

March 11, 2011



Baylor – 86
Kansas State – 53

An Interview With:

**KANSAS STATE
COACH DEB PATTERSON
KELSEY HILL
TAEOR KARR**

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by Coach Deb Patterson from Kansas State and student-athletes Kelsey Hill and Taelor Karr. Coach, opening comments.

COACH PATTERSON: Well, first thing that comes to mind is congratulations to Baylor. They just played a very dominating 40-minute game, I thought.

For us, I felt it was a game of two halves. The first half we might not have been our best, but I think we were keeping the game competitive.

The second 20 minutes we just failed in our ability to do that and that to me was beyond obvious. But there were phases of the game, the rebounding numbers reflect we didn't get the job done there to be competitive. Again, particularly in the second half. I thought the first 20 lining up against a team of that caliber, we had put ourselves in position to compete in the game well.

The lack of involvement offensively and defensively in terms of establishing some post hits and post game I think put a lot of pressure on our perimeter in this particular game.

And I think we've established during the season we're better at that than we played today, but we never really got that on track, any kind of real even post touches that would lead to good passes that would put some pressure on the defense. So I think that was a factor for us as well.

But great game by Baylor, and a second half for us that just was not competitive at the level you have to play against a great team like Baylor.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Taelor, and then for Kelsey, obviously Brittney Griner is not the only reason that Baylor scores 86 points today. Defensively, what do you feel like you should have done to limit the rebounds, especially offense rebounds, and their shots?

TAEOR KARR: Yeah, the main thing was the rebounding. They killed us on the boards. And that's on the shoulders of all of us that played, not just the posts. We all have to get in and get a body on everybody and box out and be more physical. So that was the main thing.

And then we played the zone a lot of the time, and we didn't scramble very well. We didn't communicate, and Baylor's a great team and they'll pick you apart, expose you on the little mistakes we made. They played a great game today, and they exposed us big time.

KELSEY HILL: It's just the work phases, it's the little things. You've got to box out. You've got to hustle and scramble, like Taelor said. We didn't bring it. Baylor definitely exposed us on that, where it's not characteristic of our team to not do the little things. And we didn't do that today.

Q. Kelsey and Taelor, you guys had a pretty tough game yesterday. Did you feel like you were just kind of running out of energy in the second half?

KELSEY HILL: You know, I wouldn't say that so much. I think that we just didn't focus in mentally. Mentally brings physicality and effort. And I think we had lack of effort, doing the little toughness things, which, again, like I said aren't characteristic of us, we didn't really handle those.

TAEOR KARR: Yeah, we can't use that as an excuse of being tired or anything like that.

We've been playing all season, and we should be in great shape by now. That's definitely not an excuse. We're not going to say that at all. It's just Baylor's a great team and they flat out beat us today.

Q. Kelsey and Taelor, having Jalana suit up and start with you girls, was that a motivating boost to start the game for you guys?

KELSEY HILL: You know, absolutely. Jalana is a great player, and she's phenomenal for us. And we have won games with her and with A&M -- or without her, excuse me, we've won games without her at A&M and won games with her. And I think we're just looking forward to the upcoming games in the tournament that we have to play.

Q. Taelor, is it surprising to look at the stat sheet and see you can shoot 70 percent from the 3 and lose by that margin?

TAELORE KARR: Yeah, it's tough. They played a great game all the way around. Odyssey Sims was four for five from the 3-point line. They had people step up. It wasn't just Brittney Griner that really killed us.

We just didn't play good defense. It's the same things. The work phases, like Kelsey said, the boxing out and scrambling on defense, just giving effort. And not being there for your teammates, we didn't do that at all today.

KELSEY HILL: Absolutely. Just what Taelor said. We gave up too many easy looks and didn't hustle with our intensity level.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. After a loss like this, you're now going into the NCAA Tournament. As a coach, how do you get your athletes back in the mental game to where they get that confidence back and they get that positive attitude back after kind of a disappointing loss or a big loss?

COACH PATTERSON: Honestly, I don't think it will be difficult with this team. I think it's like any of us, when you come to work and you're going to do a job and you go back home you're like, man, I really didn't do well with that, whatever it is. That's the disposition I think our players walk away from this game with.

We have to be a team that brings great attention to the little things and the work phases of the game. We can't wow you with our athleticism

and we can't wow you with our physical dominance. So we can stay competitive by doing things consistently and bringing accountability to those things.

And today it was -- and, again, I say it mostly in the second half, because the first half is a little bit of feeling out your opponent. You know they're good. You're still making adjustments. The second half I think it's not hard for us to walk into that locker room and know we were absolutely just dominated in that second 20 minutes emotionally, physically, with all the detail things.

So we're going to come back very hungry and motivated by the picture of what we look like when we don't do that, particularly against a phenomenal, great, confident, well-oiled machine like Baylor. And they are a little bit extreme relative to the challenge, but I think we're better, are capable of being better.

So I don't think I'm going to have to pick their chins up off the floor or they're walking out of there with a "poor me" mentality and how do we get our confidence back at all. I think it's just today we failed at the things we need to do to keep ourselves competitive, and so you get up tomorrow and say, well, let's get back to work and this is what happens when we don't. I think we're pretty matter of fact in that regard.

Q. I want to look forward to -- can you just talk about -- I know it's an inexact science, but do you think your seeding can be affected by Jalana's situation and how do you see your team if you don't have her at full strength?

COACH PATTERSON: Well, honestly I think she should be okay. I think she should be okay. So my expectation is that she will be. It's been a lot of days. We're going to have several days before our first NCAA Tournament game.

This is a hip flexor strain. It's not even the kind of injury that should continue to present itself at a real high level. So I feel that she's going to be okay. Today she didn't feel she could go, so we didn't utilize her. But I expect to have her in the NCAA Tournament. I personally don't have any question about her.

Q. Big picture, where do you see your team fitting in the field?

COACH PATTERSON: You might not believe this, but I can't even tell you where all of the regionals are, because I'm so focused on our

team and I like not looking out there. I might be the only coach on the planet that way. So we'll see.

Q. Also looking ahead, I mean, I know you just said that you're intensely focused on what K-State's doing, but what have you seen as a coach and just following basketball in general this year that maybe gives you some evidence that anything can happen, it could be anybody's tournament to win, as opposed to being the usual suspects of UConn, Tennessee, et cetera, et cetera?

COACH PATTERSON: I think in our league I would definitely say two of the usual suspects are A&M and Baylor. And anyone that doesn't regard them that way would be making a huge mistake.

I think if Oklahoma gets hot, you know. They've got a chance at a run. And then I tend to really believe in the usual suspects going into the NCAA Tournament this year.

I think Notre Dame's playing great basketball right now. It will be fun to see what happens with them. But our league in and of itself, in those early rounds of the NCAA Tournament, I think is a classic example of how wide open the early phases of this tournament are going to be in the middle rounds and in the first, you know -- those first games where you're looking at the 16 seed up to about the second or third seed, I think. Our league is a classic example of what can happen.

But I do believe there's a little bit of real serious heavyweights that are really some giants that people would have to slay when you line up against those 1 and 2 seeds this year.

Q. Baylor's defense, you had that stretch where you managed to cut it to nine. But it almost seems like on the perimeter they're playing with six players at times. Is that because of their quickness and then they've got Griner back there as the goalie kind of? Defensively talk about how difficult they are to get open shots against.

COACH PATTERSON: Again, if you don't establish, I think, some pressure on the rim and some post touches against Baylor, your life is just going to be so difficult every offensive possession because they're athletic, they're strong, they're physical, big bodies, great athletes. And once and if you do tend to loosen yourself for even a moment on the perimeter, with maybe a dribble

drive option, you've got Brittney that's going to be that factor on your dribble drive.

And so if you aren't hot on the perimeter, if you don't create outside opportunities by virtue of going outside and taking it at her and taking it at Brooklyn or Destiny, whoever is in at that point, it's going to be a really long day for you. And that's what we found today.

But you're right, they're just big and physical. And they're able to, I think, be better every catch because they know they've got Brittney behind them.

Q. On a normal day, how important is it that your team make 3s and how much do you rely on that aspect of the game?

COACH PATTERSON: Well, we've won a lot of games this year not being great from the 3-point line. But if you're not going to be great there, you better be scoring some in the paint. And that's the whole deal. For us it's a 50/50 proposition. We're going to take any and every 3 we can get our hands on. I like shooting them quick. I like shooting them when they're open. I never want them passed up.

But when those aren't dropping down, flat out you gotta find somebody that will score in the paint. And today we didn't. And it can be a devastating result for us.

Today I thought, especially early in the second half, we had got some decent looks. And I thought there were a couple of possessions where we saw Kelsey Hill get hot. Taelor was hot the first half. I thought we had some open looks. Alina had some. Kelsey had them in the second half. If they go in, the game remains significantly more competitive.

So it can keep us in games, that shot-making, but only for so long if we don't have a little bit of balance on the inside, and we had no balance on the inside today. None.

The other day we could win a game with Brandy scoring three baskets in the post, and that's enough. If Jalana's getting us 15 or 16.

But we have to have at least 18, 20 points in there or we can't compete with the people at this level.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.
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