

March 13, 2008



TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS

CHARLIE FISS: Coach, your comments about the game?

COACH KNIGHT: First off, it is just disappointing. It is probably the most disappointed I've been because it is a game we're in and we missed eight layups in the second half, miss 4-5 free throws and we just make a lot of dumb mistakes. It comes from just being casual. I mean, kids think they got 1,000 possessions and you can make a bad pass, you can walk with it and you're just going to have a couple hundred more to get it back. It has been a problem for us. We build leads in the first half and we just give them back and I think that's been the problem with us all year and it happened to us again. And it is not surprising, it is just frustrating.

I got to figure out this spring with my staff what we can do to change that. But, you know, I knew what type of game it was going to be. It was going to be a hard-fought game defensively, offensively and just who made -- whoever makes dumb mistakes would lose the game and we ended up making too many mistakes when it counted and we lost the game.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

Q. Martin, how tough is this one for you to swallow being your last game, knowing you had chances to really win it?

MARTIN ZENO: It is pretty tough knowing it was my last game as a Red Raider. We didn't do the things to win so I just got to live with it and learn from it.

Q. Martin, talk about the last play when it was 72-70. Charlie falls down going to the line. What were you guys trying to do that there?

MARTIN ZENO: We were trying to take a good shot. He tried to kick it out and lost his balance and we lost the ball and they came up with it.

Q. I wonder if you can just talk how frustrating this game was, all the missed foul shots, all the missed layups, those kinds of things?

MARTIN ZENO: It was disappointing from that part but on my part because I didn't play to my potential. It hurt me because it was my last game and I didn't do the things I could have to help our team win.

ALAN VOSKUIL: It was just frustrating because we pretty much beat ourselves. We made the mistakes. We didn't get rebounds. We missed free throws. We just beat ourselves.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, we'll come to you, first, but we'll excuse your students first.

Guys, thanks for coming.

Q. I wonder if you can put into context this season and the roller coaster it was for you personally.

COACH KNIGHT: It has been a real let-down, you know? We have been involved in games that we should have won, and it is just our mentality, it has been hard to overcome. We played casual basketball is the problem. And I finally put a sign up in our locker room that "casual basketball will not get the job done in the Big 12." And that means we can get a lead, you take care of the ball. You don't throw passes that get intercepted. You don't miss layups. You don't walk with the ball. You guard your man. You don't get driven. You get rebounds. You don't lose rebounds and give it back to them to get 3s or 2s. Just a lot of mental mistakes that it doesn't come from what the other team does. It just comes from us. I think it is just a mental approach that's not very good, and it is something we got to really work on.

Q. That last possession, is that an example of casual basketball?

COACH KNIGHT: Yeah. We work every day going against a 15-second shot clock, getting it up, full court.

With our motion offense, motion offense is a surprise. So, you know, there is no reason to take a time out because it allows them to either set up a zone or a trap and now we have them on their back heels.

And we work every day, 15-second shot clock trying to get a good shot and it was just too much dribbling and it got casual, it got casual with the ball. Fall down with the ball and don't get a shot off, that just can't happen.

That's not what lost the game for us, you know? It was just everything added up to that. We saw mistakes like that throughout the game and that's really what killed us.

Q. Can you talk about the possession before that, like you thought there was goal tending on the block?

COACH KNIGHT: I thought it was goal tending but what can I do? You can sit there and argue but they are not going to change the call. You let them know what you thought.

I thought the ball was coming down but I mean, it is such a quick play that I mean, it is just a judgment call. It is not like they're trying to do it on purpose. It was just a judgment call and, you know, you let it be known in case it happens again. That's all you can do.

You can sit there and complain and complain but it doesn't do you any good.

Q. Sean yesterday talked about the friendship the two of you have. I wonder if you might comment about that and Sean is under a lot of pressure in turning the team around at Oklahoma State.

COACH KNIGHT: First thing, I know Sean has been under some unfair criticism throughout the year. The guy everyone should kind of be upset with is JamesOn Curry. You know, he leaves and kind of leaves them hanging. They didn't have enough time to replace him. If Oklahoma State has JamesOn Curry, I am not playing Sean today. He is in the bye game playing tomorrow. I think people got to understand that the job Sean has done.

JamesOn is a guy like Jay Jackson that can win games by himself. Now Sean is handicapped and doesn't have Curry and has done an unbelievable job with the pressure he has had. I think it is unfair. I think too many times people want to put the blame on the coaches. These players got to be held accountable. Especially

when they're given scholarships, free education and everything that goes into college. There's got to be at least a sense of loyalty. So it cracks me up. With Sean, he really got taken by surprise, by the whole deal when JamesOn left. And now he has him, it is a totally different team. That's an unbelievable job.

I think it is really hard to come back from when you lose a player of that caliber, a kid that can win you games by himself when nobody else shows up. I think he has done an unbelievable job. It is obviously the teams we have beaten here recently, I just hope other people see that and finally realize it.

Q. Pat, in addition to the casual basketball, you guys get a lead a couple times by 5 or 6 points. It seemed like maybe this is associated with it, the guys are kind of like the killer instinct to put Oklahoma State away.

COACH KNIGHT: Yeah, the guys that have a killer instinct on this team is my staff. All the energy has to come from us. We just haven't had that guy on the court. Since Ron Ross left, it has been really tough. We have not had an extension of our coaching staff on the floor. You have to have that to be very good. That's why guys like the Patriots with Tom Brady are so good because the coaches know -- because kids get tired of hearing it from the coaches. You got to have an extension of the coaches in the locker room and on the floor. That's been tough for us. When things have gotten tight, we haven't had anybody out there pulling guys together like we had when we had Ron Ross.

Ron Ross would get on guys before we would even think about it and you need that. I am trying to see if we can get that. I think these freshmen are talented this year and have it in them. We have to work on that this spring plus the group of guys we'll bring in last year. The big reason I recruit them is because of personality.

Q. Pat, you have a sense of post-season possibility for your program?

COACH KNIGHT: I hope just because how tough our conference is and the teams we have beaten, the NIT would give us a look. But I just don't know because now you're talking about it is a selection committee and it is a group of men making the selection.

And there is always human error when it

comes to selection committees. So my fate's in the hand of the selection committee. I don't know what the situation is. I hope they give us a strong look because I think this team belongs there with what we've done and how hard our conference has been this year.

It is not just me. I think there are other teams that don't make it to the NCAA tournament. There are probably three or four teams that should be considered for NIT.

Q. Can you talk about Trevor Cook and his play in the second half that really gave big minutes.

COACH KNIGHT: I think he showed he wants to be a player. I actually talked to him after this game, just he and I one-on-one. He is only a sophomore. You kind of forget about it. I kind of forget about it and get frustrated with him and maybe get on him too hard sometimes. I think he has gotten it here in the last couple weeks. I got on him really hard, kind of called them out in a meeting and he used to be the type of kid that you would feel sorry for. He got upset with me and turned that energy around in a positive thing and played really hard in practice.

So I think he is starting to get it. I have to remind myself, this is a kid, this is his first year of really big-time basketball in the Big 12 and so I really look forward to seeing what he can do in the spring, working with him from a basketball standpoint, weight standpoint.

You know, I have the kid for two more years so I am really excited about it. I think he has grown up here in these two weeks. I told him that, and I am happy for him. But he's got to get a taste of this and not like it and we make sure this doesn't happen next year.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you very much.

COACH KNIGHT: Thank you.

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