



MEN'S BASKETBALL POSTGAME CONFERENCE

K-State 97, Baylor 95 | January 7, 2023

HEAD COACH JEROME TANG

Opening statement...

"This was not fun, it just wasn't, it wasn't fun before and it wasn't fun after. It was fun during, the game of basketball was fun and watching young men compete, do it at a high level, that's fun, but you know, before and after, and somebody's got to win and lose. I love Scott [Drew] and I never want to see him lose, never a good Saturday, when Scott loses or Matt loses or Grant loses, you know, Paul Mill loses. Yeah, it's never good Saturday when that happens. Thankful for the Baylor fans and the welcome that was really cool. And then it turned out to be one heck of a basketball game,, so credit to both teams for doing a great job.

On Markquis Nowell's improvement...

"A train is a very powerful piece of machinery, but if you put it on sand it can't go anywhere. All we've done as a staff is just put some tracks under him [Markquis] so that he can go wherever he wants to within the boundaries of the tracks. And for him to embrace that, right, and say 'Okay coach,' you know, because some people see those as limitations, but it's not, it allows you to propel your game further by taking some things away and adding some things, helping them to allow to see certain things. We have these personality things we do and Markquis by nature is a tiger, right? And the Tiger's bigger, stronger, faster than a lion. But the lion's the king of the jungle, right and we've been helping Markquis learn how to be a lion for parts of the game, and then at the right time, because the tiger will only eat what it kills, and so at the right times in the game, we need him to be a tiger, you know, just go eat and kill and he's learning when and how to do that. And you know, and keeping his teammates involved and I'm just so proud of him because it's hard work right he's worked really really hard in the offseason. And I mean, not just in basketball, right? He's helped us recruit the team him and [Ismael] right and he's constantly in a group text that they don't allow me to be in talking to the guys about, you know, mental preparation of the game and bringing guys along and helping coach. It makes coaching so much easier when you don't have to coach the ball all the time. And you can coach the other four guys up there. And so it's all a credit to him and his hard work.

On the mindset of the team...

"We're not trying to prove doubters, right, what we're trying to just continue to believe in ourselves and we know where we wanted to get to and we're not there yet. So I mean had we lost this game, it wouldn't change that we've made great strides as a team. And because we wanted it doesn't mean that we don't have any room for improvement as a team so we're just trying to keep it like compartmentalize it. I don't know when's the last time a team had to play three ranked teams in a row and two of them on the road. That's a great accomplishment for these young men. But none of that matters if we lay an egg in the next game, right? So it's like what's the next thing that we have to do?"

On the game plan against Baylor...

"Well we knew they're arguably the best group of guards in the country and great three point shooters and multiple guys, more than 50% of their shots are from the three. And so we wanted to try and make it as difficult as possible. Some of them they just missed, you know, and then some of them we were right on them and they made them you know, and it's just it's a make or miss game, you make them, you look like a great coach, you miss them, you look like a bad coach."

On Ismael Massoud seeing more playing time...

"Ismael has not seen the floor because somebody's injured, Ish is seeing the floor because he is given the kind of effort and has embraced playing the way that's gonna allow us to have a chance to win every night. And whether he was making shots or not making shots his effort level, his attention to detail is on defense. Like just his communication out there it has improved drastically but he shows it in practice, right, because I'm not a dude that if you don't do it in practice, you're not gonna do it in the game, and he has embraced that. And that's why Ish is playing."



On trusting Nae'Qwan Tomlin on the court...

"Nae'Qwan hasn't quite earned our trust yet, in that when he picks up two fouls that he won't get the third one right. And so that's just something we gotta keep working. There's some discipline things that allow him to get fouls that he can clean up. And as we continue to work on it, he's gonna get better at it and stuff. But you know, also when you go into half tied and you say 'Okay, my man only has two fouls, I don't have to worry, he could play more in the second half,' I was okay with that. But I don't believe in fouling a guy out in the first half if I could trust him."

SENIOR KEYONTAE JOHNSON

On the last play of regulation...

"It was for me to go screen for [Markquis] and hopefully they either bait on me or bait on 'Quis and flip back but they played a great defense and 'Quis still got all the way to the rack and we still had a chance to try to get a putback layup to end the game."

On the team understanding this game...

"Just came in playing with confidence. We all just ready to play in big games, I feel like that's what the team about we all want to play on the highest level and for us to showcase our talent we got to showcase in these games, and I think that's why everybody came in the game just played a role in the right way and nobody just felt selfish, we played as a team, that's how we came up with two wins on the road."

On the key to securing big time points...

"Really it just comes down to big time players got to make big time plays. I mean, we all got confidence in each other. I mean the team, nobody selfish when coaches got confidence in us so I feel like that just helps us, when a coach has confidence in you then it just helps the player showcase what are you able to do."

SENIOR MARQUIS NOWELL

On improving his personal game...

"Just taking good shots, you know, I watch a lot of film with Coach Perry, and Coach Tang. The key of my shots are just taking good, good shots. And when I do that I'm more efficient, so I just try to focus on that more and you know, just try to take rhythm threes."

On the importance of Nae'Qwan Tomlin...

"Nae'Qwan is big man, he's so versatile, he has great length, great speed. When he's out there on defense it's kind of scary to see him guarding you because he could do anything, he could move like a guard. He picked up some ticky tack fouls because he still got to get adjusted to the way the refs are and the way the big 12 is but once he gets that down, he's gonna be really scary to an offense and defense."

On the importance of this game to the team...

"Coach Tang tried to make sure that it wasn't about him and it was about us. He talked about that in shoot around. He knew what it was gonna be like coming back, but he just focused on a game plan and that was to win. And that's how the team handled it and that's how he handled it."

On the improvement from Ismael Massoud...

"Definitely [Ismael] has taken a big step man, his big shot today. But, you know, his work and his work ethic is what's really making him excel, his practice and preparation is good and it just leads to confidence. And when you practice hard, and you give it all you got each and every day. That's what builds your confidence to do it and in the game and I feel like he's been really working on that and practice and he was able to show it today. Shout out to Ish."

