

March 11, 2010



Kansas – 80
Texas Tech – 68

An interview with:



CHARLIE FISS: We're ready to begin with the Kansas Jayhawks. Coach Bill Self and his student-athletes Sherron Collins and Cole Aldrich. Coach, we'll go to you first for your thoughts on today's victory.

COACH SELF: Pass.

[Laughter] No, I thought today we played very well. I never thought we guarded them or got any rhythm defensively. I thought they played good. I thought that we obviously played much better the second half, and we had some guys step up and make some big shots. But that wasn't the energy level that I would hope that we would play with from this point forward.

CHARLIE FISS: Questions for Sherron Collins and Cole Aldrich.

Q. Sherron, it's your senior year, are you trying to basically extend it as long as you can by lasting in the Big 12 tournament?

SHERRON COLLINS: Last year we took an early exit. This year we're trying to prevent that. We already won the regular season so we know we still gotta motivated to win the tournament as well. So we're trying not to have any slipups.

Q. Cole and Sherron, obviously you guys didn't play as well as you wanted to. But

was this a little bit, maybe, NCAA tournament atmosphere, enough of a tough game to get you guys cranked up for what's going to be coming up here in the next week or so?

COLE ALDRICH: Like Coach said in the locker room, this is going to be a better atmosphere than we will wherever we get seeded in tournament.

It's one of those things we've got to come together as a team and create our own energy and get the whole team involved with getting pumped up for the game, whether it's at 11:30 in the morning or 8:00 at night.

SHERRON COLLINS: I agree with him. Like he said you have to build your own energy, got to be ready to play. It only takes a few possessions and you could be going home, especially in the tournament game. And this was a tournament game with a tournament atmosphere. This is better than tournament atmosphere. But it is a like a tournament game.

Q. Sherron, could you talk about, about six minutes to go when Tech cuts it to 2 and then you and Xavier hit back to back 3s and how that swung the pendulum little bit?

SHERRON COLLINS: We got the ball's moving. We didn't move the ball as well as we should move it the entire game, but we got some -- we got a good reversal and I was open and I hit a shot. Then we got a steal. It was off a rebound. We ran the floor. We were able to get it and he hit a 3. We hit some big shots. That's what we needed. The crowd got into it, and we fed off of that.

Q. Sherron, could you just talk about your game including the foul trouble and the way you shot it tonight, too?

SHERRON COLLINS: I think I shot it pretty good. Took a couple of bad shots. But I gotta do a better job staying out of foul trouble and putting my team in tough positions.

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No matter what calls were made, there were fouls. I've just got to do a better job playing on my feet and playing with my head.

Q. Cole you were on the floor, I don't think Sherron was. Describe the play with five minutes left, and I think Roberson sprayed it up on the floor and caught you guys napping and cut it to 2.

COLE ALDRICH: It was just kind of I think a dead ball, and then they just threw it in quick, and I think like you said we fell asleep, didn't realize that the ball was in until kind of the crowd kind of gasped and, you know, it's one of those things that we really got to touch up, because those things that can really hurt us in the future.

Q. Sherron and Cole, could you comment on the 2000 victories for the program?

SHERRON COLLINS: It means a lot. Right now it means a lot to us right now. But right now we've got a lot of the game still ahead of us. We don't want to put too much focus on it. But it means a lot to people who support us and people who played before us. And all the people who support the program and it means a lot. It was for them. We won it more for them than for us, and we enjoyed it and it's great to be a part of it.

COLE ALDRICH: It's exciting to be part of the 2,000th win because very few programs have that opportunity. I think when we're all done playing basketball we'll look at it kind of have a reunion and just kind of hang our hats on just being a small part of that 2,000. And having so many great players at the university that played before us is really special.

Q. Their offense, motion offense and Darko stepping out, what kind of problems did they create for you guys defensively?

COLE ALDRICH: It was a struggle. First half we didn't really defend them at all. I mean, the second half was also a struggle. But the one thing that we gotta do, and we talked about it earlier, is just gotta have energy. The more energy we have, the more we're able to move our feet on the defensive end. And I think that the more turned up the better we are defensively.

CHARLIE FISS: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. Cole touched on it. He said there were a lot of things you guys have to touch up.



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It seemed like the first half was full of those moments.

COACH SELF: Yeah, I thought they played better than us for sure the first half. We were fortunate we were up 2 at the half. And our energy level, like the guys said, it wasn't very good. And that's the way that we have to play in order to look good.

I also thought we missed some easy shots the first half. I thought we got some lay-ups and didn't finish in transition. First half, we had or for the game we had 12 opportunities to score in transition, which were pretty good transition team and scored on five of those.

And where we had numbers and ended up shooting the ball and coming away empty. So, yeah, we can improve on a lot of things. You know, we played -- we were the 2 seed I think and played Oklahoma State a one-point game in Dallas. The next year we struggled with Oklahoma in the first round.

The next year we played Nebraska after handling them pretty good. And they got us down 15 or whatever. So we probably played better today than we did those games, if that's any consolation for us at all. But certainly we have to play better tomorrow.

Q. You talked about Cole and Sherron needing to step up in the post-season, do you feel they took it to heart today?

COACH SELF: I didn't think either one played very well the first half. Sherron had points, but had a couple of bad fouls, and I didn't think Cole was a factor at all. He got ten rebounds but I didn't feel he was a factor at all. Challenged them at halftime pretty good.

I thought they both played very well in the second half. Cole's got to be hungry to score. He's not as hungry to score as he was last year at this particular moment.

And that's one thing that we have to do. We've got to be able to throw the ball to him, have him come away with points or fouls. And I think he can do a better job of that.

I thought the second half he did a much better job.

Q. You talked about the energy level. How much impetus is that on Sherron to get those other guys to raise their energy level?

COACH SELF: You know, Sherron would

tell you it's all on him, that he takes responsibility for everything going on with our team. Which he should. He's a point guard. That's what point guards should do. They should be an extension of the staff and whatever the staff feels they need, that's his job to implement it.

But they're a hard team. We came out. We kind of messed around with a little press. They went right through it. So we just weren't anywhere to create any momentum. And we didn't have those two or three good possessions in a row defensively that led to easy baskets like we normally do.

But give Tech credit, they're a hard team to pressure because they run motion. Then they had a five-man that was always a pressure release. No matter how hard we pressured them, Cole's man caught it.

That will happen against certain teams, but we didn't expect Darko to come out and make four 18-footers, or five. They played well. We shouldn't say we played poorly because that takes away from how well they played.

Q. Could you comment, please, on the 2,000th victory for the program?

COACH SELF: I think the guys, we talked about it. But we have played a very minimal role in that, obviously. We were joking on the way in. Jim Marchiony and myself, I think Max Falkenstien has been there for 1700 of them. That's a joke, but probably not far off.

But I think it does mean a lot to our fan base and just to certainly be, I know Carolina has 2,000. I think we've got 2,000 now and Kentucky is 2,015 or 20, whatever it is, to be the only programs in America to reach that milestone, I think it does speak volumes worth of history and tradition of the program. We're very proud of it. It hadn't been a big point of emphasis for this team, but I think the guys respect the past enough to know it's a big deal.

Q. Why do you think Cole has looked for his shot more, I guess, at least lately, and how have you addressed it?

COACH SELF: We've addressed it. And to me -- I could be wrong, which I am often, but to me he can manufacture points off transition, off board play, off scoring before he catches. I mean, what I mean by that, they throw it to him, it's just an easy basket. Teams have done a good job defending him. It's not all on him. We have to do a better job getting him the ball. No question about

that. I want him to be hungrier to demand it and hungrier in areas where he doesn't have to bounce it. It's something that most guys go through that's not being negative. That's a technique thing that he can get better at as we move forward, hopefully.

CHARLIE FISS: Thank you, Coach.

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