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An Interview With:

**TEXAS A&M
COACH GARY BLAIR
DANIELLE ADAMS
SYDNEY CARTER
TYRA WHITE**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas A&M coach Gary Blair and student-athletes Danielle Adams, Sydney Carter and Tyra White. Coach, opening comments.

COACH BLAIR: We played awfully hard, not near as well as what we did against Texas. But Oklahoma didn't play as well as they did against Texas Tech.

That game on Wednesday took a lot out of both of us, because both of us usually execute better than we did. But I thought middle of the first half we came back, made our little mini run, and the key to it in this tournament, and I've told them all along, quit waiting for Danielle to score 40 and have balanced scoring. And that's what we had.

A 6'6" kid makes a whole lot of difference. She alters shots, she deters shots in there. And since they put her into the lineup, I think Oklahoma will be very good in the NCAA Tournament.

She was 6-for-6, kept us really from scoring at will in there. We did all right on offensive boards. But at the same time that's what everybody in the league is having to do, because of Griner, is go find some taller kids that can play post if you want to try to win championships here during Griner's four-year run.

I thought we did a good job with our bench in the second half. When they made their run, I started calling Carter's number. And we'd been

calling Tyra a lot in the first half, and she was good, bad, good, bad, good bad, but she hit those five in a row that really made the difference.

Danielle's got her in the first half. Didn't look like she had 13 points. But when she hits the board she played an average ballgame and still had a double-double.

And, folks, this is the first team ever in the Big 12, four straight years in the championship game. And now it's up to us to figure out how to keep that streak going by winning one here. But we're looking forward to playing Baylor. They're our sisters right down the road. We know each other very well. We know what they're going to do. It's not going to help our seed one way or the other. If we win, we're going to be a 2 seed; if they win, they're going to be a 1 seed. That's just the way it goes.

Let's go out, we're in this thing to win championships for A&M, hopefully it will be a great weekend for both our men and our women. Open it up to questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Sydney, could you talk about what's the difference in your game in the first half and second half?

SYDNEY CARTER: Just the all-around scoring. I think that in the first half I got in foul trouble, so I had to come out. He had to protect me because he needs me on the defensive end as well. But I think I took better shots and they left me open. So I think I just knocked the shots down in the second half.

Q. Sydney, talk about what is it like to be in the zone, some of us haven't picked up a ball in a while, especially just take us back to that stretch you were really feeling it especially after the third 3?

SYDNEY CARTER: I can't explain it. It's like I'm having an out-of-body experience there. Yeah, off the record. But it's just -- I'm pretty -- I'm a pretty emotional kid out there on the defensive

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end. You never really see me too much emotional on the offensive end. When I'm in the zone, I think you can really tell. It's an awesome experience.

Q. Danielle, could you just talk about the feeling of being in position to win a postseason title here, and in what's basically your backyard?

DANIELLE ADAMS: It's great. It's always great to play in a Big 12 championship in Kansas City especially in me and Tyra's hometown. This is in front of our family. We know we always have a team and our team is going to go out there perform each night aggressive on offense and defense. Carter did a tremendous job today. She was kind of iffy in the first half, but you see she came out in the second half just firing away and knocking down shots.

And Tyra, she's just aggressive on offense, taking it to the basket. And, I mean, I'm just glad I have teammates like that who can just back it up.

Q. Sydney, speaking of being emotional right at the end of the game you got the steal, had the ball, the clock's running down. Was that neat to just kind of stand there and hold the ball and smile?

SYDNEY CARTER: Of course. It would have been much better if that was a championship game. But it just feels good to get the win. We didn't play our best game, but it's a relief to know we can pull out a win like that against a team like Oklahoma. It just feels good to come out with a win.

Q. Danielle and Tyra, Coach Blair talked about the fatigue factor, the fact that you guys have played difficult games yesterday and then having to come back out here today. And I know that's the nature of the beast when you talk about a tournament like this. But talk about how that affects you and the legs and the bounce that you get and having to play days in a row like this?

DANIELLE ADAMS: That's a good question. I mean, it affects you just because your legs are tired. You're deep in the season, postseason, you've been playing all these games. And your legs are just trying to give up.

But we tried to not let that make a factor in how we perform each day. But it set a factor today in the game, but we pulled out a great win tonight

against a very good, well-coached Oklahoma team.

TYRA WHITE: I think it plays a big factor, but you just have to give it to Coach who coached us to just rest our legs for the big turnaround for tomorrow, playing a 11:00 game. We have to rest our legs, watch film, and stay off our feet and hopefully get the win tomorrow.

Q. Tyra, can you just talk about the third matchup with Baylor? You guys know these players so well and the games have been pretty dramatic, especially the one at Waco. What do you think can be the difference-maker for you guys to be able to beat them this year?

TYRA WHITE: I think the difference-maker is us. I think when we were at Waco we had a big lead. We let it slip away. So just keeping our composure, keeping our turnovers over because that's really what caused the game at Waco -- we were up like by I think 11 or something like that. We just let our composure just slip. The third time everybody knows, everybody plays, so it's just down to execution at the end.

Q. Danielle and Tyra, we make so much of the big two, the two Kansas City kids account for much of the Aggies offense. Could you talk about the frustration having to sit there most of the second half and also the excitement of seeing the other kids come through?

DANIELLE ADAMS: It's no frustration at all. I've got tremendous teammates that can pick up the slack or do whatever. That's what Carter did tonight. She came out the second half hot. Tyra, she's always going to do her thing. And we're just glad we got the win tonight and we're just looking forward to tomorrow against a great matchup against Baylor. And hopefully the third time's a charm and we pull out a victory here in Kansas City.

TYRA WHITE: I think our teammates are mentally tough. They come out prepared. When we go down, we're always there to pick up other slack. So I think we're all just kind of accountable to each other. I think that's the main key.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Questions for Coach.

Q. We appeared to capture during the game a play called by you where you were

going to Tyra White, and Sydney Colson as she walked the ball up she said let's go to Sydney Carter. Is that in fact what happened?

COACH BLAIR: No, I don't think so, because I was calling Carter's play. I was just telling her where to go. We were running -- we were running what we call 3. That's the Allen Iverson play where she comes across the double screen over there one-on-one.

But the second option is the double screen for Carter coming back up high. That's what we were having. So all I did was tell them to run 3. It's Tyra's first option which we figured we needed to throw her over there, get her on the back side and then bring her off the double screen.

Well, one of our posts screened, the other one didn't, and I think we still scored on it. But that's what the play was. It's the old Iverson play that everyone runs, and Tyra's pretty good on it, particularly when we were at Waco she had 29 points and about 12 of them are off that same play.

By the way, we did beat Baylor in the trivia contest. I want that duly noted. We got beat by Kansas State or Oklahoma in the first round, but we hung on and we won the trivia, so we're 2-and-1. We'll try to go 2-and-2 now. I'll let my AD know that.

Q. Can you talk about your 3-point defense, particularly with Ellenberg and Robinson today?

COACH BLAIR: I thought early it was good. In the second half, they just missed because we're so used to playing help side defense. Vic trains them so well to have two feet in the end in the basket. But when you have a post player out there and the 3-point shooter behind us, and then we're running -- we're thinking help, help, help, we've got to take a charge, there isn't a charge because we're stopping Robinson so they're skipping the ball and we're playing -- running into a pinball machine bouncing off the post player.

We need to leave one outside and one in, particularly if they don't have the inside game. We'll make that adjustment, because we'll see those plays again. But they had some great looks, particularly Whitney Hand.

And I would really like to compliment Whitney. This is the best she's played in about a month, and I thought she had an outstanding ballgame for them. And give Griffin a lot of credit, because I think she's turning into a great, great freshman post player.

Q. With all that Sydney Carter does for you defensively and the grunt work, how good does it feel for her to have a game like this offensively?

COACH BLAIR: I think it's good. Robert asked that question, what happened in the first half. Two fouls happened in the first half and she sat 13 minutes. So she played seven. But she missed a couple of looks early that were open that we call for.

After that, she's just a gamer. I mean, she can go all day long. And she does so much for this basketball team, on and off. And loose balls, whatever. And I want her at the free-throw line. Colson was running on fumes. I had to play her too many minutes and her free-throw shooting very much suffered.

But Colson, look at what she did. 4-for-12 from the field. You say, hey, that's not good, but she was penetrating. We were getting 19 offensive boards. Next, eight rebounds for her. That's got to be a career high. All on the defensive end. That's huge. Eight assists. Three steals. She should have been setting up on this table, too.

Q. Just your thoughts on a third matchup with Baylor.

COACH BLAIR: First, I'd like to challenge Kansas City to come out and see two of the top teams in the country, not just in the Big 12. And we've played the last three years in this championship in front of 3,100, in front of 4,000. We're better than that, Kansas City. We want you there. We want you out. We want you to meet our kids both on and off the court. They're selling out on the men's side. It's a great thing.

You have two great ball clubs here and you have ten others that have earned the right to have the attendance improve over here. But the ones that are here, they're making the difference.

The game with Baylor, they were able to go through the Big 12 North and rest their kids not just because that's how good Baylor is, and so they didn't have to play the minutes that we had to play. And we had to go through the Big 12 South. That's a whole new different cat when you have to go through the athletes that we see in the Big 12 South, including Baylor.

We had this same scenario in 2008 at Oklahoma City. We beat K-State by one in front of 12,000, we beat Oklahoma, and then we didn't

have a whole lot in the tank by the time the second half started against Baylor, and we lost by nine.

But our kids want this rematch. We want to play Baylor four times. We know if we play Baylor four times we're in the Final Four because that's how good Baylor is. We're looking forward to it. Everybody just said the Longhorns and Aggies are supposed to be the greatest rivalry in the world. How about Baylor and A&M in basketball? Forget all those other sports. Let's just talk about basketball. And it's a tremendous rivalry.

And you all heard enough out of me and I need a Diet Coke, and we'll see you all tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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