

Penn State Basketball
Micah Shrewsberry Postgame Press Conference
vs. Cornell- November 22, 2021

Opening Statement

I told our guys as we were getting ready for this game that this was going to be a challenge, watching these guys on film and watching how they played. They played Colgate and Colgate jumped on them. Colgate was up big and Cornell ended up coming back and winning, then Colgate went to Syracuse and beat them by 15 like a couple of days later. This was going to be a challenge in terms of how they played and the effort it was going to need need defensively to slow them down. I told our guys in 2009 when I was at Butler, we played in a bracket buster against Davidson. Steph Curry used to push the ball and transition and really attack and used to show clips of that and say, 'sprint like Curry has the ball.' You watched tonight and you saw John [Harrar] running for the offensive rebound and sprint as hard as possible and turn around to build a wall before those guys could get back there. Cornell played at the highest pace in the country going into this game and they got eight transition points and that's kudos to our effort. Our guys focused in terms of how they were going to guard them and I proud of our effort tonight

Q: Could you address your effort on the offensive side of the court as well? You had 13 or 14 turnovers until about seven minutes to go then everything started clicking.

A: Right now, we go through too many kinds of mental lapses with the ball where we're careless with it. We need to value it more. Our goal is 10 turnovers or less every single game and we haven't quite cracked it yet, but we'll get there. We settled down and started to get different things. They started running jump late in the game, we then had more guys coming towards the ball. We were getting it into the middle, we were getting it out of the middle. I think there's where you saw the difference from UMass and even St. Francis where we didn't look to attack, but when we had opportunities, we tried to attack, we caught it, we moved it and we found the open guy. We're going to take open layups, dunks, and wide-open threes because those are good shots for our team. I kept saying late, just win the game. Don't wait for them to lose it, we need to do everything to win it.

Q: What was the defense showing you to lead you guys to take 34 threes?

A: They really swarm the basketball when you put it down and drive, they're a very help-oriented team. So, we talked about attacking off the dribble and when the help comes you got to play off two feet and find the guy who's going to be open now. I think when we look back, we'll find better opportunities where we could've attacked again. We also want to have the defense in rotation and whether you shoot that three or drive it again, now the lane's open for you to get layups. That's a learning process for us. When there's a night when those threes aren't falling, let's drive it in there and kick it out. So, it really comes down to taking what the defense gives us.

Q: How does it feel to tie the program record for threes in a game with 15 in just your fourth game as head coach?

A: I spent a lot of time with my guy Matt Painter, and when you see things you don't usually see, when you look at the box score, like when I saw Sam [Sessoms] is 6-of-7 from three, Coach Painter would usually say it's like seeing, 'Bigfoot at the mall right there.' But hats off to Sam. He works on his game. He stays after every single shoot around and gets shots up. He comes in on his off days and gets shots up and that gives him the confidence to take it when he needs. He passed up a wide open three at UMass and he put his head down and drove it. That's going to make him predictable and how people guard him now. But if he had the confidence to take those threes and make those threes, it's hard to guard him now. We were trying to get the other guys in the right positions to take open shots and that's what they did.

That's what Myles [Dread] is going to do, that's what Jaheam [Cornwall] is going to do, John [Harrar] even had one in the first half, and I wanted him to take it. We're happy with the record though. I hope we break it here soon. We're going to keep taking those. We're going to keep taking open shots and if the guys continue to move the ball, we're going to get a bunch of open ones too.