



MEN'S BASKETBALL POSTGAME CONFERENCE

K-State 55, Wichita State 50 | December 3, 2022

HEAD COACH JEROME TANG

Opening statement...

"Yeah, we were deeply inspired by our football team's defensive stand on the goal line and decided we want to make this a defensive game, and don't worry about making shots tonight. I thought our guys in the second half did a really good job of guarding and rebounding. I think I need to have Will Howard come in and let them know that they have some offense too, so maybe we'll have some better offense against them."

On a message to the team throughout the game...

"Just keep grinding, keep grinding. Yes, you know, I mean, shots they're gonna go in at some point in time, you know, but if we kept defending and we kept attacking the paint, I thought every time we got to a paint something good would happen, and we didn't need to settle for shots. I know they will open shots, but that's exactly what they wanted us to do. We needed to impose our will on them and keep attacking the paint."

On shooting...

"In particular, I thought in the second half, we contested shots, and that we had the right people shooting. We took away the ones we wanted to take away and then we rebounded the basketball."

On watching the football game with the team...

"This is the second year in a row. I sat in the locker room before a game, right and and we were actually getting ready to go play, last year when Baylor had a good four stops on first and goal from the two yard line. That was really cool. I love college football, and I like to be around other people when I'm watching it. Right but this one we had to shoot around we went in and we thought we watched the last minute of it. Well it went to overtime and we're like, crap, we can't watch overtime. We got to watch film. We have to, you know, do our thing and, and then he's like, Ah, screw it. We're gonna watch it and watch the overtime and they were in there and we all together and it was just a great experience, man because you know how hard these coaches work right? I mean, it took us when I was at Baylor. It took us 18 years to win a Big 12 championship. I honestly wanted to win. There was a part of me that wanted to win the Big 12 Championship more than winning the national championship, right if you'd asked me to pick one. What it means like that means that like you have grinded for a whole season and you faced everyone and then you, in their case they face someone twice, and and and you you win man at this there's like nothing like it right when the big 12 championship and so I was so happy for them because I know all the work that the staff put in the players put in and you know, you're thinking on the goal line, you know, like that's like a strength coach win. Right like all those sprint's in the summer and all the weightlifting and the tire flips and the competitive drills and everything. It's like Dude, we got, you know, inches, and then the other team is like it's all their summer work to get right and to come through in that moment, man it's just such a culture program when I actually had tears and cuz I was so happy for them and because I understand how hard you have to work to get it and so just couldn't be prouder to be a part of this."

On future regional games...

"Yeah, I tried to do a little research on the history of it. And so I understood we used to play with each other all the time. And then at some point in time, you know, one team got better than the other team so the coaches didn't want to play and then when it flipped flopped, the coaches didn't want to play and you know, I'm not going to sit up here and say we're definitely going to do this forever, after this time is over. We're gonna look at it and see, based on the net and everything else that goes on, what is the best to give us the best position, you know, to have the type of schedule or the strength to schedule that gives us the best chance to go to the NCAA tournament and have a high seed in the NCAA tournament. And so you know, I don't think a team higher than third or maybe one time a team hired in the three seats ever won a national championship. And so that's going to be my thinking once this thing is over."

On Markquis Nowel's 3 point shot...

"Huge, huge and I mean, he is such a competitive kid, you know, and we've talked about what kind of shots we want him to take. And I thought all of his shots tonight were quality shots, you know, inside-out threes and just one fall in





tonight but you knew he was going to make a big play, whether it was on the defensive end, on the offensive end. He's gonna make a big play and I just, you know, I'm glad he's on our team."

On the resilience of the team this season...

"But you know, I think it's like just the makeup of our staff to write that we got staff and everybody involved in the program. We just like we just scrap and claw for everything and we've gotten where we're at because of hard work and and we want our players to understand that that and this thing is a fight right? It's never easy. All the other team's practice hard and you know they have a game plan too. And so, you know, you have to have that fight and understand that. If you let up you're going to lose right and the no lead up is what allows us to continue to stay in things. And then at some point in time you're gonna get a break here. We always say whoever plays the hardest gets the luckiest and I thought that was true tonight."

On tonight's game...

"I thought they did a really good job. I thought first of all, I thought our staff responded well, I thought we got together and we looked at ourselves and said, 'What could we do better? Differently? What is it that we did too much of what not enough of and we put a plan together?' We stood in front of the team and told them we have to do a better job as a staff and these are the changes we're going to make to help us with travel and everything. And now this is the change we need you to make. And so we ask everyone in the program to look at it. Look at the game first and say what can I do to improve for our team, right and help our team to win and before you start, like trying to point the finger at other people or we need this than the other? And I think they did a really good job of that. They responded well, in practice, they were competitive. So we're getting a little bit better every day."

SENIOR MARKQUIS NOWELL

On the resilience of this team this season...

"We have a great group of guys who are from all different areas. We got Louisiana, we got Norfolk, we got guys from New York, so we're just hungry and we're determined to win. You know, every guy on his team puts himself last and puts the team first. So, you know, that's just our motto. Just put yourself last and put the team first and just play to win. And that's how we've been since the start of season."

On the last minute game winning shot...

"Man, I was happy to see one go in first and foremost. I mean, but you know, they left me open. And I just felt that it was a rhythm. That I should take it and then it went in. But I feel like our team really locked in the last seven minutes of the game. Got some key rebounds, got some key stops, and that's what really helped us get this victory."

On what they will take from this win to the next game ...

"Yeah, we'll definitely look at the second half and figure out how we can do that in the first half, because we started off slow again. But you know we just got to keep learning and keep growing. And I'm pretty sure that we will do that and I believe. Our coaching staff will prepare us for the next one so that we could be better than that next time."

SENIOR KEYONTAE JOHNSON

On coming back after the Butler loss...

"We just came in, said next game coming fast. So learn from watching them, learn from our mistakes and see what we did wrong and carry over to this game. We'll talk a little more, we talked more in the second half. Basically just defense, my defense wasn't how he [Tang] wanted it to be at Butler so just try to make a statement this game."

On Nae'Qwan Tomlin's work ethic ...

"I feel like it was a big game from Nae'Qwan just for confidence wise, I mean that's what he's capable of doing every night. So for him to show that this game against Wichita [State], a big game for us. Shows that how good he could be as a player, just come in and be consistent in practice and do everything the right way."

On keeping your composure after getting two fouls...

"I was in the same situation at Florida, I picked up two fouls, I feel like that just helped me carry over to this. Coach always told me to stay ready. Try to do something different on the bench to just get my teammates involved when I'm not on a court, be a better leader with my voice. So I just tried to tell everybody at each timeout just something little like, keep talking on defense and everything, and then I come back in and just be ready."

