

2017 Big West Men's Basketball Tournament

Game 11 - Semifinals Quotes

Final - No. 1 UC Irvine def No. 4 Long Beach State, 62-57

No. 1 UC Irvine

Head Coach Russell Turner

(Opening statement)

"Excited, honored, to play in a high-level college basketball game. Really proud of my guys, great defensive effort that led to the win. Thought we showed championship character when we got down in the second half. Tightened the screws defensively, made some big plays."

(On Luke tonight)

"I thought Luke got rushed a little bit, they played him with (Justin) Bibbins, they played small and under him. The game was officiated to allow a lot of physical contact which I think favored both teams and I think Luke got a little bit rattled and hurried at times by that so was out of rhythm on his shooting. Managing his minutes is always something I think about so I subbed him in and out and in and out, and he told me I did that too much around the 12-minute mark so I rode with him the rest of the way and he caught his rhythm at the right time which is what I knew he would do."

(On defending Bibbins)

"That was the whole focus of our defensive game plan in shoot-around today. Defend his pick-and-roll. He's crafty. He searches fouls a lot. There were a couple of other key things we did that I'd like to keep to myself. He's going to be one of the guys favored to be Player of the Year next year."

Senior Guard Jaron Martin

(On LBSU four-point lead with 10 minutes to go)

"One thing about our team is that we don't panic. At this stage, this late in the season, we've shown growth in our team, to go down by four with 10 minutes to go, that shows how much fight and resiliency we have and I'm proud of my team for that."

(On what led to the win)

"We defended, that's our identity as a team. We defend first before we think about the offensive side...the offense is going to come. As long as we defend and rebound, the main thing for us is getting back in transition. That's the emphasis, I think we did that pretty good today and I'm proud of the win."

Senior Forward Jonathan Galloway

(On his blocked shots)

"My job, one of them, is to protect the rim. As long as my team is doing their job, that allows me to do my job and my teammates to defend and stop the ball."

No. 4 Long Beach State

Head Coach Dan Monson

(Opening statement)

"I want to congratulate Irvine. We fought, and they've been all season the best defensive team in the league. They defended us well tonight and we battled, but they were better than us. That's why you have a scoreboard and we just came up short. There was a segment in that game when it was 46-42 us. I tried to rest a couple guys for a minute, and, that just shows how explosive a team they are, they went on a 7-0 run in two possessions. In the postseason, any three-minute segment can end you season. That one didn't end our season, because we had opportunities after that, but it changed the momentum of the game."

(On being proud of his team)

"I'm proud of all these guys. This has been one of the best groups I've had as far as representing this university, if you take out that we didn't win as much as we should've, but this is a group of good guys."

Junior Guard Justin Bibbins

(On how this loss makes him more motivated for his senior campaign)

"We just got to change the culture of the program and that's the exciting part. I always look at it from that point of view and you know, that starts next week. We got a freshman coming in that I believe will give us a different look on this team. We will back next year, you just got to look on the bright side of things."