

March 9, 2006



An Interview With:

**NEBRASKA
CORNHUSKERS**

**COACH BARRY COLLIER
JAMEL WHITE
JASON DOURISSEAU**

MODERATOR: Coach, we'll come to you first for your thoughts on tonight's victory.

COACH BARRY COLLIER: I thought our team got off to an okay start in this game and we had a good first half working, but Missouri was not going to back down and they made a push there. We fouled them and started missing free throws. That was really a big part of our problem.

In the second half, we stretched it out to I think a dozen or so again and really weren't able to finish with some scoring at that point and they really took it to the basket on us. We had some trouble stopping them and then some great individual plays were made at the end of the game. Jamel's three-pointer was a huge basket and then we finally got some stops in the first few possessions.

Q. What about Oklahoma? You guys played them earlier this year? Jason, this goes to you. You won that game by a point, what do you think about the matchup with them?

JASON DOURISSEAU: That's a tough, well-coached team. We're going to have to come out and obviously give a lot of effort. But we got to show a little bit more toughness than we did tonight as far as free throws and some turnovers. Just, you know, letting the ball go through our hands and things of that nature. We're going to have to try and win the battle on the glass as well because they are a great offensive rebounding team and they got one of

the best front lines not only in our conference but probably in America.

It's going to be a tough game. We're going to get rested up and be ready for them.

Q. On Sunday in Columbia you kind of took that loss on your shoulders because the weight-guard, in other words, went off. What was your attitude heading down the stretch in relationship to that?

JASON DOURISSEAU: To be honest with you, some of those threes he shot tonight at the end of game there wasn't much difference. The only difference was the result. I had a hand up on Sunday as well as tonight and they didn't go in fortunately tonight.

But a player of his caliber, like I say, he's capable of going off at any time and, you know, we're fully aware of that. I just try to stay on him as much as possible and chase him as hard as I could. Fortunately he wasn't knocking down as many shots tonight.

Q. Do you find it a little ironic that on Sunday your coach said you guys fell in love with the jump shot at the end of the game and tonight you are left with a decision whether to take one or not? Talk about what was going through your mind at that point?

JAMEL WHITE: Well, the shot clock was going down a little bit. My teammates just found me at the right place. It was a good shot.

Q. Jason, was this last dunk powered by a senior who didn't want to finish this thing tonight?

JASON DOURISSEAU: I figured -- it's part of that, but figured if I didn't try to dunk that I probably would have got it blocked. They weren't calling many fouls down there. I just went aggressive. Aleks made a great play to get that rebounds. He found me, they were scrambling, I had a hand at the basket, I just took it. I was going to try and dunk that to matter what.

Q. What are you feeling right now? This is something new at the Big 12 tournament.

COACH BARRY COLLIER: I am hoping that we don't have many questions so we can go practice free throws right now because I think that about gave the game away. I feel really good about our team because they want to keep playing basketball. There's four days here for us as we finished in the 6 spot and I thought that our focus was really good. We had got out to a 12-point lead in that first half with just four to go, stumbled there at the end of the first half. And then again, I thought we started well again in the second half and pushed out to a good lead.

But **Missouri** didn't stop. It was a tough ballgame for both teams, I think.

Q. If could you also talk about tomorrow night's matchup against Oklahoma?

A. It's been a while since we played them given that was the opener of the **Big 12** season. So we have certainly watched them play and push themselves right to the brink of being in the Championship position. But the thing for us is to try to duplicate the things we have been capable of doing this season.

Talked to our team before our game about those kind of thoughts and focusing on making similar plays that have already been made. With **Oklahoma**, they have got an excellent team. They really didn't -- they were without one of their key guys who has played very well for them, when we played, and but they -- you can always start with Gray and **Bookout** and Everett, so they are obviously a very good team to finish third in our league.

Q. That shot clock run down a little too close for comfort when ended with White's long three-pointer?

COACH BARRY COLLIER: Really we were trying to milk as much clock as we could late in the game and working with the penetration and trying to attack and maybe draw some help defense and find an open teammate. That's kind of a basic in basketball.

But we're not -- we don't have a specific time other than before that, that sucker buzzes, so it was fortunate.

Q. Speaking of free throws, 50% from the line tonight. Anything you can attribute to that poor shooting? Is it just a lack of concentration?

A. I don't know that -- we had a couple of guys there that don't get a lot of opportunities in the first half that missed and then Alex missed a couple early. Sometimes free throws seem to work like that, they think more about it than they should at the free-throw line, but I don't think that anybody has -- we're close to a 70% free throw shooting team for the season and yet tonight it just about cost us the game, so -- I don't think that will happen again and I hope we get fouled as much because going to the free-throw line is normally a very good thing.

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An Interview With:

MISSOURI TIGERS

**INTERIM HEAD COACH
MELVIN WATKINS
KEVIN YOUNG
JIMMY MCKINNEY
THOMAS GARDNER**

COACH MELVIN WATKINS: I thought we got off to a little bit of a slow start. Like our kids done at times, I knew they were fighting back and we did. We fought back and made a game out of it, had a chance to win the game. I think any time you play these type of games you want to be in the position to come down the stretch to have a chance to.

Q. Jimmy, there was a point end of first half where you just drove about four, five times. One they took away, some you got points on. Last one you wound up on your back grabbing your leg. What is going through your head there at that point?

JIMMY MCKINNEY: Well, Coach was telling you like we want to get some transition, wanted to push the ball more and try to get back to the bucket. That's what I did. I listened to Coach and like he's always right, I listen to Coach, got the ball to the bucket and I thought he was up under the basket.

Q. After the game on Sunday you talked about how Maric was the underrated man in the Big 12. He had a similar performance as he did on Sunday.

KEVIN YOUNG: The way their offense is set up, they really try get him down low, and earlier he got a couple of breaks where he was down low and he really got a couple of offensive rebounds that hurt.

Q. How hard it is for you guys to process right now that the Big 12 is the end of your season?

JIMMY MCKINNEY: Yeah. It sunk in when the clock was ticking. But it's pretty hard, especially for me. I know Coach is taking it pretty hard too. I think competitor don't want to lose and just go out like we did is very demoralizing, we're taking it as a man and it's really a growing process for us just for the future

Q. On selection Sunday are you going to watch the process?

KEVIN YOUNG: I won't be watching, no. Probably be over at Coach **Watkins'** house playing pool.

THOMAS GARDNER: Selection Sunday really have nothing to do with us.

Q. This has been a really breakout year for you. Frustrating way to end it? How frustrating was tonight?

THOMAS GARDNER: I think was frustrating just because I didn't feel my performance was -- I didn't perform well enough for my team to win. 12 shots, 3 makes, I got to give credit to Nebraska defense. It was learning process. Got a lot of room for improvement.

This game was evident of that. As leader of the team I am more frustrated because I put the loss upon my shoulders. With 50 seconds left I took a tough 3 -- don't think about that when you are playing. After the game I knew I could have got to the basket. But I settled, and in the end it affected my team.

Q. Thomas, simply do you know where you are going from here? Any thoughts?

THOMAS GARDNER: Not right now. My thoughts right now is just to spend as much time as I can with Jimmy and Kevin before they graduate. My decision will come later. Sitting here, talking to the people in my circle, finish school and that's something that will take care of itself.

Q. How hard is it to sit on the bench for the rest of the game?

KEVIN YOUNG: It was tough, but it's tough when you are on the bench and the guy come in for you and not really pull his weight. But I give Grimes credit. I think he did a tremendous job. I think he fought and battled well and my praises go to him. I think he did a real good job when I was out.

Q. That wasn't how you envisioned your last game, was it?

KEVIN YOUNG: Nobody envisions their last game like that. **Big 12** you are supposed to play physical, supposed to hit, supposed to wrestle with people, and I was doing what I have always been doing and tonight the ref blew the whistle on me. We got two big guys in the paints, of course they are going to be battling. We're going to fight. I am just not going to let them get position on me. I'd rather foul out going like that instead of having them just catching and scoring all the time. I was just trying to battle with them. I think he came in and did a really good job.

Q. Being a senior leader on the team, what did you say to the team after the game?

JIMMY MCKINNEY: Well it was pretty tough, coaches did most of the talking. My chance to talk to the guys and -- I just said listen to the -- really didn't say anything. I am going to have my chance to talk to my teammates. They have been great teammates through the whole process.

It's difficult, but I look at this and our starting 5 was in foul trouble. That's crazy.

Q. Jamel White hurt you guys up in Lincoln. The shot he made with a second or two on the shot clock, anything you changed defensively about that possession?

COACH MELVIN WATKINS: No, they were trying to attack us on the inside so we had to collapse to give a little -- we had foul trouble, and that was part of what we wanted to do, is collapse and try to get back to the shooters and of course he had to hit it and he did, and give him credit for that. We thought it was pretty good defensive possession.

Q. You were obviously emotional when you took the podium here. What did you say to your team after this was all over?

COACH MELVIN WATKINS: I thanked them for the effort, all the things that we have been through this year and under the circumstances I really wanted to thank the team

and hug them for allowing me to step in their lives a little bit and they not quit and come to practice every day and give me the type of effort and respect, that I really appreciated that.

Then encouraged them to go back and be students. You can't just stop your life. You got to move on and I expect our kids with great courage to do that.

Q. Obviously such a rough year for Missouri. What do you think is the next step that Missouri has to do to kind of bring things back?

COACH MELVIN WATKINS: If you talk to me you are talking to me about I want to be the head coach here, that would be the first thing. But above and beyond that, got to get back and evaluate where you are, evaluate your talent, the season, and look at where your needs are. If you got weaknesses in your personnel, you go out and recruit and try to improve on those weakness.

Q. Where do you go from here?

COACH MELVIN WATKINS: Back to the hotel, get something to eat, visit with my family a little bit and, you know, that kind of thing will all take care of itself. Probably going on the road recruiting is what my plans are. I am going to go and continue to work until someone tells me not to work anymore.

Q. Would you have any objection with being an assistant coach again here at Missouri?

COACH MELVIN WATKINS: I really don't even want to answer that question right now. Being the head coach or assistant, you know, I appreciate the question but you got to understand what just happened to us out there. Our kids fought their tails off and came up a little short and that's kind of the only thing running through my head right now.

I am sure as I get back and regroup a little bit, I can maybe answer that question a little bit better. But right now, I am feel pain for my kids.

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