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Kansas – 90
Colorado – 83

An Interview With:

**KANSAS
COACH BILL SELF
TYREL REED
TYSHAWN TAYLOR**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Kansas Jayhawks coach Bill Self and student-athletes Tyrel Reed and Tyshawn Taylor. Coach, opening comments.

COACH SELF: It's another hard-fought game. I thought Colorado played great, especially the first half. And got us down, I think, 22 to 10 before we woke up. And then we actually played some of our best ball of the year probably from about the 10-minute mark to about the 10-minute mark of the second half and kind of faltered down the stretch.

But we'll take it. Got a lot of respect for Tad and the job he does. And certainly for their players. I thought they played very, very well.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Tyshawn, how comfortable and confident were you attacking the glass tonight?

TYSHAWN TAYLOR: I was real confident. I think Coach looked over to me and told me to be aggressive and to drive it, so I just wanted to put pressure on the defense and be aggressive. And I got some stuff to fall today and got some looks from my teammates, so I just wanted to keep putting pressure on them.

Q. Tyrel, you hit a big 3 when they cut it to nine with about four minutes to go, and

after Knutson hit one you hit another one. Talk about the momentum switch for that.

TYREL REED: Yeah, I think we caught a play, somebody set a really good screen for me to knock one down in the corner, and I'm not for sure who passed it to me, Tyshawn or somebody penetrated and found me open again.

So give a lot of my credit to my teammates on those, but fortunate to knock down my shots and hopefully changed momentum a little bit.

Q. Tyrel, on that run you guys went in, once Colorado kind of got up 22-10. Seemed like the emphasis was down low, down low, Marcus, Markieff, Marcus, Markieff. How much of the emphasis was actually on that, and how much of it was just what they gave you?

TYREL REED: Well, definitely we want to play through our bigs. Marcus and Markieff are our best offensive players, and we really weren't doing anything different. We were running our offense, getting it to the second and third side, and by doing that we were getting good looks. And we've got to continue to do that down the stretch when we weren't getting as good of looks. We just have to keep passing the ball and being aggressive. But we didn't put any extra emphasis on that.

And we actually guarded during that time. So we were able to get some stops.

Q. Tyshawn, can you talk a little bit about how your role has evolved over the past couple of weeks coming off the bench?

TYSHAWN TAYLOR: I think it's the same thing, just play defense and make sure my team gets a shot. I think if I do that, I'll be fine. My goal really hasn't changed except I'm coming off the bench now. It's the same thing. The coach expects the same thing, the same things out of me, and that's what I'm going to do. And that's it, really.

Q. Tyshawn or Tyrel, Coach Self

mentioned you did play some of your best ball of the year in that 20-minute stretch. What flipped for you guys? Came out a little bit sluggish early on.

TYREL REED: I don't know. I just had better energy. Yeah, we came out flat the past two games and we've got to do a better job of coming out hard and prepared and ready to go.

But we just kind of hunkered down and defended. I think we did a lot better job of keeping the ball in front of us. And by getting stops, that gives us confidence on the offensive end as well. So continue to play defense, I think we'll be okay.

Q. Tyrel, what were you guys able to do to slow down Cory Higgins in particular?

TYREL REED: We didn't do anything different. Whoever was guarding him at the time did a good job of keeping him in front of them and forcing him into tough shots. There was really no extra emphasis. They got great offensive players in Alec Burks and Cory Higgins. And they're tough to guard, but we did a better job on Higgins today, and Burks is a really good player as well.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. Coach, you saw an 18-point lead get away there in the final 13 minutes. Obviously you were struggling a little defensively. How troublesome is that to you?

COACH SELF: Well, anytime anybody shoots 49 percent it's troublesome. I mean, that's not what we've won a lot of games -- that's not the reason why we won a lot of games is because we outscored people. We've actually done a good job over time being better defensively than that. They've got good offensive players, though.

Getting an 18-point lead and having it cut, I think they got it to six there in the last minute, that's certainly nothing to be proud of, but sometimes that's a little misleading. You get an 18-point lead and they make two shots in a row, which they did, and all of a sudden 18 becomes 13. And we haven't really played bad, they just made a couple of plays.

But I thought -- I thought we did a really poor job when we had the lead, we could have dropped them, and our offensive execution, and we had guys trying to make great plays instead of simple plays, which is how we got the lead, and then we relaxed a couple of times on Knutson defensively.

But you don't ever like to lose a lead, but certainly the game, I didn't ever feel like we lost control of the game as far as the outcome.

Q. Bill, on the flip side, how good was the defense to begin the second half after struggling some the first half? It seemed to get you that lead.

COACH SELF: It's unbelievable. I didn't think we guarded very well the first half, and we even went zone to bail us there at the end of the half. And we're up six at half. And the second half, you know, until about the ten-minute mark we played very well. We were very efficient offensively and defended better and certainly rebounded the ball pretty good. Plus 15 on the glass is a pretty good number.

So we did some good things defensively, but at the end of the game when they spread it and drive it, that's been everyone's MO against us in late-game situations when we're ahead is to spread it and drive it and get to the free-throw line, and we didn't guard that as well as we could have.

Q. You've been through many NCAA Tournaments. Looking at Colorado, can they be kind of a dangerous draw for somebody?

COACH SELF: I think so. Tad's done a great job. And they've got two terrific offensive players in the third that can just shoot the lights out.

So obviously they could be very dangerous, because if those guys are hot on the right night, they can play with anybody and beat anybody.

And I think they're definitely and certainly hope they are, but I definitely believe they are. But I don't think anybody will look forward to matching up with these guys. They're dangerous.

Q. Can you talk about the defensive effort on Higgins? He was 1 for 11 from the field.

COACH SELF: Tyrel's a modest kid. Tyrel guarded him. That's the bottom line. We had a couple other guys guard him a few possessions, but that was Tyrel's job.

And if you would have told me going into the game that Tyrel would get 15 and the guy he guarded, who was arguably one of the best offensive players in our league, would get six, I would say that definitely shifted the scale to our

favor. So I thought he did a great job on him.

But we didn't do anything special. We just tried to keep him out of the lane. He screwed up one time where he let him drive baseline, which we know he loves to do, and we fouled him. But other than that he did a really sound job on him.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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