



# 2018 Big West Men's Basketball Tournament

## Presented by MemorialCare

### Game 5 - Quarterfinal Quotes

#### Final - No. 1 UC Davis def. No. 8 UC Riverside, 70-66



## No. 1 UC Davis

### **Head Coach Jim Les -**

*(Opening Statement)* "Well first I want to compliment UC Riverside I thought they played extremely well and I told Justin Bell how much respect I had for him for the job he has done in the last half of this season. It is not an easy thing to do so they are to be commended. In March it's all about survive and advance and I think we all know as a group I have to coach a little better, they have to play a little better because we had moments of doing some really good things offensively and defensively but it just wasn't consistent enough to create some separation. I feel good about the win and surviving and advancing but also realistic that we know we have to play better tomorrow."

*(On relying on defense in final minutes)* "Defense has been our staple all year. It has not been as consistent as we'd like it over the course of a game, but I really liked it when we absolutely had to make plays and get stops I thought guys really stepped up and it came from a lot of different places. We are a team that does not have one big, huge rebounder, that averages double digits every night... everybody has a responsibility to come back to the glass and try to pick off those first rebounds and 50-50 balls and we let some get away but when we absolutely needed to have them I saw a lot of white shirts around the ball which is a good sign."

*(On play of Big Men without Chima)* "Those guys have been awesome and we never told them that they needed to be Chima [Moneke] they just needed to be the best they could be and if they do that, it will be really helpful to us."

*(On clutch play by TJ Shorts)* "One of the things we loved about him when we recruited him was that he just wins and makes winning plays. He doesn't care if it's a steal, getting a rebound, making a play for someone else and we have a lot of faith and trust in him late in the game to make good decisions and he was attacking the basket so well that we are confident with him taking that or a mid-range or even a three because he is so efficient."

### **Sophomore Guard Joe Mooney -**

*(On responding to adversity)* "When we struggle we always look to our defense and on offense we want to keep moving the ball and passing up on good shots to get great shots. Ultimately it comes down to our defense. We have to be more consistent, more disciplined and not let any team back in the game."

*(Scoring 15 off the bench)* "I was able to get in a bit of a rhythm. TJ was able to get in the paint and the defense was collapsing so I was able to off and get a couple shots to go. It felt good but we have to refresh and clear our mind for tomorrow."

### **Junior Guard TJ Shorts II -**

*(On message to fans)* "I'm just really grateful to be here, honestly. My coaching staff believes in me, my teammates believe in me, my family and friends believe in me and they knew once I got here if I got the opportunity it would be great for me. I am doing what I could do and I am grateful for this opportunity."

## No. 8 UC Riverside

### **Head Coach Justin Bell -**

*(Opening statement)* I want to thank our guys on the team. We're all still kind of emotional. They played really hard for me all year. I told them I gave them everything I got. You know it's no consolation we obviously wanted to win a game and do something special. We couldn't but for this team who started 0-8 and the way we did and the adversity we went through and to make it to the Big West Tournament was a good feat for these guys and I don't think it should be overlooked. We just ran into a good team today, Davis. They've together and been whole all season and it's the reason why they won the conference. You know they were strong coming into the conference they clinched it. We hit our peak a little late and we just kind of ran out of days."

*(On the journey he's taken now that it's over)* "For me it's been a great experience. I got to be a head coach in the Big West Conference. Early going I think it was an adjustment period for everybody but we grew and we learned. Like I told you before, we just tried to really stick to the proper hard work and we really stuck to working everyday. I'm really sick right now so that's part of the reason why I'm a little emotional and my body is just whipped right now and it all just kind of caught up to me. For the team, you've seen how we've grown so much. They really learned to just focus on their guys which is the coaches and the players and that's it."

### **Senior Forward Alex Larsson -**

*(Emotions throughout the year)* "I've been here for four years. Yes it's emotional, and it came quicker than I expected. I'm really proud of the team, the guys and coach Bell have done an amazing job. Everything that happened, he still managed to keep us together. Looking back it, I wouldn't have done anything any different. I think we worked hard and we competed and we stuck together, we had fun, we laughed. It's a learning experience."

### **Senior Guard Chance Murray -**

*(Emotions down the stretch)* "Like Alex said, I feel like coach Bell has done an amazing job. He challenged us everyday to keep our heads up and to keep pushing. Resiliency I think is the word to describe the team all season. Like he said, we stuck together."

*(On coach Bell's emotions and locker room vibe)* "Losing hurts, it was kind of quiet. You know no one wants to lose but like Alex said, we're all brothers, and we've been through everything. Of course I wanted to win but like coach said, we just ran out of days."