

March 13, 2009



Iowa State Cyclones – 59
Texas Longhorns – 55

An interview with:

**IOWA STATE CYCLONES
COACH BILL FENNELLY
KELSEY BOLTE
ALISON LACEY**

THE MODERATOR: Coach Fennelly, Congratulations on the big win. An opening comment or two.

COACH BILL FENNELLY: Certainly a very proud moment for our team, for our program. We beat a really good team. And like we've done all year, it probably wasn't the prettiest thing, but an effort that was very, very indicative of what we have done all season and certainly one we're very proud of. And it's great to be still playing, and the greatest thing for me is I get to coach these guys tomorrow. And you know, we'll see what happens tomorrow. But, an amazing effort. I thought Alison was tremendous, playing the type of game we needed her to play from start to finish, and found a way to win in a tough environment against a very, very talented team, a team that will be a great NCAA representative in the Big 12.

We're excited about it, and we're looking forward to tomorrow. But, this is a moment for them to enjoy tonight. This is a moment for the players to enjoy being in this tournament, being in a great environment and beating a great team. So that will be their focus and will worry about Baylor when they get up tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes first.

Q. Alison, with Heather out of the line-up, did you feel you had to step up offensively and kind of take control of things?

ALISON LACEY: Yeah. You know, Heather scores 12 points a game, 35 minutes, and she is emotional and drives our team. A leader out there. Definitely with her out of the game, I knew I had to step up. But everyone did a good job I think and we put out a good win against a really good Texas team.

Q. Alison, also, on the play towards the end when you drove and kicked it out to Stuckey, she's about the most likely candidate to be shooting a three I understand. But, could you just talk about that play a little bit?

ALISON LACEY: Yeah, I was driving in and I wasn't open and I saw Denae wide open. And you know, she shot it and made it, and I didn't hear everybody being that excited in the game. I was screaming, she was excited. I heard the coaches were pretty excited on the bench as well. It is great for her to play well. She is a big part of this win. And to hit that shot is awesome for her.

Q. Kelsey, what did Coach talk to you about at half time? It seems like things weren't working for you in the first half.

KELSEY BOLTE: Pretty much the same thing he tells me every half time. He didn't really come to me at every halftime -- at halftime and tell me that I need to step up or anything, but I did. You know, I kind of looked around and I noticed that -- I kind of let my teammates down in the first half and I wanted to step up for them. And Oz was really carrying the load in the first half and a lot of the second half, too. And I just wanted to help my teammates out and step up a little bit.

Q. Kelsey, you had the huge block from behind and then the pass in bounds. Was that just something you saw? Or was it just a reaction to seeing the ball right up in the air?

KELSEY BOLTE: I got beat going to the line, so I think my first reaction was: Don't let her make a layup. And I saved it going out of bounds and I didn't know who to throw it to. I didn't want

them to throw at the basket and have them get a layup, but Oz was open, so I tossed it into her.

Q. Kelsey, talk about the basket that you made in the lane that gave you guys the lead for good, I think about 57 seconds to go. Kind of the spin move, what you saw there.

KELSEY BOLTE: We ran a play, I think, for me to get a 3-point shot and I wasn't open. And they were really hugging up tight on me on the three-point line. No one else was open and the clock was running down. You know, Coach really tries to tell us, you know, either pass it to someone who has a shot and no one really was, so I just tried to make something happen.

Q. Alison, when you're making 3-pointers like that, what does the basket look like?

ALISON LACEY: I don't know, pretty good, I guess. I don't know, I. Have been so good, I have been shooting great this year. And Heather has been shooting well and I had to pick up on my 3-point shooting. And luckily they were going in. It is one of those nights you can't really explain it, it just happens. I am happy that it happened tonight.

Q. Oz, you played the last game of anybody else in this tournament. Did you feel a little rust? Or were you tired of sitting and waiting? Or how was that?

ALISON LACEY: There has been a lot of sitting and waiting, sitting in our hotels and watching the games here, and watching people, you know, with the bye first round, lose in the first game, so we were determined it wasn't going to be us. So we were ready to come out and play. And once again, we played a great Texas team and we are happy to get this win.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, we will let our student athletes go back to the locker room. And Coach, we start with the question on the aisle on the left side.

Q. Bill, can you talk about Stuckey's three. Was that one of those "no-no-yes-yes" type of moments?

COACH BILL FENNELLY: I would say up until tonight it would have been. But with Heather out of the game we told Denae if she was open, she had to shoot it. Certainly, it is one of those plays in these kind of tournament it is keeps you playing. You know, we're down three, and you

know, it's one of those plays that you don't design it and kids make certain plays. But tonight -- actually we tried to run the very first play of the game for a 3-point shot for Denae because I wanted her to get it out of her system. They guarded it really well. I was shocked that they guarded her to be honest with you. But, you know, it's just one of those things that sometimes instinctively it happens and she's a competitive kid. And certainly it's not a play that was designed by the coaches. She made the play, Oz made the play. And a lot of these tournaments, those kind of things happen. Certainly we were the beneficiary of it tonight.

Q. Bill, could Heather have played if this was maybe possibly the last game of the season, first of all? And would she likely not play the rest of this weekend?

COACH BILL FENNELLY: She could have played, Rick. Probably not very well. It is her right hand. If this was the last game of the season or a game that we absolutely felt we had to win to get into the NCAA tournament, she would have tried to play. We made the decision collectively with the doctors, with Heather, to not play her. She will not play tomorrow. You know, I'm not going to try to hide anything from anyone. She's not going to play tomorrow.

My thing was, and I told her this, she has done so much for our team, so much for our program. She deserves the right to play as healthy as she can in the NCAA tournament. So we're going to hole her out until then and I think she will be fine by the NCAA tournament time.

And it kills her to do it, but she did a great job on the bench. She looked like a coach, acted like a coach, and did a great job. But, it's sad that she couldn't play, but, you know, it's one of those things that she'll be ready to go hopefully next weekend.

Q. Coach, I think there are 17 lead changes, eight ties. When you are coaching in that situation, what do you tell the girls? Because obviously it's -- you don't ever get a sense of comfort, I suppose.

COACH BILL FENNELLY: Certainly when you play Texas and you watch what they did last night, the way they came back, you remember what they did to us at our place, the way they came back. You know, you have a hall of fame

coach on the other side, lot smarter than I am, so hopefully you are telling the players to overcome the coaching that they are fighting against I guess.

The biggest thing is control what you can control. Control your effort, make plays, value the ball. And that's the number one thing. I just kept saying shoot the dang thing before you throw it away. And maybe something good happens. And certainly Denae's shot was something good that happened.

Our effort was really, really the good last four minutes. I thought way guarded really hard, really smart. And we missed a couple of rebounds that we weren't getting. And a we'd got a lot of inbounds play because we kept tipping it out of bounds.

The four last minutes, the kids really did a great job of executing what we wanted them to do and defended as hard as we could defend against a team that we knew would keep coming at us in ways, and they did.

Q. Coach, with Heather out, it makes minutes from your bench all that much more important. Especially talk about maybe Whitney Williams who had 18 minutes tonight or maybe some of the other players that gave you great minutes off the bench.

COACH BILL FENNELLY: Certainly Denae playing 27 minutes in a starting role and Whit got 18. And my son who coached Northwestern has been on me and told me tonight if I play Whitney over 15 minutes, we would win. So I am sure I will get a call when I get back to the hotel. And Whit did a great job, she made a stop. Defended pretty well and had a couple of turnovers. Sometimes that happens. You are getting thrust into a pretty tough situation as a freshman in the tournament. We got some good minutes from other people on the bench. We told them Heather placed 35 minutes, we have to make it up somewhere. And I thought collectively they did that, and certainly did some things to allow us to have a chance, and that's what you want.

Q. Coach, when do you start thinking about playing Baylor? And how do you feel you will match up with them?

COACH BILL FENNELLY: We're thinking about it right now. You know, Baylor is an outstanding team. They beat us pretty good at their place early in the year. But, the thing, like I said earlier, right now this moment is for our players to enjoy tonight. We don't talk about

Baylor as a team. We'll do that tomorrow. They need to go back to the hotel and smile and just not -- so much in sports is, you know, immediately you're thinking: What's next? And sometimes the players don't get to enjoy this. They will enjoy this.

But we understand. They're a top 10 team. Another team that's very well coached, very competitive. A team that has overcome the loss of a great player to injury. So -- and had a great run in the second half for the game tonight. Way down and came back and played. Many and you know, it's the sale kind of team that we saw tonight. Athletic, physical, talented, well coached much we will have to do some things a little better, especially rebound the ball better. Bear always kills us on the board but I am happy we have to worry about it, to be honest with you.

Q. Coach, talk -- I saw you just shaking your head earlier when this question was asked about, asked to the players about being the last team to play tonight. And you've had a chance to watch this week, what has happened to others, the first game in the tournament.

COACH BILL FENNELLY: No, it was, it was a long week, you know. It's great to get a bye and play, but we watched a lot of teams play. And you watch a lot of teams get beat. And you know, we all stayed up and watched the Syracuse-UConn game and you know, you want to get to playing. The good news is, there's only five teams left by the time we played, so at least that was the good news.

But it was a hard week for our kids. We tried to be smart about practice. And we actually brought them in here early this morning and shot wishing we normally wouldn't have done at 8:20 this morning, but we had to get them out of the hotel and let them shoot a little bit. And they handled it great all day. And then we went back and did our study table and did everything normal as we could. And luckily, you know, we played hard enough to do the right things. But it was hard waiting, but certainly it was well worth it.

Q. Bill, for Baylor with Danielle being out with the injury, how does that change how you guys prepare and go to attack them?

COACH BILL FENNELLY: I don't know, Bobby, if it changes as lot. I have been someone that has been a card-carrying member of the Alison fan club for three years. I love the way she

plays. You saw tonight how physical and competitive they are. They are going to find it from other places. I don't think there is any question.

Danielle is a phenomenal basketball player. And it's tragic what happened to her. And it's sad for their team and sad for her. But, you don't get to the point they are with their record with one player.

So, you know, we'll look at it tonight and try to make some decisions. Certainly the quick turnaround at 2:30 tomorrow. The good news is -- does anybody know how the Syracuse men did tonight? The reason I'm asking, if our players complain about being tired, we will bring that up. I told Oz before the game: You're playing 40. Jonny from Syracuse went 67, you ought to be able to play 40. I am sure that will be the scouting report tomorrow, if anybody complains about being tired.

We are excited about playing. How can you not be? It is the best conference tournament in the country, in a great environment. And the Big 12, it is an honor to be a part of it and we are so excited we get to stay and play another game.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, see you tomorrow. And best of luck to you.

COACH BILL FENNELLY: Thank you, everyone. Thanks for being here.

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