of course, he's our ball handler. He comes in and gives us a big spark. He's very confident in what he can do. He usually makes big shots and big free throws for us in almost every game, and he did it tonight. He stepped up when we needed it the most.

**Q. You played against one of the most athletic teams in the tournament tonight; how do you guys plan to use what you did tonight in your Finals game on Thursday night?**

COACH DAWKINS: First of all, what's your name?

**Q. Eric Kanchuger, Channel 6 News.**

COACH DAWKINS: You're my hero, man. (Laughter).

We did a good job, we tried to control tempo. They have a very good team, especially when they can get up-and-down. So we didn't want to play that game. We wanted to try to take time in possessions, get the ball inside, and we were hoping that would slow them down from getting in the transition. And then we tried to send a number of guys back to prevent from them getting easy layups. Normally when we would send three or four guys to the boards, we would only send two or three to the boards; that way we would have more guys back for defensive balance and maybe slow them down in transition.

**Q. On a night where your team didn't shoot well, what clicked for you tonight, Anthony?**

COACH DAWKINS: Before he speaks, I thought Anthony was terrific and he made big shots all night and he's made big shots all season to be frank. He was just waiting for his opportunity. He had great looks and he took confidence and he

made them. He really stepped up tonight and did it for us.

ANTHONY BROWN: You know, like you said, the team wasn't shooting well, and there was a change of momentum and I just wanted to do whatever I could to help the team out. Aaron was looking for me, got me a couple easy ones, my confidence got better and from there I was just shooting my bullets like Coach always tells us.

**Q. Being that you came here earlier in the season, how does coming back here help with overall recruiting and how does this serve as a springboard for next season?**

COACH DAWKINS: It helps in recruiting because first of all, playing in Madison Square Garden, it's a televised game, so just the visibility of our program is lifted because of that. That helps us.

We are a national school, an international school, basically. Kids come from all over the world. So for us to play in this kind of venue and for people to see us from outside of California is a big thing for us. That's been good.

**Q. And using this tournament as a springboard for next season?**

COACH DAWKINS: Well, any time you can play in a tournament, especially a tournament like this, you know, there's a very good field, and to be still playing in the Finals game, that's an accomplishment.

What we'll do is for our younger players that are returning, having gained this experience throughout this tournament, I think will bode them well going into the future. I think their confidence will be a lot higher. I think they will understand how to win games in this type of atmosphere, which will make us a better team in the future.

**Q. Can you talk about Josh's performance specifically on defense?**

COACH DAWKINS: I tell you what, Josh was the man tonight. I think he controlled the paint, blocked shots. He rebounded the ball well for us and we went inside to him and he produced and he finished around the basket. That helped our offense out, especially on a night we were not shooting the ball that well from the perimeter.

He was huge in the ability to get the ball in the paint, finish and get fouled.

**Q. Just wanted to ask you about the run that UMASS made to cut the deficit when**

**you were up by 12; what did they do that concerned you the most? Their length or defense or the way they extended their pressure?**

COACH DAWKINS: I thought, one, they sped us up. They really got after us and we -- you know, you have to be poised against their pressure and I thought during that period, we were not poised. I thought most of the game we were and they were able to make their run. When they were getting going hitting 3s, throwing lobs, transition, when they are doing those things, they are one of the best teams in the country and that's evident by their record and how they played in this tournament. So I thought we did a good job of withstanding that, and not letting it consume us. We were able to snap out of it and make the plays we needed to make to be successful.

**Q. What was the game plan for Chaz Williams? You pretty much held him down until late in the second.**

COACH DAWKINS: You can't defend him with one player, that's for sure. We tried to crowd him as much as we could and keep people around him in the paint. If he sees seams, he's going to run it like a fullback running to the basket makes plays. So we tried to keep him out of the paint as much as we possibly could. I don't think we did a great job of it but we did enough to get the win. The kid is terrific and he's going to be a great player for a long time to come.

**Q. Can you talk about the importance of a deep bench this late into the season, keeping guys fresh?**

COACH DAWKINS: Well, we always said during the season, we were talking to our guys, we were built for the tournament because of our depth and I think it's held true through this tournament; that we have been able to rely on more than six or seven players and that's allowed us to be fresh, have energy and compete for longer periods of time during the games.

**Q. A very pro-UMASS crowd; was that a factor in the off-shooting tonight?**

COACH DAWKINS: A terrific crowd. We expected them to have a great crowd and it didn't disappoint. That's the kind of atmosphere you want. You want to play in that kind of atmosphere. I thought their students were great and made a lot

of noise and disrupted us at the free throw line, but you want to be in that kind of environment.

Like I said, we expected it and they did a great job.

**Q. Now, you're 21-6 when your team is leading at halftime; what do you contribute that to?**

COACH DAWKINS: I think we have done a good job of coming out in the second half and typically establishing tempo after we have been up. I don't think we did a great job of that tonight. I thought we came out a little flat the first four minutes. We usually take pride in starting that first four minutes off well. But tonight we were able to dig down and still win.

When we get to the second half and we are up, we want to control the game, keep playing our tempo and typically that's worked for us.

**Q. You guys had zero fast break points, but obviously you guys like to run a slow tempo game. Is it concerning that you guys had zero fast break points coming into the Championship game?**

COACH DAWKINS: Not really. We actually like to get up-and-down, but we knew it would be difficult to get up-and-down as much as UMASS could. They really do run well. That game wouldn't benefit us at all. So we wanted to slow it down a little.

We would take a fast break if it was wide open, but if not, we wanted to come down, execute our offense and run clock and make them have to defend some.

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