

Penn State Basketball
Micah Shrewsberry Postgame Press Conference
vs. Winthrop – November 7, 2022

Opening statement: Coming into this game and walking out onto the court, I was nervous. I was nervous because I recognized, and you guys may not realize this because of how the game went, but it's a good team. It's a good program. Hightower's a little banged up so he's not 100%, but he's a first-team all-league guy. They lost nine games last year. They lost two or three conference games, one of them being in the conference tournament. They lost six non-conference games last year, and then they're on the verge of going to the NCAA Tournament. We're going to look up in March and that team's got 23-24 wins to its belt. And that's not by accident. Mark Prosser is a good coach. They run good stuff, they really defend, and they play hard. So, credit to them. I think the anxiety part was I wanted us to play well. I really wanted us to play well, because I've seen us play well in practice. I've seen what we've been able to do in practice. I wanted to show up tonight and I'm happy for the most part. I'm happy with our play.

Q: I think a lot of people focus on the three pointers, but you set a really good tone early by forcing them to turn it over, which wasn't necessarily a hallmark for you last year. You ended up with 28 points off turnovers. How important is that? In this game and for when you go smaller this year to get those points in transition?

A: We're not pressing. We're not in passing lanes. We're not overdoing it. We just want to be solid and disciplined in our spots. And that's when good things happen for you. That's when you get deflections when you're in the right spot. When you're playing with long arms, you're active. I thought some of those turnovers really helped us. I think the thing that really helps us is that if they get a rebound or a turnover, they have to outlet it. Everybody else is pushing it. Everybody else is bringing it in then the other guys are running. They're not, like, waiting around to see, you know, 'Hey, I need to come and get the ball.' We're running. We're pushing. We're trying to get layups. We're trying to get our feet set. We can keep swinging and get open threes. And you can't play set defense on every game. Every minute of every game, right? We had to watch that last year. That's what we had to do. But us being able to force more turnovers by just being disciplined and solid helps us offensively.

Q: Last time we spoke, you spoke about being nervous that you had all your bases covered before the season. Fast forward to this game. Do you think what you wanted to accomplish in the offseason translated well onto the court?

A: I think so. I still want us to be better defensively. 11 three pointers is too much. It's too many. Early in the year last year, we gave up a bunch of three-pointers, right? We have to clean that up in terms of the threes that they got or threes that they're making, right? We can't give up threes when guys don't do anything, when they're not running actions to get a three, when they just come off the screen and the guy shoots a three in your face. Like, don't let Hightower shoot threes. Make him bounce it and put it on the floor. He made a couple early in the first half. Those are ones we have to take away. Eleven is too many, so we have to clean that up. We've got to be better. That hurt us early in the year last year until we could get it corrected. So, we'll watch it and try to get better at it. There were things I thought they would test us on the glass. I thought our guys did a good job of boxing out and holding them to one shot.