

March 12, 2009



Oklahoma State – 63
Texas Tech - 57

An interview with:

**COACH KURT BUDKE
TAYLOR HARDEMAN
SHAUNTE' SMITH**

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Coach Budke and his student athletes. Coach, your thoughts about tonight's game and congratulations on the win.

COACH BUDKE: I've got to say, it wasn't in the plan to fall behind 15 points and come back, but it says something for the ladies sitting up here.

The players weren't ready for their careers to be done. We could have stopped and rode it out and not gave it our best shot once we fell behind, but really, really proud of the girls tonight.

Just happy for my seniors because these are two people that were very big parts of getting this done tonight. There has never been any "quit" in any one of these two, and we're still alive. We move on.

Q. Taylor, can you talk about the beginning of the second half? I mean, it's obvious you weren't ready for your last Big 12 tournament to be over.

TAYLOR HARDEMAN: I give credit to my teammates for screening for me and Andrea to distribute the ball, that's the only way shooters can get shots. I'm glad she dribbled in and created and gave me an actual shot.

I really wasn't thinking, I just knew that somebody had to step up and hit a shot. I didn't want to go out this way and I won't, and that's what I was thinking.

Q. Shaunte', you made the statement yesterday, you talked about the last week being one of the best weeks of practice. What was the expectation, and when you had the start you had, did that diminish it or did that strengthen it somewhat?

SHAUNTE' SMITH: Our shots weren't falling, but like I said, we did have two or three good days of practice and we never quit. I'm proud of my teammates for going out there and hustling, and we came together as a team and we overcame the adversity and this was a big win for us.

TAYLOR HARDEMAN: You know, I would have to say that when you have a good week of practice, it makes you feel good going into the games. We did tremendous, we moved on defense, we worked our offense well, and we just didn't give up and that's what's been our statement.

We can't give up because, yeah, it's been rough, but I'm never going to quit, and I know Shaunte' is not and the rest of our team is not. So like she said, we did great tonight. I'm really proud of ourselves.

Q. Shaunte', what was said at halftime?

COACH BUDKE: Be careful!

SHAUNTE' SMITH: We were playing hard, we held them to 28 points for them, we were playing good defense, we had good shots and they weren't falling.

And in the second half, Taylor gave us a good spark coming in with four 3-pointers in the three minutes, and we had to work through our shots and adversity, that's about it.

Q. Taylor, late in the first half you guys had made a run, but you could tell you were double-digits down, you come out in the second half and hit four big 3-pointers. And when you're on the bench, you're giving everybody high five's.

Go through what this means as a

senior and when you come back and going into tomorrow.

TAYLOR HARDEMAN: Our bench is good at keeping us alive, and I think our bench did a great job of keeping us up.

Emotionally, I looked at her and I thought, we were not going to lose this game. We were going to do whatever it took, no matter if I had to dive on the floor, knock somebody out-of-bounds, whatever we needed to do, that's what we were going to do and we weren't going to stop until it happened.

Q. Y'all, with the 3-pointers, it wasn't there last time you faced Tech in Stillwater, so talk about not giving up and controlling Murphree, who had 20 points against y'all last time.

TAYLOR HARDEMAN: She's a great player. She is tough to guard, and guarding her was part of my game plan, where I'm thinking, I'm going to shut her down and I don't care if I score points.

When I do that the offense comes more for me. Hitting three's is great, but I have to give credit to my teammates because I wouldn't be able to make 'em without them.

Q. Same question, Seals had a big game last time, she got rebounds, but what did she have, 6 points? Talk about what you did as a team to slow her down.

SHAUNTE' SMITH: She is a great player. I just focused on playing great defense, me and Megan and Shyvon, we did good on her and we blocked out and rebounded.

COACH BUDKE: She's going to try to give credit to other people, but it was her that got it done right here.

Q. What was going on across the street, seeds are dropping like flies. So you're in that position. Is this strong enough, this league strong enough to see the seeds drop tomorrow in the quarterfinals?

TAYLOR HARDEMAN: Absolutely, absolutely.

SHAUNTE' SMITH: Yes.

TAYLOR HARDEMAN: So proud of the guys, we heard the crowd. We were like, our guys won, we cannot go down without a loss, we have to win this game. Get all the OSU fans fired up and ready for basketball. It gets you excited as a player.

Q. Coach, I wanted your thoughts on the first five minutes or so in the second half that seemed to put the momentum in your favor.

COACH BUDKE: There was a lot of things discussed at halftime, but one of the things discussed was, you know what, we couldn't have shot any worse than we did and we're only down 11. We were down 11 to Nebraska the other night and came back without Andrea.

We knew we couldn't possibly shoot 22 percent again, we hoped anyway. I didn't look, what did we shoot in the second half.

Q. 59 percent.

COACH BUDKE: That's different, isn't it? You know, we said, hey, let's get a good start, ease our way back into this like we did the other night at home. Let's give ourselves a chance and we talked about, college players have to hit shots. And they did.

And Taylor, right before halftime I said, time for you to do something, "let's go." I should have gave that speech earlier in the game.

Q. Have you ever had a team start 0-13 and not score the first seven minutes of the game?

COACH BUDKE: Was it 15-0?

Q. (Away from mic.)

COACH BUDKE: I can't say that -- we were talking about that and they said, Coach, we were down 18-2 at K.U. last year and we came back and won. I can't remember that, no. We shot the ball so well all week long, Mike.

But as we're watching Texas and Missouri play, we saw how many balls went in, went out, came out, and I was thinking to myself, I hope that doesn't happen to us, because you could see it in the game before us, and I don't know if it's nerves or whatever. But, no, I gotta say, if you're in this game long enough, you'll see everything, and we saw something tonight.

Q. You talked yesterday about how difficult it is to win four games in four days, like you did on the junior college level, but a lot of times when a team gets momentum it can carry over. What will this do for you tomorrow against a good Baylor team?

COACH BUDKE: You're exactly right, you can and sometimes it's a disadvantage to have that bye. We're used to the rims and the feel of the court, and hopefully we'll carry this 59 percent over against Baylor.

They're a great team, there is no question about that. One thing we're all ignoring here tonight is Andrea Riley played a great point guard in the second half. I mean a great point guard in the second half.

Taylor hit the shots, but there had to be someone penetrating and kickin' to get them the shots. And I told Andrea, that's one of the better jobs she's done runnin' the team all year long.

Q. Talk about the minutes that Mercardo and Clardy gave you.

COACH BUDKE: She's always ready, and the 3 she hit, I didn't think the ball was in her hands. She got it off so quick and drained it, but that's because she puts in the extra time every day.

If you're going to win four games in four days, we're going to have to have an Ally or Melinda step up. And I thought Mercardo's defense was good at the end of the game. She brings energy into the game whenever she comes in, and everybody that played tonight contributed and that was fun for the team.

Q. You said last night we would find out altogether, and obviously the first half wasn't that, but maybe the second half, take away the discipline part of the suspension for Andrea, but maybe it cleared the air a little bit, allowed things to equalize or something for her to play the point guard position.

COACH BUDKE: Robert, I can't answer that, I don't know. I don't know exactly how they feel or how they felt about the suspension, and that's -- but I know this: Andrea Riley worked hard to get the ball to her teammates tonight and they responded, and rewarded her. We talk about that all the time.

Now if she's going to work that hard to make people collapse and kick to ya, you've got to hit your shots. You've got to reward your point guard by making those shots. This was a great team win, it wasn't one person.

Q. Hardeman was six for her last 30 something, what were your thoughts after she made the second one, anything go through your head?

COACH BUDKE: We ran a couple of things for her because when she gets hot, we -- in fact the last set we ran for her, I think she shot it four feet behind the line, and that is out of her range, but she was feelin' it at the time.

This game is easier to coach when you have three or four that can be weapons on the floor at the same time. We had that last year, and we came up a little bit short this year, but I'm just so proud of these kids for not quitting. I know they will be ready to play tomorrow night.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you very much and good luck tomorrow.
FastScripts by ASAP Sports.