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Texas A&M – 86
Missouri – 71

An Interview With:

**TEXAS A&M
COACH MARK TURGEON
B.J. HOLMES
DAVID LOUBEAU
NATHAN WALKUP**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas A&M coach Mark Turgeon and student-athletes B.J. Holmes, David Loubeau and Nathan Walkup. Coach, opening comments.

COACH TURGEON: Well, we were good from the beginning. I thought defensively we really played well. They were missing jump shots, and our whole thing was trying to make them shoot jump shots overhand. They started cold and didn't do a very good job guarding the ball. We fouled them way too much. They shot 37 free throws.

Our defense was good. Our rebounding was pretty good and execution was at a pretty high level. We made shots. When you make shots, you look better. Didn't really let them make a run, which when you play Missouri you worry about that. But I think our defense had a lot to do with it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. David, six of eight from the field, eight of nine at the line and started out so well, talk about your mindset early on to start off well and give this team a lift early?

DAVID LOUBEAU: Really, it was B.J. and Dash driving to the hole. I was ready to finish and we've been driving the ball lately more. So that's been a plus in our development.

Q. B.J., can you talk a little bit about how you handled their pressure especially in the first half? Coach talked about no runs and that's probably the biggest reason that happens.

B.J. HOLMES: We knew coming into this game that they was going to press us and try to trap us and try to get us out of our offensive rhythm. We just tried to stay calm and poised and try to execute as best we could. And I think we were able to do that tonight.

Q. Nathan, can you tell me, you guys get another crack at Texas now. What do you guys have to do differently to kind of shake the result of the last two times?

NATHAN WALKUP: We're a little bit different team now. We're playing more physical. We just gotta get after it. We have to step up to the challenge and individually, the man you're guarding, and as a team. We have to step up and we've got to make plays and we've just got to play well. It's going to be a good game, I think.

Q. B.J., with David's hot start, how did that really help open things up for you? I guess about six or eight minutes in you got hot.

B.J. HOLMES: You know, the whole season they've been doubling Dave and trying to open it up for more of us on the perimeter. Today Dave started off hot. They started doubling him. We swung the ball, shared the ball tonight, and got a lot of people open shots not just myself, and we was able to make some.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. Coach, I believe Khris goes scoreless in the first half yet you play maybe the best half of the season. Break down the first 20 minutes to set the tone.

COACH TURGEON: We were good

defensively in that stretch, and then David and Dash kind of carried us through the first half. I think they had 36 or 31 of our 41 points. I'm not sure what we had at half, 46.

So, yeah, we were in a lot of foul trouble tonight. And I imagine they were, too, because it felt like the whistle was blowing a lot.

But we tried to piece it together as best we could. We had guys step up. We've really been sharing the ball in practice really well. And you knew it was coming at some point, sharing the ball like this, and it's been getting better and better.

But, yeah, it was good to play well without Khristis, and I thought Naji gave us pretty good minutes tonight. And I thought Darko gave us good minutes and I thought Derrek helped us, too, when he went in there too.

Q. Coach, now you get Texas. You lost to them by a combined 41 points. What's going to be different?

COACH TURGEON: By how much? Seemed a lot worse than that, trust me. We just have to play better. I think we've become a better team. We changed the way we played since the whipping at home. It humbled all of us and we became a better team. I didn't watch them tonight. I heard they were really good. They're probably 1 or 2 seed probably right now in the tournament.

I just hope we play well. They whipped us both times so hopefully we'll play well. That's all we want to do.

Q. There was a lot of substituting. Did you do that because of the foul trouble, or was that trying to like slow the pace, keep the flow from the game?

COACH TURGEON: No, it was foul trouble. Then we were doing offense/defense subs with nine minutes to go in the first half, which you don't usually do. But I felt like I had to, to just keep Khristis in some type of rhythm and keep Dash out there. We flow a little better with Dash out there.

That's why we were trying to do it. We were just trying to keep guys fresh and knowing we've got another game tomorrow night. So I think we shared the minutes pretty good.

Q. Can you talk a little bit more about the strategy behind your defense tonight? Obviously the big thing was keeping Mizzou out of the transition game, keeping them from running. Talk about, other than just the fact

that you're making the shots a whole lot, what you were able to do to keep them out of that transition game.

COACH TURGEON: I don't want to take anything away from what we did, but Mizzou had a tough game last night. And I think it showed a little bit. Jump shots were short. They got to the foul line. And I think that was a heck of a game last night, and I think that had a lot to do with their play.

Mike's gotta tell you that. I'm sure he won't make excuses. But just seemed that way. And came out a little bit flat not hitting shots, and it kind of just helped us make them continue to shoot jump shots overhand.

But with that said, our defense was pretty good. For the most part, I know we had 18 turnovers. Felt like we took care of the ball pretty well, especially against the press. Our turnovers didn't lead to layups, maybe six points of layups.

So it was a combination and we were pretty good and I think they just had a really tough game last night.

Q. Sticking with the defensive theme, what about against Ricardo Ratliffe? Specifically, only got six points, only took five shots all night.

COACH TURGEON: I don't know. I thought David did a good job. Ricardo just kicked our tail in College Station, and physically kicked it. I thought physically they manhandled us in College Station. So we talked about being a little bit tougher tonight. And I think we were -- we knew Ricardo Ratliffe was good. We had no idea he was that good when we played him in College Station. So we were really dialed into him pretty good tonight.

Q. Mark, it was physical all night long, but were there times when you thought it just moved to brutal on either side?

COACH TURGEON: I'm not sure I can answer that. There was a lot of stoppage. Of course, I want to get home to get to bed because we play again tomorrow night. And it was tough. It was tough on both teams. It was easier for us because we had the lead.

Yeah, the no flow really helped us against Missouri.

Q. You touched on it a little bit, but can you talk a little bit more about the way you

closed them out, didn't let them make the run in the second half to even get it into single digits.

COACH TURGEON: Once again, they weren't making shots. And our defense was pretty good. They missed a lot of shots around the rim. We rebounded well. We kept scoring. We executed. 86 points, that's like 120 for us.

And it's been hard for us to score. So it was really good to see that. It was just a combination of a lot of things. We were pretty good tonight. And they might not have been at their best.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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