

Arkansas vs. Central Oklahoma

October 27, 2017

Head Coach Mike Anderson

Opening Statement...

"I'm sure you saw by the number of guys we had dressed out tonight, we were shorthanded and I thought it really had an effect on the game. I thought our guys kind of wore down. Darious Hall, about two or three days ago, he bumped heads with somebody in practice and was a little woozy, so we kind of held him out for precaution. He was a little woozy, so we just kind of held him out. In terms of Dustin Thomas, he's a guy that's going to miss these games here and possibly three more. His is a violation of team rules. So with that being said, obviously it opens up an opportunity for guys like Daniel Gafford and even Gabe Osabuohien. We saw Gabe out there tonight and Adrio Bailey will get some quality minutes in these games going forward. Of course Arlando Cook's situation is still pending. We're just waiting until the law takes its course.

Other than that, we had a game and played someone other than ourselves and to me that was good to see. I thought it was kind of raggedy for the most part. We had a nice spurt there coming out of halftime. You know these games are the first games for this particular team, not just necessarily some new guys but this particular team. This wasn't very fluid like I'd want it to be, especially in the first half. We made some shots in the second half, but I wasn't very satisfied with our defense. I thought we were just trying to play more with offense. There was no flow. I thought in the second half, our defense became our offense and in that first three minutes, that was pretty good basketball with our defense really revving up what we were doing.

Then, of course, credit Central Oklahoma and Coach Hankins. They started making some shots. They went to a little zone and started making some shots and of course the game started just going back and forth.

We had some good productivity from some guys that came off the bench. We saw CJ with some significant minutes and I thought he did a lot of positive things. Daniel looked like a typical freshman in the first half, but in the second half I thought we saw him kind of impose his will out there on the floor. He's relentless, he rebounds above the rim. The only thing that has to get better for him is at that free throw line. He had a lot of shots that rimmed in and out, but that's what these games are for. The non-conference schedule is to get him really comfortable out on that floor and playing with other guys.

Again, it's the first game and its exhibition. We got to see a lot of different combinations and see what different guys bring to the table. I thought Adrio in the second half was much better than he was in the first half. He was fixing things on

defense, blocking shots, changing shots. He got to the free throw line and when you get to the free throw line, you have to make teams pay. Of course, when we got there tonight, we didn't make many. When you talk about those guys, the athletic guys, the ones who are going to be the finishers on the break or get offensive rebounds, they have to be able to knock free throws down. That being Daniel, a guy like Gabe, a guy like Adrio Bailey, Trey Thompson. Those guys have to be able to score more for us in those situations. We got what we needed out of it and that is some feedback from the first game."

On Daniel Gafford's performance...

"His presence is very evident out there when he's doing the right things. He picked up a couple of quick fouls early on and you just see him trying to get used to playing at this level. Then in the second half, I thought he settled down and got some offensive rebounds. He plays above the rim and we want to get him closer to that rim. Once he does that, he's going to get fouled a lot. It's really imperative for him to get in there and continue to work on shooting those free throws. He had a lot of free throws that kind went in and out, but it has to be something that's personal to him. He has to work at it, work at it, and work on them, but he's active on defense and offense. Once he picks up the little nuances of our defense, whether it be in man-to-man or in the matchup zone, because he's a big presence back there. When you have a guy with a 7-foot wing span and they have to shoot over him, it makes a big, big difference."

On how happy he is with his team's performance...

"You don't know how they're going to come out that first game. I thought it could've been a lot better from the effort standpoint, but given the numbers, I understand that. I'm happy and excited because why? I get a chance to get some feedback, now they know I'm not lying when I tell them something, what has to take place. Let's take the free throw shooting. Let's talk about defense. Let's talk about loose balls. Let's talk about how hard you have to play. Not only that, but when everyone sees that Arkansas, they're going to come after you. You're going to get their best shot. I can tell them that, but now they can sense that. So for me, it's good that we got a chance to go out and play somebody and we'll get better. We'll be better."

Senior guard Jaylen Barford

On impact of Daniel Gafford coming into the game...

"I think once he got comfortable and started playing his game, he affected us a whole lot, he brought us a lot of energy. Being more long out there and getting a lot of rebounds and altering shots so, I think once he gets comfortable he will be alright."

On OCU slowing them down in the second-half...

"I don't think they slowed me down at all. I just was trying to get my teammates involved and just trying to help everybody 'eat' and just get everybody to score the ball and make plays for other people. I don't think anyone can honestly slow me down. I think it was just me by myself doing that."

On how important pace is...

"Let me just try to play smart and play fast at the same time, but also take good shots and make good players for each other, not to rush anything. We just try to speed up the other team and just contain them as much as we can."

On how Arkansas played overall as a team...

"I think we played a little sluggish at first, probably some of the new guys were a little bit nervous. I think once the second-half started, we got the energy going like we wanted it to at a fast pace and had them turn the ball over a lot. So, I think we just got to correct things and just go back to the drawing board."

On the role Daryl Macon and him feel to set up others for scoring...

"It's fun actually just seeing your teammates getting to score the ball and just creating plays for other people. I've always been able to do that, but I think Daryl has always been able to do that as well he just learned how to play without the ball the last year and just getting the feel of each other and playing off each other is great and having Anton Beard as well doing the same thing."