

March 11, 2008



An interview with:

**COACH FENNELLY
HEATHER EZELL
ALISON LACEY**

THE MODERATOR: We'll let Coach Bill Fennelly make an opening comment, and then we will take questions and then release the student athletes and take questions for Coach again. Coach Fennelly, congratulations and go ahead.

COACH FENNELLY: First of all, I would like to say the respect I have for Jackie McFarland and Susie Powers. They're great representatives of CU, and I'm glad we don't have to guard Jackie anymore.

But in all honesty, I don't know that we could have played any better. We talked about it as a group before the game. We hadn't gotten it all together, but we played great, shot it great and defended at a perfect time. We valued the ball, made shots.

You know when you get into this kind of environment, you want to feel like you did the best you could, and I feel bad for Colorado because they caught us on a great day. We should play all of our games at noon. Just excited to keep playing and stay in Kansas City and we'll look forward to tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student athletes.

Q. Heather, you said you watched the game here before, more fun to play?

HEATHER EZELL: Definitely more fun to play. It's a great environment, especially with our fans. We had a huge turnout, which is awesome, and a lot of fun to play.

Q. You didn't score for the first 11 or 12 minutes then it just clicked. What happened from -- remember the 8-minute mark you made the first shot then a couple of 3s? What clicked for you at that point?

HEATHER EZELL: I was able to get some open shots and they fouled so just kept shooting.

Q. Heather, can you just as a player describe to us mortals what it's like to be absolutely on fire? Did the hoop feel like a swimming pool? What was it like?

HEATHER EZELL: It felt good. When you get your first shot to fall and the second, it makes things a lot easier for you, and my teammates gave me the ball when I was in a position to hit the shot, and that was nice. I know someone said at halftime, "Were you doing a heat check and letting it fly?"

Once you get in that mode and everything -- you just kinda forget about how many you're shooting or making, you're just doing what you do.

Q. Allison, I don't have a final count but I'm sure 10 of those assists went to Heather.

ALISON LACEY: Thank you Heather.

Q. How cognizant were you of getting her the ball while she was in rhythm?

ALISON LACEY: That was my thought, where was Heather, and in the end when we were in trouble, everyone looked to Heather and she stepped up and made huge shots today.

Q. This is for both of you. You guys had a rough time the first time you played K State and a much closer game in Ames. Can you talk about the third match up and what you need to do to upset them?

HEATHER EZELL: I think we have to focus on defense and then hopefully we can shoot the way we did today and put points on the board. Main thing we're going to focus on is our defensive end.

Q. Both of you guys, entering the second half you guys extended your lead, but right from the start of the second half you went on a run, an extended run. Did you think that was something you had to do, take the bull by

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the horns early?

HEATHER EZELL: We wanted to jump out in the first four minutes and knew we had to keep fighting and doing what we were doing, and luckily coming out of halftime our shots were falling, we were hitting them and getting stops on defense and made big shots to open up the game.

THE MODERATOR: Alison?

ALISON LACEY: That was good.

Q. Alison, the fact that Kelsey ended the shot at the quarter, did that give you momentum?

ALISON LACEY: I can't remember many games when shots like that go in for us, so everyone was happy and cheering and screaming in the locker room, so it was good for her and for the team!

Q. Heather, can you talk about what this team has been through? A lot of kids maybe have to play minutes they weren't expecting to play, because of injuries, and here you are?

HEATHER EZELL: Coming into the season you talk about how you are going to replace people that have left, and I thought we did a good job, and then losing T. And Nicky, they had to step up more and take on more minutes, putting up more shots and everything like that. I think "As" doesn't get enough credit sometimes.

She has to shoot the ball maybe more than somebody would, and you have to step up and get a look at the basket sometimes, and I think the biggest thing is our coach has done a great job of preparing us for the games. We come in with the greatest game plans we could ask for and they give us a chance to win night in and night out. So you have to give credit to them; they put us in a position to win.

Q. Heather, did you know you tied the record for most 3-pointers made in a Big 12 game?

HEATHER EZELL: I didn't know that until we came down here and Aaron Smith let me know. It's not something I focus on. If it comes, it comes but I'm just glad we got the win.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach Fennelly now?

Q. Bill, could you talk about the job your post players did on McFarland on the

second half and when Genesis went in for Jocelyn?

COACH FENNELLY: We always talk about trying to find a way to impact winning, and we didn't score in the post tonight, but Joce and Gen did a great job of defending Jackie McFarland. She ended up with 21 points; I thought all of them did a great job, and they were a little down because when you don't make shots your head drops down a bit. We're 19-11 and we're not 19-11 playing tomorrow without Jocelyn Anderson and Amanda Nisleit. It's not an option.

Sometimes you've got to do the dirty work, and it was defense for them today, and the other kids made shots. There has been other games where Joce has carried us, and I honestly believe it's one of the greatest stories in the country what Jocelyn Anderson is doing, what we've asked her to do.

Amanda is 6-foot playing on half a foot and guarding Jackie, and it's not fun to do. It's not fun to go in there and get your butt kicked, and they're going to throw it in there every single time, and you want to give them credit, they deserve it, but it's hard when you're a young person and you're focused on how many shots you made. They're not here.

Everyone wants to see Heather because she made the shots. They found a way to be successful, and tonight it was our guards making shots and our big people grinding it out on defense.

Q. Can you talk about the huge turnover differential, 20-5, which is also a tournament record?

COACH FENNELLY: We really took care of the ball. We added a couple of wrinkles in our offense to open up the court, but Alison did a phenomenal job of delivering the ball, making good decisions. When you play at this level and you turn the ball over only five times, that says a lot. And we got rid of the illegal screens, the three seconds, the travels, some of the things that have been killing us losing possessions.

You're going to get assists when people are making shots, and we had one of those games or like the play Kelsey made at halftime, or the loose ball in the corner and she shoots it. Heather had one of those games that Heather has been looking to have, so when you value the ball like that you have a chance. The trouble we have had

all year is trouble scoring, and offensively we were as good tonight as we've been in a long time, maybe all year.

Q. Every one of these games is going to be for your team an audition for the NCAA tournament. How important is it to continue this run tomorrow and into the weekend?

COACH FENNELLY: I think at this point the Big 12 is the biggest tournament going right now, and you have a chance to play when everyone else is sitting and watching. So you have a opportunity -- the ACC, the SEC, the Pac 10, they're all done, so the focus of the basketball world is on the Big 12, and all we can do is play to the level that we're capable of and hope it's good enough.

I don't know, I've never -- I'm not big on politics to get into the NCAA, and I think it's a great opportunity to show people what kind of team we have, and I think we showed people today that we have the ability to play at a very high level, and certainly playing the number 1 team in the Big 12, the Big 12 champion tomorrow is an opportunity for an audition, but a very tough one, but at least we get to play 'em! The good news is we get to play 'em!

Q. Coach, I know you don't take any pleasure with the margin of victory, but how nice was it to have that luxury to get your starters off the floor?

COACH FENNELLY: You never want the game to get out of hand and that's not -- I don't think -- I've been a head coach 20 years, and I can honestly say I've never purposely run the score up, and we were making shots, but I think the biggest thing was it was nice to see all the kids play.

We have a lot of kids that have done a lot of things and they don't get a lot of credit, but they get to get out there and play in the Big 12 and run around and have people cheer for them, and you don't get that at this level.

They were as excited as anyone to get in there and play, and that's a neat thing to see, that, you know -- we all say we win as a team, we mean it, but there are people that don't feel a part of it at times because they don't get the attention and don't get to play, and you get to play four minutes in the greatest tournament in this country; they'll remember that, and they'll tell their kids they made shots and they played twelve minutes as opposed to four minutes, and they were the key to winning --

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you're in the box score, that's what counts, man! More than I ever got in!

Q. Bill, do you think about that game in Ames with K State? You said you felt like you had guarded them as well as you could. If you are able to do that, is offense the key?

COACH FENNELLY: I don't think there is any doubt, Michelle, that offensively -- K State is a great defensive team. They do a lot of switching. In Ames they switched almost every screen and made it hard to get something going to the basket. We've got to do a better job of getting the ball to the free-throw line and not just making shots from the perimeter. Kimberly Dietz had more points at halftime than anyone on our team did.

They're going to make the shots. We held them to 45 at our place; the pace was slow, but, you know, we've got to defend similarly to what we did in Ames, the opposite of what we did in Manhattan. We scored 49 and 42 against them, so we're not an offensive juggernaut against them, and the confidence that our kids have should be high and hopefully they're relaxed. And I'm not big in the you-got-nothing-to-lose thing, because you have a game to lose.

There is no pressure on this team. You're playing the No. 1 seed in the tournament, and I'm glad we played today, and roll it out there and see what happens tomorrow. I think what you'll see tomorrow are four phenomenal games, and it's a great way to showcase our league, and you could have eight teams all playing in the NCAA tournament after tomorrow.

Q. What is entailed in the greatest game plan that any player could ever ask for? Heather --

COACH FENNELLY: Heather gets to shoot, I guess. They have to say that, you know, it's required! I tell 'em that, make sure you talk the coach up because my bosses are here and you're always getting evaluated. It's fun to win, but -- my son flew in and surprised me! Thank you everyone!

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach.

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