

**March 11, 2011**



Texas – 70  
Texas A&M – 58

An Interview With:

**TEXAS  
COACH RICK BARNES  
J'COVAN BROWN  
JORDAN HAMILTON  
TRISTAN THOMPSON**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by the Texas Longhorns, coach Rick Barnes and student-athletes J'Covan Brown, Jordan Hamilton and Tristan Thompson.

Coach, opening comments.

COACH BARNES: Really, again, another, I thought, game that we had to grind it out. We had some foul trouble, but I thought there were some guys that really, especially in the second half, came in and really did some good things.

I just told the team I thought when we had to get a little bit smarter on the perimeter, and when J'Covan and Jai and Cory are in the game, really moving the ball, putting it inside, playing through Tristan. Matt certainly did a great job keeping the ball moving. But the execution was good there.

And, again, overall, just the fact that we had to use everybody. And tonight it was a night that, again, it was a really nice team win for us.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. Rick, can you talk about the work that Tristan and J'Covan did together to get the shots for J'Covan?**

COACH BARNES: Moving the ball, and both guys, first of all, the guys worked hard to get it in there. And it was very hard to do when A&M

does a nice job defensively, but Tristan was fighting for his position, posting up hard, and most of the night he had seen either two or three guys around him, and he moved the ball and those guys cut, and the screens, if you go back and look, whether it was J'Covan getting shots, Jai set some good screens or Cory, it was again the details, the execution from all three of them.

But, again, the whole team, it was just really -- we really did the things that we practiced.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. Jordan, talk about a lot of that second half you were sitting because of the fouls. Talk about what the two guys beside you did there.**

JORDAN HAMILTON: I think they executed. Tristan did a great job getting a lot of offensive rebounds and put-backs and J'Covan, he knocked down some key 3s for us. It really helped get us going. And Jai also did some great things tonight, too.

**Q. Tristan, I think there were two or three offensive rebounds you didn't get. Can you talk about what happened on those plays and just your overall aggressiveness tonight and going after those things?**

TRISTAN THOMPSON: Yeah. Coach mentioned to us at the beginning of the game we've got to be really active on the glass and win the rebounding battle. So I took the initiative upon myself to try to get the rebound and try to own the glass tonight.

**Q. Any of you, no team from Texas has ever won the Big 12 Tournament. What would it mean to be the first?**

J'COVAN BROWN: I think it would mean a lot to us. If we just go out there, just have fun, like Coach said, just playing for each other, and just executing what we do, everything else will take

care of itself.

It would mean a lot to us if we could just win, but I know it's going to be hard. Kansas is probably upset about what happened at their place, so they're going to come out and just try to fight a whole lot, try and outrebound us and everything.

**Q. Tristan, were you expecting to be double-teamed throughout the game? And also what adjustments did you maybe make to their defense double-teaming you?**

TRISTAN THOMPSON: I was expecting to come in with them to double-team me or send two or three guys after me, try to get it out of my hands, but when teams do that, then I gotta become a passer and get my teammates open, the guys to my left, J'Covan and Jordan, so it worked out for us.

**Q. Jordan, what do you think about the other team on the other side of the bracket for you now?**

JORDAN HAMILTON: Meaning Kansas? I think they're a great team. It's going to be like a home game for them. They're going to have their fans and they're going to come out hyped up. Like J'Covan said, they really thought they should have won that last game.

But we just have to come in and execute and play hard, and I know the Morris twins are really good. So we'll have to do a good job on those guys.

**Q. I understand your brother Gary is playing pro over in Japan and apparently everything was okay, but was there any kind of worrisome moments until you heard that he was okay today in the hotel while you were waiting to get word?**

JORDAN HAMILTON: I actually found out from Facebook. It happened in the north side of Japan. My brother lives I think in the south. So he's okay. And I had a chance to talk to him and he's doing fine.

**Q. Tristan, talk about the matchup with A&M. You beat them now three times. This may be a little tougher, but you've dominated them this year.**

TRISTAN THOMPSON: Each time we played them, the score margin got closer and closer. We knew coming in it's not going to be a blowout or win by 20, because they're playing to

play in the game tomorrow, so we knew they were going to come out and play the best game ever. And that's what they did, and they gave us a run.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

**Q. Kind of bizarre you talked so much this year about making more free throws than they take. You made 12, they took 27. That hadn't happened much for you guys this year. What was the difference in that?**

COACH BARNES: Again, I think they made a conscious effort of putting the ball inside through the post, which we're going to foul some there, but they drove the ball at us, made some plays off that.

But maybe that's a good thing. But, again, A&M, Mark's done a great job. And when you play people three times, I mean, I was calling something, they were calling it.

So, again, in a game like this, there's no secrets and you do try to make adjustments, little tweaks here or there. But whatever -- I'm serious, whatever we called out they were calling.

And that's what -- again, teams in the league, you go through it, you know each other so well. But it was a grinding-type game, and that's fine with us.

And we missed some shots around the rim. You go back. We missed early. But at the start of the game I didn't think we came out the way we should have. But you go back, we've used our bench all year, and it was good for us today.

**Q. Speaking of that bench in the second half, you had the lineup out there that you probably don't usually have because of foul trouble. And the last three games this team has really shown that everybody is contributing. Is that a good sign right now?**

COACH BARNES: You know what, you might be right, I don't know that we've ever played that lineup with three guards. I don't know that we've ever been that small.

But we can get big, too, but I don't think I've ever thought about getting small. But Matt Hill came in and, again, we executed on the offensive end. That's really what we did. Matt kept it moving. The other guys moved the ball cut. Tristan obviously went and got 10 extra possessions for us. Got his hands on some more.

But, again, I thought that, again, you look

at Jai's line, you might not think much about it, but the fact is we did execute in the game. And I actually took him out the first time because he didn't shoot the ball and he had a wide-open shot and he was trying to overpass the ball.

But you gotta find ways of just working it out sometimes, and we did.

**Q. Can you talk a little bit about the importance of J'Covan Brown not just in this tournament but his play as it goes moving forward into the NCAA Tournament?**

COACH BARNES: Well, when he's serious and gets after it, I think the key is when he really engages himself on the defensive end. And he did that really in the Baylor game, came out and really got down and guarded. I think that's true for anybody. But when he engages there, he's a smart player.

But sometimes he tries to overthink it a little bit. But the last couple of games he's really tightened it up. I don't think he's put his head down as much and just -- as soon as he would catch it and start dribbling the ball.

And when we break down, that's what we do, guys will catch it and we don't let it work what we need to let work. And the last couple of games he's done a nice job of keeping his head up, letting the offense kind of come to him, picking his spots.

When he's playing, he's obviously a terrific player.

**Q. I'll ask you the same thing, what would it mean to be the first team from Texas to win the Big 12, and what do you have to do to achieve that?**

COACH BARNES: We have to play a great basketball game against a great team. You know, I'm not sure anybody's got any harder job than Bill Self. I think he's done a great job. He's in a program, great tradition, great history, great fans, fans that expect to win every game and be pretty doing it.

And I have great respect for him. I have great respect for their players, the fact that, again, when you're as good as they are and the tradition of their program, you've got to be ready to play every night.

But for us to come in here and win, we'll have to have everybody doing what we have to do. And, again, the fun has to be in the execution. When we do that, I think you've certainly got two of the best teams in the country going at it.

**Q. When you talk about Tristan's maturity, he plays 38 minutes and getting double- and triple-teamed, even hitting some jump shots now.**

COACH BARNES: You know, one thing I can tell you about him, I actually was talking to him before the game, he has fun playing basketball. You're out there watching him, and actually I told him before the game, you know, when I watch you play you can tell you get lost in the game, you have fun.

I said just do me one favor tonight, if you do get to the free-throw line, have fun on the free-throw line, you know? Because I watch him work at it so hard. And he's willing to do all the dirty work. Again, defensively he does it. He altered a lot of shots tonight too that don't show up. I think we had, what, three blocks. He gets up and you can tell a couple times they were looking around for him.

And, again, he's a tough kid. But he loves playing. And you can tell that about him when he's out there and he does it in practice, and he's had a terrific year.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.  
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