

March 13, 2008



An interview with:

**COACH BUDKE
DANIELLE GREEN
ANDREA RILEY**

THE MODERATOR: Coach, your thoughts about tonight's game, and if you'll make a few quick comments.

COACH BUDKE: Well, Andrea wanted me to say she had 6 rebounds, so I'll get that out of the way. You know, again, people keep doubting these girls, people keep doubting the talent on this team and how far we can go.

We beat a very good team tonight. I think Texas is one of the hottest teams in the country, and they're well coached. Like we said, no one is going to want to face them in the NCAA tournament when they see their name on the bracket because they're a tough team to play and they don't go away.

They're talented, and I'm so proud because there was a time where we could have folded tonight and we didn't. We found a way to get it done, and that's kinda what we've been doing all year long. We've had amazing wins this year because of the courage and the heart of these young ladies. Now we get to play in the Big 12 championship, so we're very excited.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for our student athletes?

Q. You guys have had some games this year where you built big leads and you've had teams come back on you, most notably Nebraska. Did you draw on that experience? Talk about that.

DANIELLE GREEN: No, we just remembered how it felt when teams came back on us and we did fold. Texas A&M we had a lot of games like that and Coach kept saying, "Don't quit. Get this. Stop, we don't look ahead." We would get the defensive stop and get the next

possession. That helped us a lot because it helped us focus on one thing at a time.

Q. Danielle, I don't know if you've ever made a better play than the assist to Andrea when you were flat on your back.

DANIELLE GREEN: That was an amazing play. I thank God she hit it.

COACH BUDKE: We work on that play.

DANIELLE GREEN: Yeah, Coach drew it up. (Chuckles.)

Q. Andrea, so much has been made about the things that you've been able to do this year. This is the type of game that proves y'all are more than one player, aren't you?

ANDREA RILEY: It proves a lot. We've had a couple of games that five and six people have been in double figures and we've been very successful with that. I think if we have five or six people or three people in double figures, I think we will continue to be successful because that means we're playing together.

Q. Danielle, I understand that you were wearing your shorts backwards. Do you plan on using that in the future?

DANIELLE GREEN: No, I don't. I didn't realize that until my teammates told me. No, I didn't.

COACH BUDKE: She's got no choice, she's going to have to do that. (Chuckles.)

Q. Talk about Shaunte Smith. She didn't shoot the ball well but took a couple of charges and hit a couple of big shots!

ANDREA RILEY: Shaunte Smith. Every time we need a big play, she steps up. If it's not me or Danielle or Maria, it's her. That's what makes our team so dangerous, because we have a lot of weapons and we keep the focus and we keep our intensity and we have so much heart.

DANIELLE GREEN: Her intensity isn't based on whether she scores or not, it's just that she's in the game, period. That's what we feed off

every night.

How about that block by Maria Cordero? She don't get enough credit either. She's our leader, she keeps us fired up, and I'm proud of her.

Q. Would you take us through the final seconds of the game and Cortijo's shot. Did you expect her to take that? Was that the play that you thought Texas would run, and how you set up to play in the final seconds?

ANDREA RILEY: Cortijo is hot right now, and she's the leader. They have a lot of confidence in her, so we knew she would take the shot. And Maria stayed with her because she is a guard. And even though Maria is a 6-3 post, she had the mental toughness to say, "I'm not going to let her beat us."

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, ladies.

Questions for Coach now.

Q. Did you talk to the team about how aware you had to be of Texas coming back and their ability to come back?

COACH BUDKE: Oh, yeah. We spent a lot of time talking about that. They're talented and athletic, and if you can do what they did last night against Baylor, they can surely do it against us.

We did talk about it at halftime, and there was a point in time in that game where you could have folded. You could have really let them make a bigger run than they did, and we found a way to get it stopped. Very proud; Texas is a very good team.

Q. Talk about the defense on Lindsey tonight. She had 18 and 10 in Stillwater and didn't come close to those numbers tonight.

COACH BUDKE: We just wanted to get her out of her comfort zone. She is one of the most improved players in the league. Last time we let her get too deep on us, and that was the game plan, try to get her 2 feet beyond where she was last time.

I thought the girls did a good job of making contact and holding it with her and making her shoot a 10-footer instead of a 6-footer.

Q. If someone told you two years ago that you were going to be playing in the Big 12 championship game Saturday night, would you have thought they were crazy?

COACH BUDKE: Well, I mean, we've -- sure, probably. (Chuckles.) We've never put a ceiling on this team. We've recruited winners and recruited kids that people in this league didn't want.

We have a legitimate star. A lot of people that are role players that accept the role that it doesn't matter -- just like Danielle said, it doesn't matter if Shaunte scores 2 points or not, she is going to outwork everybody on the floor. You look down and she has 16 rebounds.

We are not the most talented team in the Big 12 or in this country, but we play together and we have chemistry, and that's huge this time of year.

Q. How big was it for you when Erneisha Williams fouled out for Texas?

COACH BUDKE: We do a good job of getting people in foul trouble, because the offense is set so that we attack with. And that was a goal, to try to get certain people in foul trouble.

She's a great player and having her on the bench -- last night we got McCray and Boogaard in foul trouble and that's part of the game plan. Credit the girls for getting that done.

Q. What did Texas do to make their comeback and what did you do to adjust to their flurry?

COACH BUDKE: I think they had more energy than us. They didn't do really anything different, and we just weren't -- we didn't quite have the hustle in our step that we needed and the toughness that we needed.

We were letting Cortijo dribble up and shoot a 3, didn't get back on a made bucket and gave up the left. Those are things that we're normally good at covering. We called time out, grabbed the girls' attention.

You just get them refocused again that there is a long way to go in this game. This is one of many runs they're going to make, so did you want to play in the championship game or not, because if you do, you've got to get a little tougher right now, and they responded.

Q. Talking about the role players; people like Maria and Megan didn't have a lot of stats, but they clogged the zone and made it hard for Lindsey to get into the paint. Talk about that.

COACH BUDKE: I thought Megan was

huge tonight with Maria getting those fouls. I thought she played one of her best games. The girl is a sophomore. She is going to have big minutes for us before her career is over.

Alex Richardson came off and held her own in there and got a couple of rebounds and played good defense, also. We talk about it all the time with our girls, you never know when your number is going to be called.

Prepare like you're going to play 40 minutes every night. No one outworks Megan Byford, so she plays like she is going to play 40 minutes, and she played like that tonight.

Q. Sometimes little things, Shaunte Smith stands in there and takes a charge. Talk about that play and how it changed the --

COACH BUDKE: She's the one that does it. She does the little things like that that help us win games. You've got to be able to make a play like that.

We say in timeouts, hey, someone has to step up and make a play if we're going to win this game. Just like Danielle making the pass to Andrea for the 3 and hitting that shot; Shaunte taking the charge; Maria with the big block. There are so many times in a game where it's your time to step up, you need to come through, and I thought that charge was obviously huge.

Q. Talk about Texas A&M a little bit. You guys have had some classic match-ups with them the last two years.

COACH BUDKE: I doubt there are two teams in America that have played each other tougher or closer in the last two years than A&M. I think they are the best team in this conference right now.

They're defending champions. They're playing better than anybody else in the country, and I think they have a legitimate chance to get to the Final Four. I love their weapons and their team. We seem to find a way to come out and battle them, and we'll find a way Saturday.

Q. Alluding to that, you said people have been doubting your team all year. Why do you not doubt them and go into a championship with them Saturday?

COACH BUDKE: The first thing is the coaches have to believe in themselves, their teammates. The coaches have to believe in them

and our coaching staff believes we're going to find a way.

We're going to show up Saturday and compete for 40 minutes. And besides Andrea, someone is going to come through. Danielle Green was huge tonight. She looked like an all Big 12 performer that she probably should have been. So it's just -- you know, this team's chemistry, coaches and players right now is at an unbelievable level, and we'll bring it Saturday.

Q. Is there a point that you focus on, or maybe two points in the next 48 hours that you want to make sure you get accomplished with your team, to have them ready for a Saturday game with this day off?

COACH BUDKE: Rest. Y'all, just rest. We don't play a lot of people, as you see. We've got to get some dead legs some rest right here. A&M, their two games weren't probably as competitive as our two games were, and I think they're fresh and ready to go, so I think the biggest thing is rest.

There are no mysteries right now. We know what we're going to do. We know what they're going to do. We're going to support our boys tomorrow and hopefully they can get a win, watch tape, have a shoot-around and hopefully come out Saturday with enough legs to get it done.

Q. You kind of halfway answered it, but with the off day tomorrow and playing on Saturday, would you rather be playing 3 straight days or do you like the day off before the championship game?

COACH BUDKE: We need a day off. Andrea doesn't come out of the game, she gets beat up and knocked down and body checked; she needs some rest and we all do. I think it makes for a better championship game when both teams get one day of rest.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you very much, congratulations.

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