

2012 A-10 Men's Basketball Championship Semifinal – Game 10 – March 10, 2012

#3 Xavier – 71
#2 Saint Louis - 64

SAINT LOUIS POSTGAME INTERVIEW

COACH MAJERUS: Well, congratulations to Xavier. They're an excellent team, they played very well today. They played with the greatest purpose. They had energy and effort and they took it to us.

I don't know who is going to win this thing, but both these teams are really good. And we faced a good one today.

Q. Cody, in the previous games with Xavier so much of your offense was dictated by the defense, how much was that a problem today not being able to get the stops to get the offense going?

CODY ELLIS: Defense has dictated our play all year, that's what made us so good this year, but we didn't come out in the third ready to play at all. We weren't aggressive like we usually are and we didn't get the stops that we usually do. That affected our game.

Q. How much are you looking forward to playing in the NCAA Tournament next week and how much of a leader has Brian Conklin been this year?

DWAYNE EVANS: Brian has been huge, he's led us to where we are now, looking forward to the Tournament, got to bounce back from today, get more block-outs, and focus on defensive and get ready for next week.

Q. (Away from mic.)

CODY ELLIS: Obviously we haven't thought about it at all, we're getting ready for the games that we have been playing. Like Dwayne said we got to get back to St. Louis, work on our mistakes and get better as a team and do what we have done every day this year and see what happens.

Q. You guys made the second half run and got within a point and I believe at that point Xavier scored on the next five possessions. Defensively, you talk about not having effort in the first half, but in the second half Wells went wild, what was going on?

DWAYNE EVANS: I missed a few down the stretch and we let Xavier do some things, and we weren't able to get the stops against their offense that we needed. A lot of things I need to work on personally. We need to focus on next week.

Q. As much as this loss has to hurt, you have to know that there is something beyond this and tomorrow you get -- you should be in the NCAA Tournament unless a great injustice is done, that must be a slightly good feeling going out of this?

CODY ELLIS: Obviously no good feeling coming out of a loss. This hurts right now. But tomorrow we've got to pick it up, look forward to

getting better before we play and hopefully coming out like the team we know we are.

Q. Rick, there was a point in the first half you were up 20 to something and it seemingly went south. What happened in that span?

COACH MAJERUS: The fool's gold of bad shots. You got your 6-foot athletic guard who is a junior shooting a jump shot against a 6-11 -- 32, I forget his name, I just know these guys' numbers.

That's ridiculous and I told Dwayne that and he worries and has anxiety over the jump shot in the left corner. The left corner in front of our bench in the first half and in the left corner in front of their bench the second half. He thought they were going to score or something, and it was jump shots. Sixteen of their first 20 points came inside the 10 and partly because we were dependent upon each other in the schemes of the defense and the support in many instances. Like when they got that first back door pass he was standing straight up and they just zipped by. They come out of a time-out, run a backdoor for 52 or 10, I couldn't see their number, when they scored, and that was Rob's fault. We were overplaying that because we feel we get support from the base, and it just was one of those days where -- you get down to the nut-cutting time and they zip a ball past Kwamain -- and they have done that all year. They are opportunity oriented guys, without any loss of vision, so right over Kwamain's head and on the biggest possession of the game, Conklin doesn't block out. This all reverts back to me.

All my former players come to practice and they all watch and they all say you're too easy, you're too old and you're too soft. I used to be a tough coach and I've got to look at myself and see, is it resonating through me? Because that isn't how we got 20 -- whatever the hell wins we have.

I'm disappointed in myself, I'm disappointed in the team and I applaud Xavier for being opportunistic, smart, energetic and they are a very good team. I believe they were picked 1, I don't know.

Q. Coach, can you talk about Conklin's leadership this year and his career --

COACH MAJERUS: It's typical for me to go all retrospective on the year when the year is not over and I understand your situation. Right now I'm a little bit -- let's put it this way, I'm pissed at Conklin for that foul, that was an intentional foul and then for the backdoor and for the block. He played uncharacteristically without that today. And, you know, again, you know, I try to drive this deal here, and probably I've let it slip a little bit.

I think we won something like -- I don't know how many we won out of our last whatever. Then I think a sense of complacency sets in and at home when we beat 'em we had the big Billiken Blue behind us, we had the band and the fans and we were down and that brought us. Today we were out there, an island by ourselves and we didn't necessarily "man up" collectively, one guy played his guts out today, and Cassity in the minimal minutes he played he gives great effort.

Q. Does that mean you're going to be tough on the guys in the next few days getting ready for the tournament?

COACH MAJERUS: Well, I don't know what prompted this but I mean, I don't have any friends that are telling me, "let's go have a cannoli right now. Every friend I got is saying "let's go eat a banana" and I had the "banana talk" with them after the game today.

Hey, I don't want to take anything away from Xavier, they're a really good team. Holloway is an outstanding player. They hit some tough shots. Jordair and Mike couldn't have defended better, you've got to give those guys credit, head a hand up.

Q. The shot Lyons had there at the end was a 2-point game.

COACH MAJERUS: You're right.

Q. Looking ahead, I asked the guys if you hate to lose like this --

COACH MAJERUS: Honest to God, I'm proud of what they said, I didn't say anything to them, but I'm not looking ahead to anything right now, I'm looking forward to seeing the films, identifying the mistakes and correcting the issues at hand.

Then I'm not looking ahead to anything at all about anything other than remedying what it was that occurred today. I'm not trying to be disrespectful, so if you're asking me what I'm looking forward to, I'm looking forward to getting home as fast as I can and getting in that film room.

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