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An Interview with:

**COACH BLAIR
DANIELLE ADAMS
SYDNEY COLSON
TYRA WHITE**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas A&M Aggie's Coach Gary Blair. We have three student-athletes, Danielle Adams, Sydney Colson, and Tyra White. Coach, opening comments and then questions from our players.

COACH BLAIR: That was the best defensive game we've played in a long time, and the energy was there. We had great point guard play in transition, and really on half court offense.

But most of the first half we were just simply in a transition game. We had in the mist about five lay-ups it might have been over by the half. But we made a couple of bad decisions. Colson is the only one allowed to make the behind the back pass. That will be a rule that we'll put in.

But pleased with our team. We said we have to have a balanced score. We cannot just rely on Danielle. We almost had all five of them in double figures. Elonu did a lot of nice things in there for us, and it goes unnoticed.

Tyra is a scoring machine, but we didn't need her shots. If they would have played us more man-to-man, we would have been going to Tyra a whole lot. But they were mixing up their defenses. Doing a good job.

What we did on Fussell and Nash, I thought that was the key to the ballgame. Fussell and Nash, and we took charges. That's Aggie defense. That's Coach Schaefer defense. And he's the best at teaching it, and our kids might be

the best at executing it. I'm very proud, and I've got 58 seconds and I'm out of here.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach Blair. Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Sydney, why are you so good at forcing them into turnovers?

SYDNEY COLSON: I think just like any other team we play, we like to come in and come out with a lot of aggression on defense. Just doing things that we wanted to correct the mistakes we made in the second half when we played them in Austin. They came out and scored 48 against us. We knew we had to come out and keep up the intensity we had the first half. Our posts did an excellent job hedging on ball screens for us. We did an excellent job being in the held defense and charges. Our guards were getting out and denying passes on the wings.

When we're playing like that, it really helps us convert in fast breakpoints and I couldn't be more pleased in the way we played today defensively.

Q. Can you elaborate more in the three-point defense? They really hurt you in the second half down in Austin. What did you gals do differently on three-point defense tonight?

SYDNEY COLSON: Just basically seeing who the shooters are. When we played them in Austin, they were getting down, mocking down their shots. We weren't doing a good job of getting back first awful. We weren't doing a good job of finding our man. First thing we needed to do was stop the ball in transition, and find our shooters.

We didn't do that well in Austin. But I think we came out here focused and everybody did what they needed to do and we executed our defensive scheme.

Q. Danielle, and then Sydney, the loss at Kansas State was so out of character the

way you guys played. But in some ways was there a silver lining in that that you sort of maybe, I don't want to say woke you up, but the way you played tonight was a response to how you had played them?

DANIELLE ADAMS: We talked about it. We all agreed that we needed that loss. We went out and played our hearts out. But as a team we knew we needed that and we just looked past it and looked for it in this game in the tournament. It was a great fight tonight, but it was a great loss at that.

SYDNEY COLSON: I think in that game it had been coming for a while, I think. We had been playing a lot of teams closely even at home. They weren't coming out with the intensity we played with early in the season, and early in conference.

We had some close games, like seven-point games at home. We just weren't doing a lot of things correctly. We were out of character, I think. They came out and took advantage of us not playing well. We looked like we didn't take the game as seriously as we should have. Their point guard had an excellent game and other people stepped up for them.

I think it woke us up in a sense. I think that it helped us get our minds on what matters and knowing that we need to come out and play hard every game no matter who is in front of us. I think that we responded on Senior Night when we played Nebraska, and we responded today.

Q. Danielle then Tyra, you won a tournament here last year. Is it a little bit different field tonight out there coming back home? Can you talk about coming back home for the second tournament in a row?

DANIELLE ADAMS: No, it's not a different feeling. We just have a better team this year. We're playing more aggressive on defense and just trying to repeat our tournament championship. But it's no different than last year or any other year that we've been in Kansas City. We're just looking forward to playing each game game by game instead of just looking forward to the tournament championship. But it's no different at all.

TYRA WHITE: Going along with what Danielle said, there is really no difference playing here or College Station or playing in Austin. We just want to come out every game and force turnovers. I think we did that a lot and cut down our turnovers too.

Besides our family being here, it's just another game for us.

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Q. Sydney, 11 in a row against the Longhorns. Could you speak to that?

SYDNEY COLSON: I think it's a big deal when you have that streak going against anybody. We came out here and we were in Austin saying it was a big deal for our program to go out and get ten wins in a row against any problem.

But today, Coach said I didn't think we'd see it again, but I'm asking you for the 11th one. We came out and fought hard like any other team. It happened to be against Texas. I'm just I'm just proud of the fight no matter what.

Q. Could you talk about Adams? You're trying to get the ball down to her early because she had stepped out with two threes. Half her points early was the three. Could you talk about her game tonight?

COACH BLAIR: I thought she was solid. They were double teaming her a lot. Sometimes she was giving it up. We got the easy pass underneath, and she was very unselfish. Yeah, she had some turnovers and Carter had some turnovers, and Colson had some turnovers. We'd like to do better, but Adams is going to take what the defense is going to give you.

I really emphasized and talked about how well Baylor played today without Griner having to get 30. And the four-point Destiny Williams went off. That's what we want from our team. Let them spend a lot of attention on Adams. Then you have a little White, a little Gilbert coming off the bench and Colson is starting to find the seams of the defense.

That is the key right now is Colson, not Adams, but Colson is playing more under control and attacking the basket.

Q. What is the key to Chassidy Fussell holding her to eight points and really scoreless. The 3:55 Mark was the first point?

COACH BLAIR: I think the last two times we played her -- in the first game at our place she had 17 in the half. It looked like the second coming of Steve Nash. But all of a sudden, we paid more attention to her. We're not coming off the shooters. When Fontenette or Anderson penetrates and goes to the basket, we're not going to come off the shooters. We'll take the charges, which we took six of them tonight, three by Adams.

But we're not going to come off of Nash. I

think two times we came off Nash and she missed open shots. We've been very fortunate because that was the key. We knew they hit the drivers in Anderson, and Fontenette.

But we wanted to stop Fussell and Nash. And that is the key. Fussell's a very, very good player.

Q. Sydney said 11 in a row is good against anybody. Does it mean anymore to you because it's the rivalry of the school?

COACH BLAIR: It's supposed to. I'm not a born Aggie. I'm an Aggie now. In any sport, you compete. We've got marriages. They get along. We get along. Gail and I are good friends. Right now we just happen to have their number, and Baylor sort of has our number right now. We need to change that up.

You give me a couple of wins against them, I'll give you a couple Texas wins. Well, maybe not. But that's what I want to do. I just want to play hard. Our goal was to come in and get better. Survive and advance, but get better today.

Like I said, this was the best defensive game we've played in a long time. And they're a transition game. All you have to do is write the story, 44 in the paint, 37-9 off turnovers. 13 -9. 18-0 against a fast-breaking team. Their bench scored more, and I'd like to give a lot of credit to Hartung, she came in and forced her way around.

So did -- where's my other girl? Bass. I thought Bass had a whole lot of energy. I think she's going to be a fine player for them at the three position. But give those two credit. Look what we did against their starters, but give those two credit for energizing that team with the very short bench that they have right now.

Q. What would you say your group learned from the Kansas State loss?

COACH BLAIR: Childs went out 35 seconds into the game. You're losing 17 points, and all of a sudden sometimes that's just life on the road. We're going to have to go to Manhattan every year now. That really excites me. Then going to Ames every year, that's even worse. Give your opponent credit. We woke up Kansas State, and now they're in the NCAA Tournament playing very well. I hope like heck that shut Baylor down a little. Right now Baylor's playing well.

But give Deb Patterson, she's one of the most underrated coaches in the country, and nobody gives her a enough credit. Everybody

talks about a lot of others, including myself, but they need to talk about Patterson and what she's done over the years. You know she's had eight WNBA players? Eight. And most of them have been shooters.

So they do something in Kansas. They know how to shoot the ball and I'd like to have a couple of those.

Q. A lot of people think Texas is in even though they were 7-9 and only won one game here. I know you talked about them when you were in Austin. Is it enough just to play a great schedule since they don't have a great signature win?

COACH BLAIR: That's a hard question because I'm going to speak for Texas and our league. We need seven teams in. A lot of teams across BCS conferences have bottoms of the league, particularly the Big East. You're going to go 6-0 against the bottom of that league. All you have to do is split and they're going to get ten teams in.

Do you think Texas does not deserve to get in over Syracuse or St. John's or some of these other people? Oh, crazy. That's a very good team.

I've been in that predicament before. I've been the 7 and 9 or 6 and 8 team in the SEC. I got to the Final Four one time 7 and 7 tied for 6 in the league. I was Cinderella plus.

Who knows? Gayle is getting better. Gayle is the key to their team. They've got to have Gayle on the floor for 30 minutes. Then I told her going through the line, I said girl, you're getting better and better. You don't have to be a scorer to be an enforcer. We had Buchanan for five years, so we know what that's all about.

Give Texas credit. They've worked hard to get back to this spot. But give the rest of our league a lot of credit because Baylor and us have been in the Top 5 to eight the whole year. Sometimes those losses are going to happen. But Gayle's done a great job with that team with a short bench and that's been very hard.

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