



MEN'S BASKETBALL POSTGAME CONFERENCE

K-State 98 vs Incarnate Word 50 | December 11, 2022

HEAD COACH JEROME TANG

Opening statement...

"Thankful for the fans that showed up today, especially the students with exam week and all that stuff, dead week and everything that goes on with it and for them to take the time to come. I was thankful for that. Very pleased with our guys. Obviously Incarnate Word was a little under manned, they had some injuries and they're missing some guys. This could easily be a 'me' game where guys are trying to get theirs and I really challenged him to make it a 'we' game and really work on the things we need to work on and share the ball and be great teammates and I thought we did that. We let down a little bit in the first half with some transition buckets and some easy cuts, back door cuts, and at halftime we challenged them to really lock in away from the bench and talk and really do a better job defensively and I thought for the most part we did that. So, I'm happy to coach."

On getting off to a 9-1 start to the season...

"Our whole staff, we're such like forward thinkers and so it's not about what we've accomplished, it's about the next thing. And so we did what we need to do today and now the next couple of days, we've got to figure out what's the best thing to do to get us best prepared to do a great job with our exams and then be ready for Nebraska. And so I really hadn't thought about that."

On what Dorian Finister did well today...

"He didn't play scared right, like he didn't look deer in the headlights when he went out there. Then I thought he was aggressive from the very beginning and if you're gonna get subbed out of the game, get subbed out for being aggressive and trying to do something not because you're just out there. And so that's the thing and he's been, I mean every practice, he's our best rebounding guard, and he showed it right. I really like Dorian, I think he's gonna help us. I think we need him to help us as we go into the Big 12 because guards win games for you and I think there are times when having three guards, a wing, and a center is better for us than having two guards, two wings and a center. So I need him to come along."

On his excitement to start playing tougher competition...

"Nerve racking. I know we're going to fight, right, we're going to compete. And so it's in those moments, are we gonna be able to make big plays? Because it's a player's game, players make plays and so I am excited. I'm excited to see where we're at and watch us take another step. You kind of gauge based on your opponents. So you know, watching LSU beat Wake Forest the other night and so you say man, LSU is a good team because sometimes you come away after winning, you say, 'Okay, well maybe then they weren't as good as we thought.' But then you watch them do that and you say, 'Okay, so they were a good team and it was a good win.' So that's kind of how you gauge it going forward. But I am so thankful for the group that we have, right like, I wouldn't trade any of them and I feel really blessed that our staff did a very good job of evaluating the character of our guys and I think we have the right group. I know, I know we have the right group on the bus."

On nine Big 12 teams being projected into the NCAA tournament...

"The league is incredible. Who's not in, like he says nine but who's not an NCAA tournament caliber team in our league. So yeah it's going to be a bunch of one possession games, people beating up on each other. You go, good coach, good coach, swish, great coach, good coach, good coach, boing bad coach. That's what it's going to come down to. So I'm looking forward to it."

On Keyonate Johnson playing at a high level right away...

"He's a special player man. I think, you'll have to ask him this, I'm pretty sure he's been playing basketball since that time, he's been hooping. He's been getting himself ready for the opportunity and for us, it was just about getting his legs underneath him. And then finding the best ways to put him in position to allow his talents to shine. Yeah, doesn't it look effortless, like it looks effortless for him out there. Sometimes I wonder if he's playing hard but then you see the readouts of the numbers and his speed up and down the court and his jumps and you say that man was getting after it. But it just looks so easy for him. Yeah I'm amazed too."





SENIOR KEYONTAE JOHNSON

On 9-1 start to the season...

"We just tried to take every game just to play how we've been playing like in practice and just don't take it for granted. So for us to start off nine to one it's a blessing, just seeing all the hard work we had in the summer coming in all come together."

On areas the team needs to work on ...

"We're still trying to get better at just communicating on defense right now. I feel like today, we did better in the first half, just getting on the lead and just trying to build off the energy so in the second half, we came out with a better urgency. Not to say, we just need to communicate better on defense and take care of the ball more."

On getting to play conference teams...

"Oh man, very excited. We all worked for this. We all came to a big time division one college to play against games like that. So for us to be able to play that, just a blessing and just ready to go to work and just play the game really."

On how Dorian Finister is progressing...

"I mean for me when I first came in, he made a big jump. He was one of the guys that stood out to me as a freshman. He was competing at a high level and just seeing all the work he put into summer and today he gets time to shine. So I mean it was really good seeing him just succeed and putting in the work and all that stuff."

JUNIOR NAE'QWAN TOMLIN

On holding UIW back from scoring in the second half ...

"We knew that defensively that we could hold their team from scoring more than what they did in the first half. So like that was just the goal in the second half to come up with a more aggressive defensive edge."

On getting some stops ...

"Definitely good for us because that's what we want. We want to go in transition and we want to get multiple defensive stops, we call them kills. So that's just our game plan."

On his chemistry with his guards...

"Progressing pretty well, we built that chemistry throughout the summertime and stuff like that. So this is what we do."

