

March 9, 2007



An interview with:

TEXAS

CHARLIE FISS: Joined by the Texas Longhorns. Coach Rick Barnes and his three student athletes, D.J. Augustin, Kevin Durant and Craig Winder.

Coach, your thought on tonight's victory.

COACH RICK BARNES: Craig Winder was the guy that turned the game around for us. We were definitely lacking the energy or whatever you want to put on it in the first half and we came out the second half and got going a little bit but then I thought when Craig came in, the whole complexion changed and I think our players really appreciate what he does for us every day and they obviously felt what he was doing.

What he did, he came in and said, hey, let's do this. He played really with reckless abandon and really got us going.

Q. Kevin, at half time, did you ever have the thought in your head that this might not be your shooting night?

KEVIN DURANT: I really didn't think that. Coach just told me to keep being aggressive and chip away at the lead. My guys did a great job of encouraging me after the half time and keep shooting it.

Once we came out we had a lot of energy and kept chipping away at the lead.

Q. There will be two big schools of thought tomorrow. One is going to be Baylor blew a 18-point half-time lead. The other one will be Texas stormed back to take this game. From your feeling out there, when did you kind of know it may have been the latter?

KEVIN DURANT: Myself, I just wanted to get in with ten minutes left in the game. We did that, and I think we were down nine. We was playing harder than they were. We were getting stomped and we were making baskets. We were

moving the ball and we came back and hit some great shots.

Craig did a great job at picking us up. Craig won the game for us by far, man.

Q. Craig, if you can, talk about normally it is your guys to the left are the ones making the plays down the stretch. You made a couple big buckets. What were your emotions late in the game?

CRAIG WINDER: Just trying to help them out and playing with a lot of energy. The buckets came from energy points, hitting the glass and things like that. My biggest thing was trying to get them going in that part.

Q. D.J., can you talk about just the start you had and how you are kind of being forced to do some other things, create some things with your shot not going down and then coming alive in the last couple of minutes to put in six key points?

D.J. AUGUSTIN: You will have nights when you are not shooting well. I try to do other things. I try to get other guys involved. I was trying to get the ball to Kevin as much as I could.

Like Kevin said, Craig really sparked us. We praise Craig tonight, and like I say, I just tried to do some other things.

Q. What was the attitude like at half time in the locker room?

D.J. AUGUSTIN: We knew we wanted to win this game. We know why we are here. We are trying to win the Big 12 championship, man. We just came out in the first half sluggish. We just turned up our intensity in the second half.

Q. It is not the way you would script it, to fall behind early, but wins like this, coming back, showing mettle, how do you feel about your ability to come back?

KEVIN DURANT: Baylor is a great team. They played us well every time we play them. Coach talks about swag. When we came out, we didn't want to look like we were going to lose the

game. We wanted to look like we was up. We did that and we got a little confidence.

We came back and won the game.

Q. Rick, I wonder if you can talk about the toughness that Kevin showed today bouncing back from that 0-12 start, how he played in the second half.

COACH RICK BARNES: I thought early -- again, first of all, Baylor is good. Their guards are as tough to guard. Their guards are talented. Those guys have been playing now for two years, and they were really in a rhythm. They were in a rhythm last night. They were in a rhythm to start the game.

We didn't do anything to get them out of it. We settled. They were being much more aggressive than we are. We were just settled. We missed some shots around the rim we needed to make but we didn't.

We just didn't have any energy. At half time, it is probably the longest I have talked to them all year. What I said to them, I said, hey, right now, if our season ended right now, how would you feel? And I said, understand, this is what a NCAA tournament game is like. You are going to play against a team that you are probably supposed to beat. If you don't have more energy than what we have, this is what you get. I want to see if we will come back and play 20 minutes like we don't have any left.

I told Kevin, you got to quit settling. And he came out first time all year I have seen him a little -- I don't want to say uptight. Again, I don't know what it was. But that's the first time I have seen him where he looked like he wasn't real sure of himself. When he got it going, it just ran through the whole team. You could tell when he got it going.

We didn't extend the defense and tried to pick up the pace a little bit and tried to get the game going a little quicker and took some chances and tried to get them doing things maybe a little bit quicker than they wanted to play.

When started making those shots, you could almost feel it from our point of view. Craig came in and really gave us a huge lift. And D.J. was better. D.J. wasn't very good in the first half. Nobody was good in the first half. That's why he is the Player of the Year in the league, because he responded to as bad a half of basketball we played this year and as bad as he's played.

Q. Coach, Baylor got off to a good start, running and trying to push the tempo. Were you surprised, though, they didn't try to slow it down, try to extend the shot clock. It seemed like they settled for a lot of quick shots?

COACH RICK BARNES: I thought early they were doing that. They made shots. They can shoot the ball. They're talented. And they can shoot the ball. But they run their false motion delay game, whatever it is. Again, even in the first half, they were doing it. They were just making plays at the end of the shot clock.

We were going down one pass in the shot and not doing anything. They were comfortable. I thought they came out relaxed. I thought they played relaxed in the first half. That's what I told the guys in the half time. We just got to get it down to ten. I actually told them at our place, I think we were down nine or ten with seven minutes to go.

I said, hey, we have been here before. Let's just keep working it and see what happens, put the pressure back on them. I felt if we could get the game close again, put a little bit of pressure back on them, we were able to make some plays. D.J. made some plays at the end. Damion made some plays. They weren't waiting on Kevin to do it. A.J.'s shot at the foul line was a big play.

Q. What kind of carryover benefits do you think there are for your young guys in a setting like this to be able to climb out of that hole tonight?

COACH RICK BARNES: I tell you, our team -- we've been down. We were down -- first half of this game reminded me of the Gonzaga game where we were just awful. Even in that game, I think we were down 28. Even though we cut it back to ten, this team, I have said before, we don't always do the smartest things but the one thing they do, they keep playing. They keep playing and they haven't flinched all year.

Now, I did tell them at half time, I didn't particularly like their body language. One time when they went up 17 or 18 in the first half, I made up my mind I wasn't going to call a time out because I think I would have killed them if I would have. And I didn't want to do that, and I just said, hey, let them figure it out themselves, because I don't think I can help them then. And I told them that at half time. I told them we have been down before, you have found a way to work back in it, go

one possession at a time, play some four-minute games and get it close and see what happens.

Then I looked to a couple of assistant coaches. I said, can we win this game, in front of the team. All at once I heard a couple of them, yeah, we can win this game. I said go win the game.

They came out and won the game.

Q. Coach, after you come off this game, beating a Baylor team that came in kind of on a roll, how similar does tomorrow's challenge against Oklahoma State look to you?

COACH RICK BARNES: Again, I said a week ago, I thought that Oklahoma State, even with adversity they have had to go through, they could have closed out the season with three wins. I thought they were the one team that came in here, they could finish the record with a season 8-8, I thought they deserved to be in the NCAA tournament because of their résumé start to finish.

Today when I watched a little bit of them, to me it seemed like they were back to the team we saw in December, January. Obviously they will have the crowd here. They will have the house with them.

It is going to be a quick turnaround, a very quick turnaround. The fact -- that's what I was looking at right here, the minutes. 40 and 25 and 36, 38, 30. That's going to be a quick turnaround. Hope that we've got enough to give them a game.

Q. Kevin didn't look like he was limping in the first half, but did he seem tentative to you at all, like he was thinking about --

COACH RICK BARNES: I don't know what word you want to use. My words were you weren't very good. I said, you are not very good. I look down and I said, you are 0-11. Half of them were not very good shots. He just wasn't very good. I don't know if it was tentative or whatever.

He was pretty good in the second half. And I told him that after the game. That's what I said to him, you weren't very good. The second half, you were pretty good.

He got it going. Again, we went up and started doing a little zone pressing and he got up on the ball and he finally said to me, if we are going to keep doing this, I won't be able to finish this game. I said let's stop doing it then, because we need you out there. He backed it off. At that point in time I thought we got the momentum and the rhythm shifted to where we needed it.

But he had a lot going. When he gets going like that, we have been around him long enough to know that he can score. Whatever he got in the second half, but we've seen him do it and you could tell the confidence swing shifted to us.

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BAYLOR

CHARLIE FISS: We are ready to begin with the Baylor Bears. Coach, we will come to you first. Your thoughts on tonight's game.

COACH SCOTT DREW: We started out well, very pleased with how we came out and the intensity we had and then give Texas a lot of credit. I thought their press changed things around. We didn't handle it very well.

That's disappointing since we were pressed for 40 minutes the night before and handled it very well. We all saw what Durant did in the second half. We tried three different guys, four different guys on him -- three different guys on him. And Texas deserved the game. Give them all the credit.

Very proud of our guys. Proud of the fact that we competed like this. I hope this leaves a taste in our mouth that we don't want this to happen in the future. Everyone that played tonight is back next year. We're a year older and hopefully this experience will pay off next year so we don't have this feeling like we do right now.

Q. Curtis, what was the difference between the first and second half as far as the way you guys played?

CURTIS JERRELLS: I think we played well throughout the game. But in the second half, we stopped making some shots which may have let us let up on the defensive end. They had a good run, they are a good team. They made some shots and made a run. We didn't do a good job of stopping them.

Q. Aaron, Coach just said you guys are a year older and a year wiser now and that maybe this will help you not have the feeling you're having in your heart right now. What is that feeling you're having in your heart right

now? What was the roller coaster ride you were on all night?

AARON BRUCE: Expectation, I think, from going -- outside perspective didn't have much of an expectation for us in the tournament. Inside out we knew we were very good and knew what we could do, I think we showed two sides of us tonight. We showed what we can do in the first half and you have just have to credit Texas with having heart and Kevin Durant for making plays for them in the second half.

He really did step up and led their team to a win.

Q. Mamadou, talk about the defense on Kevin in the first half and what happened in the second half?

MAMADOU DIENE: Like Coach said, we started to get him pretty good. We gave everything we got in the first half. But he is a good player. He just step up in the second half and make shots.

Q. Aaron, did your offense change at all in the second half or the way you attacked the basket or what happened?

AARON BRUCE: It wasn't necessarily our offense that changed or our defense that changed, it was just that Texas made a run. Momentum changed more than anything. Them being the aggressor both on the offensive and defensive end. We struggled with dealing with that. They did an excellent job on putting us on our back foot in the second half and keeping us there.

Q. Aaron, can you expound on what Coach said about being a year older next year and leaving this bad taste in your mouth.

AARON BRUCE: We have a long time to sit and watch and we are going to recover immediately. I think a lot of us are feeling pretty drained right now, emotionally more than anything.

Just back to the drawing board, another year, another chance, same crew. The off-season is where you put in work and where you

really improve. We're all very, very driven people. But I think being in these situations in the past few days for us will spear us on a little bit more and leave a bit of taste in our mouth.

I think we have seen where we can go with things. It is just a matter of working hard and making it happen.

Q. Coach, normally we would talk to you and you are chipper under all circumstances. You look like you are feeling a lot of pain with what happened out there tonight.

COACH SCOTT DREW: From the standpoint we really prepared for this, really wanted this. To basically have the lead we did and have it slip away, I mean, that hurts a lot worse than not being in the game.

Again, you look at the shooting percentage, first half we held them to 22% which when you get stops, you get fast-break opportunities. Second half, they shoot 53%, you don't get stops, you don't get fast-break opportunities.

We obviously didn't shoot well in the second half. So to answer your question, we were running the same offense.

Q. Scott, what's going through your mind when Durant comes out and pretty early in the second half got in a groove?

COACH SCOTT DREW: Change defense. Try something new. We throw a zone out there. He hits in the zone. We go man. He still scores. Switch a different man on him, and he still scores. At that point you say he is definitely the first pick in the draft but you can't do anything else.

Q. You touched on it earlier, Coach, talk a little bit about the press. Do you feel like that got them into a rhythm and took you guys out of it in the second half, despite, like you said, you handled the press very well last night.

COACH SCOTT DREW: That's what's so frustrating from a coaching standpoint. Last night the whole game was about pressing and attacking. Tonight we are in the same situation. Again, they had all the momentum. We missed some finishing opportunities, we didn't miss last night.

They just led to more momentum for them. Again, Kevin Durant made the plays.

That's a special player. Those guys don't come around a long time -- once in a long time.

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