

**March 13, 2009**



Baylor – 76  
Texas – 70

An interview with:



CHARLIE FISS: We are ready to begin with the University of Texas and Coach Rick Barnes, his student-athletes A.J. Abrams and Damion James.

Coach, we will go to you first.

COACH BARNES: We are ready for questions.

**Q. Rick, anything in particular at the end where you thought caused it to get away when you had a lead?**

COACH BARNES: I didn't like the way we closed the first half. I didn't like that. We did miss some free throws at an important part of the game.

With that said, we missed a wide-open lay-up at the rim and we actually missed an opportunity from the elbow that is a great lay for us. So, you know, that's where it was.

When we needed to make those plays, we didn't make them.

**Q. A.J., did you ever think you would lose to Baylor?**

A.J. ABRAMS: I mean, I don't think you want to say that. You want to go in and try to win every game. Baylor is a good team. They had some unfortunate incidents that happened this year where they have always been in the game and just couldn't pull it out. I think they are putting

it all together right now, and they played a good game for the most part.

**Q. Even though you are not going to win the championship here, what do you feel like you got out of these three games up here as a team?**

A.J. ABRAMS: We saw that we can play through Dex. He became more of a force for us. We knew what he could do.

I think it was kind of a -- somewhat of a breaking-out party for him knowing he can play longer stretches of minutes and just be a dominant force inside. That's one thing we can take from this.

**Q. Damion, did it feel like they got to you on the offensive boards a little bit?**

DAMION JAMES: We gave up -- I gave up a couple offensive rebounds early that led to a couple easy baskets.

They really pounded us on the glass, I see. We just got to look at it and stay focused.

**Q. Rick, the play where Dexter got his second foul on the pass from Mason, do you feel like that hurt your momentum where you had to take him out of the game when you were going pretty well at the time?**

COACH BARNES: Yeah. You can't give it to them in that situation. Justin did it twice. But the one I thought was more hurtful was the third foul.

**Q. Obviously you got great play out of Dexter for this tournament and seemed like Varez Ward played a lot better. Do you feel like you got a lot of positive things out of this week?**

COACH BARNES: I think we can play any style we have to play against. I think we -- obviously if we can get everything playing, we did come away with some really good things.

It is always disappointing when you lose,

but Dexter, I think, the two days back-to-back, playing the most minutes, I thought he would probably feel it more than anybody, and I think he did early.

But we thought we could manage it through working the clock. But then the foul trouble sat him down a little bit. Overall, with Varez coming back with what he did -- I thought Connor did some really good things today. He really did. He did some good things in there. I feel good where we are right now. We got a chance to do -- I told the team, this is what we always played for, Texas to be in the NCAA tournament and this is the one that counts and this is the one we got to try to do what we can do with it.

**Q. Do you feel Dexter -- it seemed like tonight Baylor focused on him and opened up A.J. on the outside. Do you feel it has developed into a situation where they have to pick who they are going to guard?**

COACH BARNES: Definitely, they are going to have to decide that certain teams are not going to guard certain guys. That's why we have to shuffle lineups and create some space at certain times.

I mean, I don't think there is any question -- I have said this, we can play a number of different ways.

Defensively, for the most part, we were really pretty good here with the exception today we just gave up too many offensive rebounds. You take that away and, you know -- even with all that said and done, we are up four under two minutes and missed a lay-up and missed a wide-open shot.

I think Gary was surprised that he was that open, and that's his shot. Again, this time of year is going to be a very fine line between winning and losing and coming down the stretch, we didn't make the plays we needed to make.

CHARLIE FISS: Coach, thank you.

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