

March 13, 2010



Oklahoma – 74
Oklahoma State – 69

An interview with:



PETER IRWIN: We're now joined by the Oklahoma State Cowgirls, Kurt Budke along with the two student-athletes Tegan Cunningham and Andrea Riley. Your thoughts on this afternoon's game.

KURT BUDKE: Well, I just can't even begin to tell you how proud I am of my team and the effort. Third game in three days; and believe me, there's nobody no more tired than these two up here. I thought it was a gutty performance and a heck of a college basketball game.

We've got a lot to be proud of. I think the only difference in the game was at the free throw line. Other than that, I thought the rebounding and everything that we got hurt with last time we did a much better job. We might have took another step as a team today. So great effort.

PETER IRWIN: Questions?

Q. You guys both shot really well virtually the entire game. Then the last eight, ten minutes cooled off. Looked like your shots were a little short. Do you think fatigue was part of that, ended up playing three tight games in a 45-hour span?

TEGAN CUNNINGHAM: I mean, obviously playing three games in three days obviously took a toll. My legs were hurting early on. So, I mean, that's probably, yeah, no one else

has really played three games in three days. So I'm sure it took a toll on us.

ANDREA RILEY: Me, yeah. The same.

Q. Can you just talk a little bit about just the back and forth nature of this game? It seemed a little bit like when they got it out to about three or four there late, I mean, that was one of the biggest cushions of the day. But talk a bit about the back and forth of things and how stressful that was for you guys.

ANDREA RILEY: Well, I think that we really just played really well today. And the fast speed games, playing against them like they beat us really bad the last game, and then the game at home was kind of tight, but they just made plays at the end. That's the same kind of outcome that it was tonight.

When they only played one game and we've played two games. And then we played a game so close last night, and so sometimes you have that freshness in your legs to be able to make plays in the end.

Q. Robinson hits a jumper. She missed one. I think they were up maybe three or two and she missed a jumper, comes back and hits one and gets to the line. Talk a bit about her play. Obviously you guys have gone back and forth this year pretty good?

ANDREA RILEY: She's a great player. It's basically an open floor. She really knows how to lead her team and she just led them to a victory tonight. She did whatever she had to do.

Q. I asked the OU girls this. Same question for you. I think everybody that watched the games last night, both games and then today's game, had a lot of fun. Is it fun playing in games like you've had last night and today? You pulled them out last night, didn't tonight. But is it a lot of fun playing in such a tight back and forth game as you played up

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Oklahoma State 3.13.10b

here?

TEGAN CUNNINGHAM: Obviously it's a lot more fun if we win. I mean, I enjoyed last night a lot more than today. But, yeah, what you play for. Conference, every team is up for a chance. Any given team on any given night. It is fun. But like I said I prefer to get the win, yes.

Q. Talk about how this conference tournament has prepared you guys for the NCAA tournament.

ANDREA RILEY: I think my teammates have gained a lot of confidence, because they really rolled off of my energy, but I think they found a way to just to continue to be in stance, to go to the boards harder and try to do the little things. I think that's really going to rub off going into the tournament.

Q. Tegan, you seemed to recapture some of the shooting touch that maybe eluded you the last couple of games, I don't know what you finished tonight, nine of 18. Could you talk about that and how it felt to get that back today?

TEGAN CUNNINGHAM: Obviously OU didn't play me as tight as the other teams, Ohio State really gave me no chance to catch the ball. So I mean we ran more plays, me as well. And I just felt good going into this game. I hadn't had any big nights so far. So obviously my legs were a little bit fresher than Andrea, and coach made a comment to shoot the ball. He had faith in me.

Q. Andrea, I know it's a difficult situation, but can you even allow yourself to think about the possibility that you played your last game at Oklahoma State?

ANDREA RILEY: No, I've got confidence in my teammates. And I'm going to have so much faith and believe that they're going to win the game.

Q. Andrea, I know it's tough in a defeat also, but have you addressed the breaking all the records, the tournament records and career in a single tournament?

ANDREA RILEY: The one I'm most proud of about is the assist record because I don't really worry about scoring. So that's it.

PETER IRWIN: Thank you. Questions for coach.

Q. I think you learned something about your team up here that maybe you didn't know before you got here?

KURT BUDKE: I think, yeah, I think you're right. I think really it's maybe five or six of the last seven games, I think we've done a much better job defensively, much better job of blocking on game plans. The difference -- one of the differences between us and OU right now is that OU has veterans that have been to the Final Four and they do the little things right to win games like this. They did it last night in the Baylor game. And they did it tonight.

We were much better the last six, seven games of doing the little things. We're not perfect yet. But my team as a whole has gotten better and we learned a little bit more about our toughness at this tournament, yes.

Q. Can you talk about some of your young players and how they've played in this tournament?

KURT BUDKE: I think this tournament is kind of an eye opener for some of them. And as we look at Toni got in foul trouble tonight. But has played well in the tournament. I thought Precious helped us tonight. I thought Carolyn Blair-Mobley gave us good minutes tonight. You're not going to stop Danielle Robinson, but she did a good job containing, making her shots tonight. We're going to need everybody to win that first round game, and I think you saw Lindsey Keller miss shots tonight but had confidence to shoot the shots tonight. I just think this group as a whole will really rally together and I think this tournament helped us as we prepare for the NCAA.

Q. For somebody who doesn't worry about scoring, Andrea sure does it a lot. Just talk a little bit about her tournament. It was a historic tournament for her.

KURT BUDKE: It really was. And just like her last answer to you about breaking records. We just don't talk about those things at all. She doesn't talk about those things at all. She never looks at the scoreboard. The one thing she checks is assists: How many assists did I have? Because she really has taken a lot of pride in getting her teammates involved and making our team better that way. And for those that didn't come out and watch her in her career, they really missed something. Because now we're not going to play

at home anymore. And it's a career that will be talked about for many, many years to come. She's a great player and a great kid.

Q. At halftime, Andrea was shooting great and Tegan shooting great. But you're only up 4. Generally if both are hitting like that you've got a pretty good lead. Do you think OU being able to score the way they did in the first half was sort of the, kept them in the game and because you weren't going to be able to keep shooting like that. That was a key thing.

KURT BUDKE: It was a key thing. Again, that's where OU I think is a top ten team, because they have four legitimate threats out there. At most all times. They have four legitimate threats that any one of those four can go for 24 points on any one given night. We knew it as coaches. Of course we didn't talk about it at halftime or anything, but we knew that the game being that tight, our legs were starting to give just a little bit.

You hoped and prayed that the kids could get through it. And they almost did. They almost did. But OU is just a little bit fresher than us at the end.

Q. Now you guys wait for Selection Monday. Can you just talk about your feelings heading into that where you guys will be come Monday night?

KURT BUDKE: We'll have a little party like we always do and get together with some of our favorite people and watch the show together. And Monday night is about a celebration of this season and how well these kids have done. And we're not going to let anything take away from it. And I promise you I don't know where we'll go or who we'll play, but those kids are going to play in that game and are going to do everything they can to give Andrea Riley a chance to play again.

Q. You started in terms of talking about the game plan for having to face us, now we're here that you have to game plan for this. What do you think? You must have seen some things today that made you optimistic about how other people can step forward, when she's not out there?

KURT BUDKE: I totally agree. I mean, obviously you can't make up all her points with one player but you can sure ask someone else to get four more, six more, have someone else go. I mean Toni's capable of going for 20 on any night. So is Precious. Obviously Tegan's going to have

to have a good night. I think they're not excited about playing without Andrea, but I think -- I just saw the mood in the locker room and them looking her in the eye saying you're not done. You're not done. And that was really good to see. I think they're a confident group. And whoever we get I promise you it will be 40 minutes as hard as we can.

Q. I assume Carolyn made her first start tonight?

KURT BUDKE: I think that's right.

Q. 36 minutes. Talk a little bit about not only the start but 36 minutes.

KURT BUDKE: Andrea is obviously the natural matchup but she, again, playing the two games, we thought Carolyn could hopefully go in and contain Danielle Robinson and I think she did. We asked Carolyn to keep Danielle Robinson around her average. We thought that would be a great goal for tonight. And I thought Carolyn did do that and that let Andrea not have to lead us in scoring at this end and stop a great player at that end. And really proud of Carolyn tonight. It was her first start, and I thought she delivered for us.

Q. Seems the whole point of basketball is putting boards on the board. Why does Andrea seem almost embarrassed about being a scorer? Could you talk about what a great feat it is for somebody her size to come into this league and be the all-time leading scorer?

KURT BUDKE: It's unbelievable, isn't it? You see it right there. She never ever talks about it. The toughness this kid has displayed in four years, and we talked about it a little bit yesterday, all the many times she screened, all the many times she's chipped on a screen, takes an elbow about nose height, and all those things, I promise you, I can go back over her four-year career and find 500 times that she was hit just a little bit harder because who she is.

I'm not talking illegally, I'm saying legally, of just trying to take her out of her game. This has got -- she's got to go down as one of the toughest kids in the history of the Big 12 for what she's meant for this program.

Q. The fact you get an extra day, by losing a day you get an extra day to play that one game without her. Because she's dribbling

the ball 80 percent of the time when you're on offense and now all of a sudden she's going to be dribbling 0 percent of the time?

KURT BUDKE: Right. We talked about it before we got here that if something happened and we were eliminated early, just give us a couple more days of practice. So I haven't even looked at really where the sites are, when we might start. But the kids need rest right now. We'll probably go home tomorrow and just have a nice relaxing bus ride home and get to work on Monday, and you're right, one extra day, we'll take anything we can right now.

Q. Is there an advantage to the fact that whoever you play has no idea what you're going to do or what you're going to look like, probably because you don't know either. I mean, literally --

KURT BUDKE: I've got a little idea.

Q. There's no way anybody can game plan for you because you can't replicate what you've been doing?

KURT BUDKE: No, we've talked about it as coaches already. They can get all the film they want. It's not going to matter, is it? That's one of the different things about this is that we obviously will hold some of the things that we've done. But we've got an opportunity to pull out a whole new game plan. It's like preparing for a Bowl game almost, isn't it? You can change everything in that month you get, but we'll have to do it in about three days. That's why the football coaches have it easy. I don't know what they're complaining about.

PETER IRWIN: Thank you, Coach.

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