

Penn State Basketball
Student-Athletes Postgame Press Conference
vs. Rutgers - January 11, 2022

Sam Sessoms | G | Sr.

Q: Sam, did you try to put more effort to score tonight after you sort of struggled against Purdue [in terms of] getting to the rim and finding your shot?

A: Yeah, that's been an emphasis from the coaching staff. Coach Shrewsberry tells me as well that when I get in he just wants me to attack and look to score first, find my scoring opportunity, make the right passes, you know, honestly just get into the game. Getting downhill until someone stopped me.

Q: So at times in late-game situations you look like almost a completely different player. What is your mentality when it comes to crunch time?

A: I just listen to Coach Shrewsberry. He's gonna call out the play, and we just have to execute it. Believe in the practice and work that we put in, so at times me and [Jalen] Pickett will look at ease out there, but we're just following what we do at practice every day.

Q: Sam, how important is the chemistry between you and the screeners when you guys run so much pick and roll with you as the ball handler?

A: It's very important, because when you go a step early it can lead to John [Harrar], Greg [Lee], Jalanni [White] drawing fouls, and them being a step lower might lead to my defender not being touched. So we actually did a lot of work on ball screen synergy. So we did a lot of drills just being patient and coming up the screen making sure John makes contact, making sure I'm driving my defender off of John's shoulder. We did that all week, so the connection has to be on point and tonight it was.

John Harrar | F | Sr.+

Q: Can you talk about your defensive effort and how much of a focal point was that because it looked like the coaching staff was very adamant to get your hands out, that sort of thing.

A: I think Seth Lundy did a heck of a job. We emphasized Ron Harper Jr., and all the big games that they've won. Ron Harper Jr. goes off for 25-plus [points], so Seth Lundy was all over him. [Ron Harper Jr. and] Geo Baker, those two guys make that team go. We want other people to make plays. And I think our defense is turning into one of our best sides of the court. We obviously have talent on the offensive end, but we want to guard, we want to know what's happening. Our scouts, I think they're next level, like we know the play coming. I try to call it out for everyone, we know [what play is] gonna happen. Yeah, I'm really happy with our defense.

Q: John, Greg [Lee] out-rebounded you tonight, had his first double-digit rebound performance. What's he been like since coming back from injury? What does that say about him?

A: Thank you for that statistical reference right there. He told me when I was on the bench, but yeah, I mean Greg Lee's a big body, we went huge to start the game. I think that's also helping our defense, like we're so long, we're in our gaps, we're showing everything. I think when you guys first asked me what Greg Lee is about, and I was telling you that he was a dog, like Greg Lee is a dog. He'll go in there, he'll throw his body around, he'll go get you 12 rebounds every game. That's the type of dude he is, and then we got to see him post up some

smaller dudes [and] make some plays. So I'm sticking with my [saying that] Greg Lee is a dog. D. A. W. G.

Q: We got a chance to see Jevonnie [Scott]. Can you tell us what you thought of him getting out there for the first time and how did he handle himself?

A: Jevonnie Scott doesn't play tonight if he doesn't go compete in practice. He's been competing in practice, he's been all over the glass in practice, he's been giving me trouble in practice. So that's why he got out there and that's why he did what he was supposed to do. He has so much upside, I think Penn State basketball fans are really going to like Jevonnie Scott in the years to come.