

March 12, 2010



Kansas – 79
Texas A&M – 66

An interview with:



CHARLIE FISS: We're joined now by Texas A&M, Coach Mark Turgeon and his student-athletes, Bryan Davis and Donald Sloan. Coach, your thoughts on tonight's game.

COACH TURGEON: I thought we were great for 32 minutes. My guys gave it everything they had. They executed. They defended. We're not going to make any excuses. But for 32 we were really good. And give KU credit. When it was time to make plays, they made plays. They made seven or eight straight shots. We missed seven or eight shots. Really good looks at the eight-minute mark. Wide open. Didn't make them. They made them at the other end, that was the game.

Then there was a couple of minutes in there where we weren't ourselves. And they built the lead from 6 to 12 and 14. That was the only disappointing part of the day. But besides that I wouldn't trade my team for anything. They busted their tails today. They were great. Tough environment against a heck of a basketball team, and we just came up short.

CHARLIE FISS: Questions for our student-athletes.

Q. Donald, how big of a momentum shift was it when you picked up foul number three?

DONALD SLOAN: It was pretty big. But we got the guys that stepped up and did what they had to do in order to keep the lead, keep us in the game at the time. Actually when I got back in, that's when the lead kind of shifted.

But I don't really think that that was key to why we lost the lead. And they were able to get momentum and come back. Because we were fine. So it was big, because I love being in the game. I sat on the bench in foul trouble. But I think that was the least of the problems, why we came up short tonight.

Q. Donald, you hit the jumper, I think 57-56. Then after that KU was in a zone. You didn't really get to touch the ball a whole lot until the lead had really gotten big. Offensively, was it guys just having trouble finding you? Was it tough to get the ball or what was going on in that period?

DONALD SLOAN: No, not at all. I think we're very team-oriented group. KU played excellent defense. But I touched the ball, to say the least. I had touches. I was actually trying to get other guys shot. B.J., Khrist. Trying to hit B.D. in the middle, kind of giving other guys the opportunity to make plays, because I did feel like KU were keying in on me while they were in that zone. And we had great opportunities all night. And just fell short in the end.

Q. Brian, talk about the physicality of you guys being able to match Kansas through most of two games and that five, six-minute run they went on, that was the first time they've been able to do that on you. How good are they when they're doing what they do?

BRYAN DAVIS: They're really good when they're really physical like that. And they were able to make some runs. And they hit three big 3s in

the corner. And just the physicality of the game throughout the whole -- throughout this whole game and the last game that we played against them has been pretty much even, until like the last eight minutes of this game, and they were able to pull away from us.

Q. Bryan, how do you describe your team? I've heard blue-collar, strong-willed. And moving forward, what kind of team does A&M have?

BRYAN DAVIS: We're a very tough team. We don't back down from anybody. We're going to fight until the end. We're going to play you 40 minutes on tough defense the whole time. We're a team on offense. We don't really just look to one person to score everything. We spread everything out and just do everything we can to execute and play the way that we play.

Q. Donald, did that zone kind of force you guys to take too many jump shots, too many 3s, without working your way inside?

DONALD SLOAN: Yeah, I would have to say so. I think, if we can play the game again, guys would be a little more aggressive as far as trying to drive and force the defense to collapse and have kick-outs for even better 3s or better shots.

And so, yeah, I really have to say that it forced us to shoot shots that weren't as open as we'd like. Gotta give KU credit. I guess they had a good game plan, as far as the second half, at least.

CHARLIE FISS: Thank you. Questions for coach.

Q. Mark, you've been into the NCAA tournament with a few other teams now. How good do you feel about this bunch, as you begin play next week?

COACH TURGEON: I've got a lot of confidence in this group. Playing the number one team in the country in this kind of environment gives me confidence, without your starting point guard; we're not making any excuses, because that was the way it was today.

But hopefully we can get Dash healthy. We can get better between now and next week whenever we play. But we didn't guard this weekend the way we normally guard. Teams shot a really high percentage against us.

So if we can get back to playing the way we can play defensively, I like our team. They've

been fun to coach. And today was fun. I mean, that four-minute stretch we just weren't very good. And besides that, they were great. So I've got a lot of confidence in them. Hopefully we can get healthy. We have guys that are playing that are hurt. So it affects practices.

They play in the game, but they're not practicing. So hopefully we'll get everybody back and have a good week of practice next week.

Q. I think you said last night or today you were sick of losing to KU. I wonder your emotions now. Immediately after that bounce against the effort without those two key guys.

COACH TURGEON: I say silly things, but I'm used to winning. And so I'd like to beat Kansas sometime. They've been pretty good for three years. They've had a national championship team, and a team that's 31 and 2. Not many people beat them. Our effort was great both times against them. I thought we played -- even though the score doesn't indicate it, we played much better today than we did at College Station and I thought our guys played like they knew they could beat Kansas. College Station, I didn't feel that way all the time.

So some day. If we play them enough times, maybe we'll catch them on a good night.

Q. When Sloan picked up that third, automatic decision to sit him down?

COACH TURGEON: Yeah.

Q. And also when he hit the two free throws, put you up 55-51, sat him down, had a word with him for just a second, why take him out at that point?

COACH TURGEON: He had three fouls. And I took him out with, I don't know, he picked up his third at 17:41. We were ahead.

The boxout foul was a bad foul. And get a cheap one like that, which he did, leads to the third. And then he hit his two free throws. We still had command of the game. I didn't want him to pick up his fourth.

I took him out, what did you say it was, 10:13? And I was going to try to get to the eight-minute mark and play him the last eight minutes. He didn't sit there very long because we started to panic a little bit, which we don't do. But we did today.

And I was just trying to get him through, I

just didn't want him to pick up his fourth with ten minutes to go. I think if I could have gotten to the eight-minute mark we were good. But his third foul was big. It was really big. He was playing. And that was big. And especially with the lack of guards that we have for the tournament. For him to pick up three was big.

Q. Could you comment, please, just on the quality of play that we're seeing here this weekend in the Big 12 and what that can do for these Big 12 teams as you're moving into next week and beyond?

COACH TURGEON: I think the league from top to bottom is great. When you can play a 12 seed like we did yesterday and they take you down to the wire, it shows you how good our league is.

We're not going to see a team better than Kansas out there. So it's great for us. The competition throughout the league, whether it's Oklahoma State, Texas, Baylor, Kansas State, it's gotten everybody ready for the NCAA tournament. There's not a team you're going to run into that's any better than what you've seen. And it's just how well you play on that day.

So I think it's been great for us. Knock on wood, I think it's going to be an exciting stretch for the Big 12.

Q. Can you talk about the altercation? It looked like it might have woke up Kansas a little bit.

COACH TURGEON: Which one?

Q. When the teams got together, looked like there was a double foul called.

COACH TURGEON: I don't know if it woke them up. They made some shots and we didn't. I don't know. I don't know.

CHARLIE FISS: Thank you, coach.

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