

2017 Big West Men's Basketball Tournament

Game 7 - Quarterfinal Quotes

Final - No. 1 UC Irvine def. No. 8 UC Riverside, 76-67

No. 1 UC Irvine

Head Coach Russell Turner

(Opening statement)

"Pleased with the win for our team and credit to Riverside. They are a difficult team to play and that really came through tonight. I have a lot of respect for those players, especially Secean Johnson and their coaching staff. Those guys were well prepared and made things hard for us. We're just happy to escape with the win."

(On pulling away after a close game)

"That was the type of game we were expecting in this tournament. We didn't shoot the three well in the game, so we had a hard time making an offensive run. Credit to that goes to them. All of our bench guys were ready. We didn't make some three-point shots, that I thought were some pretty good shots. We did defend though and we did rebound. We're going to win ugly a lot of nights."

(On their opponent tomorrow)

"There is familiarity with both opponents, so we're just going to get ourselves ready and see who wins. I think we know that any team in this league can beat us and we can beat any team remaining in this tournament. The teams that play the best here will be the teams that win. We're in a good spot because I don't think we'll be the ones that will be making big adjustments. I think all the other teams are adjusting to us at this stage."

Senior Guard Luke Nelson

(On the close game)

"They were trying to play me very aggressively, so as a scorer I have to learn to adjust, but keep playing my game. It was a team effort though. Together we moved the ball really well."

(On the emotion of playing as seniors)

"This is the game I love and every game I try to play my best. It's not more or less than it ever is. I want to make the tournament again, just one more time. I'm just doing what I can to help my team win."

Senior Guard Jaron Martin

(On his mindset when UCI only led by three in the second half)

"There was a lot of time left on the clock. I just wanted to lead, that's my duty as a senior. Getting these guys calmed down and trying to figure out the best way to win. Down the stretch I knew I needed to score more and I just tried to do what I needed to."

No. 8 UC Riverside

Head Coach Dennis Cutts

(Opening statement)

"Well, that's a really good basketball team and I give them a lot of credit. Obviously, the standard for the league right now are those two senior guards who were incredible. And I thought we competed and gave ourselves a chance, they just made the plays to win."

(On UC Riverside's effort to battle against every team all season)

"I think we fought all year. When you see us we would always compete and give ourselves a chance to win. This group has gone through a lot and it's been disruptive. And we obviously never played the way we wanted to play like in early January. It's unfortunate but that's how seasons go sometimes and there's some things to build on. I would say we are a lot closer to good than not good."

(On the play of UCI senior guards Jaron Martin and Luke Nelson)

"They made plays, its not like we broke down, they just made a couple plays and make you pay for mistakes. The thing I give them a lot of credit for is that they were never bothered. Usually when you go on a little run, you could bother a team, but it didn't bother either one of those guards. Jaron was incredible in the second half."