

March 13, 2008



An interview with:

**COACH FENNELLY
ALISON LACEY
AMANDA NISLEIT**

THE MODERATOR: Coach, your thoughts on tonight's game.

COACH FENNELLY: First of all, congratulations to Texas A&M. They may be one of the best teams in the country right now. They'll do a great job in the NCAA tournament.

On behalf of our team and everyone associated with Iowa State, I want to thank the people from Kansas City for a great event. It was an honor to be a part of it and I think our players and fans made this more special than it would have been otherwise.

We thank everyone in the Big 12 office and hopefully like we've done in the past, Iowa State did some positive things for the tournament.

Q. The first 6 or 7 minutes when they went up, that was the difference. What made it so tough to go against them in the first few minutes and what did you do to get back in the game?

ALISON LACEY: The trap is good, we had trouble getting it up. The defense wasn't there. Once again, they're a good team, nerves as well, and they came out strong and we were ready to bounce back and they came out again ready to go.

Q. Alison, can you talk about whether the team was feeling fatigued? You guys get tired playing three games in three days, especially in overtime yesterday?

ALISON LACEY: I don't think you can put it on fatigue. We would have been practicing anyway, and I think everyone would rather play than practice. I don't think you can -- you're in the semifinals, for what you're playing for, you can't blame it on fatigue, you forget about it and you keep playing through it.

Q. Amanda, what got your team back into the end of the first half and the second half?

AMANDA NISLEIT: We were struggling with defense, and we paid more attention to detail. We got a couple of big shots and we were able to hit some open looks.

Q. Alison, when you cut it to 41-36, how were you feeling at that time? Did you feel like you had the momentum at that point?

ALISON LACEY: You feel good, you hit shots. The crowd is into it, it's so loud in there, you know, I'm sure A&M is feeling pressured and we've got to thank the fans for supporting us. It was just like Hilton, and they helped us get back into the game. Thank you to the fans again.

Q. Alison, when you play a team as physical and strong as Texas A&M, how do you attack that? What's your philosophy?

ALISON LACEY: They're physical, they're bigger, they're stronger, you can't step back from that. Attack pressure with pressure, I think, so you're -- I think the biggest thing with us, we did a good job of rebounding, a lot better than last time we played them. And our posts boxed out, so we can't stand down just because they're more physical than us.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies.
Questions for Coach.

Q. Coach, first of all, talk about the technical, have you ever gotten one that early in your career and look at the big picture of what happens to you guys beyond this tournament?

COACH FENNELLY: I think I've gotten one earlier in a home game against Missouri, I think. I'm not positive. As far as going on, we'll find out like a lot of other teams on Monday night if we're still playing.

I think our team is worthy of consideration and we've done a lot of good things, won a lot of

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games and played a great schedule, best league in the country. I think this tournament shows the capability of our team. So we would love to play again and love to coach our team again and love to have another opportunity to play and represent Iowa State and the Big 12 in the NCAA tournament.

That's why you do what you do, so we'll sit on pins and needles Monday night and hopefully St. Patrick's Day will bring us a little luck!

Q. Bill, talk about the physical nature of Texas A&M, and early on it didn't look like the kids were ready for that; it didn't respond as well as you hoped.

COACH FENNELLY: They're a great defensive team. Obviously you can't simulate that in practice. We didn't do much today in practice. You know, it's nothing that we weren't prepared for, it's hard to go against it.

You know, I thought Joce did a good job of trying to break down pressure and get the ball to people. You have to make a few more free-throws when you get the chance and a couple more open 3's and get consecutive plays.

We would get it to 5 and they would come down and make a 3 on us. You have to have consecutive plays when you're playing good teams and to the kids' credit, we're down 17 and it looks like they're going to blow us out of the building, and we make it a game again and I'm proud of them for that. They're a great defensive team. I think they've done this to a lot of people and it's hard to score on them, very hard.

Q. You kind of touched upon what I was going to ask, but is it that defense that really makes 'em so tough? Are you surprised that they had as much offense early on that kind of got 'em there, too?

COACH FENNELLY: I think they're a team that relies on pressure defense and taking you out of stuff, and they're very good at it. Offensively, A'Quonesia made shots, and Starks is a first-team all-conference player, so it's not like you're surprised by it, but offensively they were much more efficient. When we made a defensive mistake, they made a shot.

And that's part of the reason we got down and got flustered, and that feeds their defense even more. When they get balanced scoring like they had tonight, and defend like they do, they're tough to beat. I think that's why they've won 11 out

of 12 games. And there might not be a team in the country playing as well as they are right now.

Q. Coach, you guys didn't get the ultimate goal of winning the whole thing, but how proud of your kids are you, the way they've played in the last three days?

COACH FENNELLY: I'm not smart enough to put it in words how proud I am of them. Not just for what happened this week, but I think this tournament crystallized for people, what they've done and what they've been through to get to this position.

When you look at the things that have happened and the excuses that could have been made by our players, never happened. And now we're in a position where we played three great games against three great teams. But a lot of other people got to see it -- people in Ames have seen it all year, but a lot of other people got to see it today. We're proud of them and pleased that they showed the courage that they have all year in this tournament.

Q. Coach, obviously A&M is going to try to take Ezell out of the game, given what she's done the past couple of games. Were you happy with the looks she was able to get?

COACH FENNELLY: She went 2 for 9 and there was a couple of them that -- I would say probably 6 of them I thought she had good looks at it, couple times they rushed her and got up into her.

For the most part, I would say a lot of them -- we would tell them to shoot them again, I guess, would be the best way to answer that question. You know, that's the thing that we do and it got us into this game, making those shots. Didn't make enough of them tonight, but Heather was 2 for 9 tonight but certainly without her, we wouldn't be sitting here talking to you.

So I'm proud of her that she kept shooting them, that's the thing I'm the most proud of, she didn't recoil and give the ball to someone else. She wanted that responsibility and that says a lot about her and how much she cares about her teammates.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you.

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