

**March 15, 2008**



**BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP**

## **TEXAS A&M AGGIES**

CHARLIE FISS: We're ready for Texas A&M and Head Coach Mark Turgeon. He has three student athletes today, Bryan Davis, Joseph Jones and Beau Muhlbach.

Coach, we'll go to you, first, on thoughts on this afternoon's game.

COACH MARK TURGEON: It was a heck of a college basketball game. For us to beat Kansas, we got to keep the score in the low 60's and we weren't able to do that today. You know, they shoot close to 70% the second half and make free throws and really don't turn the ball over.

It looks like a recipe for disaster but we are right there with a two-point game with 50 seconds to go.

To gun it up without Sloan, our point guard, the one guy that can break down the defense for us, twisted his ankle and really didn't play the last 25 minutes of the game. I was really proud of our guys. We made shots. Beau had some big shots. Joe hit a big 3 when we were down 7. We couldn't get them stopped, couldn't stop them. They got an offensive rebound for a basket and, of course, the lay-up right at the end. And we broke down defensively. It shouldn't have happened, but it did and that was the difference.

But KU was great and they have been great all year. And, of course, Brandon Rush was phenomenal. We had no answer for him. He just kept making shots. He was 2 for 9 against us and I think he played poorly last night against Nebraska. I think he was 2 for 8. He had a breakout game tonight and that was really the difference.

**Q. Bryan, how much -- how differently do you feel about this team leaving town than you did when y'all got here?**

BRYAN DAVIS: I feel great right now. I feel that we came together as a team these past three days and we are a better team today than we were three days ago and we're going to get better.

**Q. Beau, can you talk about -- do you feel like you have been in a war the last three days? And kind of follow up with what Bryan said about how good you feel about this team going into the NCAA tournament?**

BEAU MUHLBACH: Yeah, in the Big 12, any game is a war let alone the tournament. Just battling every night, do whatever it takes to win. I will play with a broken arm, I just love to play basketball. I am sure these guys would say the same thing.

Same thing, we're just glad to be here and, you know, the team has just come together so much these past three days. What we've been through, what our odds are and just fighting when we're in the foxhole, we are just going to scrap and play hard and get the job done.

**Q. Bryan, can you talk about your Harlem Globe Trotter shot?**

BRYAN DAVIS: I just threw up a prayer and hoped it went in.

**Q. Joe, how do you feel about this time right now after what you guys went through this weekend and really seeing them come together?**

JOSEPH JONES: Right now, we feel real good. Like he said, we came together and got better as a team and that's what it's all about, coming together, getting better each and every day, each and every game out. We feel like we did a great job these three days. Unfortunately we lost today, but we got better. And that's what it takes for us to keep going further into our season.

**Q. When Sloan went down, I mean, was there anything said that was like, somebody is going to have to step up even more?**

JOSEPH JONES: No, the only thing we said was keep playing. One man down, somebody got to pick it up for us somewhere else. And Beau came in and did a great job. And Dominique did a great job so we just kept going on. We never

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missed a beat.

I know it hurt us a little bit, but we find a way to pick it up.

**Q. Y'all took some real gut shots today from Kansas. They got on a little bit of a roll. But you seem to come back from everything they threw at you. Can you just talk a little bit about the resiliency y'all showed today.**

BEAU MUHLBACH: You said taking what kind of shots?

**Q. Gut shots. They hit you but y'all didn't back down.**

BEAU MUHLBACH: I just -- -- this program is built on toughness. You got to fight through it. It is a grind. Like I said earlier, the Big 12 is a grind every night, every game.

We're down to fight and we're down to do whatever it takes to win. That's being tough. To play in the Big 12, you have to be tough no matter how the game's going, you have to play together as a team through thick and thin. One player goes down, the team knows we have to step up and help that person. That's what we did tonight, just came up a little short.

**Q. Beau, can you talk a little bit about where your confidence is coming from right now because it seems like -- especially tonight, you were really looking for your shot a lot.**

BEAU MUHLBACH: My whole deal is just to work hard and work hard in practice and just waiting for the right opportunity for me to come. That's all I can say. I work hard in practice, and these guys do, too. And it shows on the court. That's all I have. Just being a good teammate, just helping other guys and just staying focused with what Coach wants me to do and what he wants the team to do. Just keep working hard.

CHARLIE FISS: We'll let you go back to your locker room. We'll take questions for Coach Turgeon.

**Q. At what point did Sloan hurt his ankle?**

COACH MARK TURGEON: He hurt it pretty early. I think the first time I subbed him out and I put him back in, I'm not sure if it was the first time -- I think it was the first time -- and he said "my ankle hurts." And Sloan is tough as nails. And I was like, do you want to play? And he said

"let me try it." His ankle was affecting everything; his game, his brain.

So we took him out again, tried him one more time and he just didn't have it. Took him out. So at halftime he said he was done. I said, all right. And then he looked at me when they made that run, and he said, "Coach, I want to play," and obviously he wasn't ready to play. I think he hurt it in the first five minutes of the game.

**Q. Do you think he'll be okay for next week?**

COACH MARK TURGEON: Yeah, he'll be fine. It is a mild sprain. He'll get treatment and hopefully we won't play until Friday. That would help us, an extra day.

Now, if we had to play tomorrow, he wouldn't have been able to play. But he'll be ready for next weekend.

**Q. In keeping with the theme here, what happened to this team over the last few days? I think everybody that's watched y'all sees maybe a different team than they had in a while.**

COACH MARK TURGEON: Oh, I don't know. I think we've been awful critical of our team this year. And the reason why is because we've had bad losses. We've had losses where we didn't show up. So everybody has been really critical of me and our team.

We just had guys step up this week. Junior stepped up. Was sick. And Junior stepped up. Bryan Davis stepped up. And obviously Beau stepped up. But we've been getting better since the Nebraska game. We've had really one bad game in that stretch, was at Oklahoma. KU whipped us pretty good at our place, but we've been getting better.

I don't know if it just happened this weekend, it probably happened a few weeks before and we just kept coming together.

Our backs were against the wall coming over here. We knew we had to win one for sure, we felt like. And we got two and pushed probably -- maybe a No. 1 seed to the limit in front of their home fans. So we did a lot of good things.

I don't know. Was it different? Yeah, yeah, and our sense urgency was different. There was no quit in us. We might have folded our tents early in the year down 7 or 8 in front of their fans.

But we just kept fighting through it. And

then we made a lot of big shots this weekend, too.

Teams go two ways at the end of the season. They either get going or they go the opposite way. I think we're just getting going, so hopefully we can get a lot better between now and our next game.

**Q. KU made a nice run, a 9-0 run at the beginning of the second half to punch you guys in the face. And then you struck right back with the 10-0 run. What did you say to them in that time out? And maybe the sense urgency for the television cameras, but how proud were you that they were able to come back and push KU all the way?**

COACH MARK TURGEON: I got on them pretty good. We just want our guys to play with a little toughness and compete. We weren't playing with that. That's basically what I said to them. Just compete a little bit harder. Let's give them our best shot. Let's don't run out of here and look after the game and say we didn't give them our best shot.

We just challenged them to keep a little bit harder. It wasn't an X and O thing. Then we made some plays, got some stops. We didn't get many of them in the second half but we got some stops. It was all just about getting on them to compete. I'm so proud of my group. Obviously I would rather have won, rather gotten a stop and had a chance to tie it there instead of giving the guy a wide-open lay-up. But to have Sloan go down, DeAndre sick all weekend and not himself and just to gut it up the way we did against arguably one of the better KU teams ever, we'll see what history is going to do for them down the stretch here. It was just a great gutty effort by our team.

**Q. What did happen on -- what was the breakdown exactly on Robinson's lay-up?**

COACH MARK TURGEON: Well, we were switching certain screens, and then they had a big, big switch. There was a lot of ball screens. So we switched on that one. And then so -- I don't know if guys can follow this -- so then Bryan was guarding the five man. We were switching one through four balls. That means he was guarding the five. I wish he switched him. Our guard was expecting him to switch it, and he didn't.

But it wasn't Bryan's fault, okay, with what happened. He actually did the right thing. So KU did a good job. They went small and did all the right things. I just wish we'd made them shoot a

jump shot over his head. That's the disappointing thing.

CHARLIE FISS: Coach, thank you very much.

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