

**March 14, 2015**



An Interview With:  
SMU  
Hartford, Connecticut  
SMU - 69  
TEMPLE - 56

COACH BROWN: I want to acknowledge something. It's pretty hard to beat a team three times, especially a quality team with an unbelievable coach. Again, we kind of got off to a bad start, but I thought Sterling kept us in the game. We got behind, he made some unbelievable hustle plays, and then hit a huge 3 and it seemed like after he made that 3, we kind of got control a little bit. We got in real foul trouble the first half, and my assistants got on me about playing a zone. You know, just to protect some of our players. The zone kind of was pretty effective, I think they only scored one field goal when we went zone late. Coach Smith's going to be upset with me about that. And then the second half we just kind of got the ball inside a lot, and that -- you know, when you have Yanick and Markus, Cannen and Ben, I think that really put them on their heels. They went small. I know it affected us a lot, you know, on the defensive end, but we had some opportunities on the offensive end. But to beat a Temple team, a quality program like that three times, it really means a lot to our program.

MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.  
Questions for Markus and Sterling?

**Q. Markus, how was Temple different without Jaylen Bond on the floor?**

MARKUS KENNEDY: You know, Jaylen's a great offensive rebounder, great overall player and I think that without him on the floor it's a little bit easier to get to my spots and get where I want. We played against each other our whole lives growing up in Philly and stuff, so he kind of knows my game, I kind of know his game and we kind of take away stuff from each other, and without him

on the floor, it's kind of easier for me to get where I need to go.

**Q. Sterling, can you talk about that run early in the second half when you guys took control and how important that was and what you guys were doing right there?**

STERLING BROWN: We were just getting stops and executing. We talked about that at halftime, we wanted to come out and execute and do what Coach said.

**Q. Markus, Philly native, obviously you came to Liacouras Center had 21 points, 7 rebounds. Today, you had 17 points. Is there something about playing Temple you get up for?**

MARKUS KENNEDY: No. No, I guess you could say for bragging rights, you know. I just know most of their team, I'm real good friends with a lot of them, me and Jesse Morgan are real close, we played on the same AAU, Coach Fran recruited me out of high school, their whole coaching staff when I was getting recruited by them were real nice to me, always showed me a lot of love, and I think even with my freshman year when I was at Villanova they always supported me even though I played against them in the big five, so it was always love when I play against Temple, but I play hard for my teammates and I know how much the game meant to us even when we went to Temple last year, I mean during the season it meant a lot for us as a team and I think that's what it is more than anything is just playing harder for my teammates because I know how much this game means.

**Q. All the contests between SMU and Temple have been pretty tough, physical games this year. Do you feel like there's a rivalry developing between the two teams?**

STERLING BROWN: I mean, I guess you can say it is but we haven't played them long

enough for it to be a rivalry. They just a good team, they like to come out, when they compete, they run the offense, they knock down shots, it gives us a good challenge and lately we've been standing up to it and we've been fighting through adversity and winning.

MARKUS KENNEDY: I like the sound of a rivalry still.

**Q. For both players can you talk about -- talk about the fact you started slowly pretty much the last five games, what's up with that, and do you guys just need to be behind to start playing well?**

MARKUS KENNEDY: Oh, man, I don't know to be honest with you, I think we just like to get -- take a punch first, I guess. I really don't have an answer to that. I think we just, our MO, that's one thing we can't have going forward this season and next year and the years to come, we going to know the teams are going to come out and give it their best shot. We no longer the underdogs, people are going to come out and give us their best shot, everybody wants to beat us so we can't have slow first halves anymore.

MODERATOR: Thank you, gentlemen. And for Coach Brown?

**Q. Coach, what do you guys do to kind of make Temple struggle in the second half because in the match-ups they've really struggled in the second half against you guys?**

COACH BROWN: I really don't know. We come out with the same mindset. Obviously I'm not doing a real good job in the locker room prior to games if -- I didn't realize it was five games in a row, but it has been a pattern. We've been down double digits against Temple the two previous times. I was sad to see Cummings go down late. I mean, he's -- that kid is as good a player as we have in our league. Pretty confident he's going to be playing, you know, once this is over. But I think we pay attention to detail. You know, we talk so much before the game about getting the ball inside. I think Obi, he's going to be a great player. Right now, like all freshmen, physically he's not right there, just like Ben Moore, but when Bond got in foul trouble, that obviously helped our inside game a lot and I think when you play good offense against Temple, it affects them offensively because they can't get out and run, and Cummings is so good in the open floor, and their game is to get into the paint and pitch, and I think the second half we

got it in so deep and got to the free throw line we didn't get to the first half, I think that was really effective. And then second half we just dominated the board in every game we've played against them.

**Q. Coach, just talk about Markus Kennedy, not just in games against Temple but how key he's been for you guys pretty much all season.**

COACH BROWN: Well, we didn't have him all season. You know, a lot of people don't realize what we've lost. Losing Keith, losing Justin, not having Markus early. This team has been through an awful lot, and to Markus to come back and have the attitude he's had, it's been so important. And then to be humble enough to not start, come off the bench and accept that role, not a lot of kids with his ability would, especially this new generation, I think playing time is such a key thing and young kids forget the object of this game is to make your teammates better and give yourself a chance to win. He's accepted that. But I started him the second half, he got in foul trouble, didn't play much the first half and he did great. But he's a quality, quality player and a really great kid.

**Q. Coach, back at the Liacouras Center, you said you don't like to coach against friends. Last night, Coach Dunphy got his 500th win. Can you talk about that a little bit?**

COACH BROWN: That was the first thing I said, I told Aaron McKie who was responsible for about two of them, but I think everybody knows how I feel about Fran, and it's kind of universal. The way he accepted that award was incredible but being in Philly, and you realize the tradition at that school, and I used to watch him work at Penn and I got the opportunity to coach a couple of his kids at Penn. Jerome Allen always reminds me I only coached him 56 games, but he's a class act. To win 500 games is an unbelievable accomplishment but to do it in the way that he does it is even more remarkable. Every young coach should spend time with people like him. I can't figure this stuff out now that they've given so many young coaches coaching jobs and telling older guys to mentor them. I think it should work the other way around. I look at Aaron, who I admire so much, and Aaron McKie is going to be an unbelievable coach and he's going to be better for it, playing under Coach Chaney and now with

Coach, he's remarkable. That's a great accomplishment.

**Q. Coach, like you said, it's a big accomplishment to beat this Temple team three times, but when you took a look at the last two times you played them, what did you really stress to your players leading up to this game? I know it was a quick turnaround.**

COACH BROWN: Well, I stressed they thought they felt they could beat us and that we had to make them know that we didn't feel exactly that way, and that if we just stick to what we do and what we do best, we'll give ourselves an opportunity to win. I didn't think it was a fluke, either game. I thought -- but I also thought we had to play great defense to win. I was scared to death coming here. We haven't defended the three in Hartford very well. You know, UConn last time we played made everything yesterday, East Carolina made everything, they started out first shot, bam. I was a little concerned. Then when I looked at the sheet, they're 4 for 24, I thought there was a misprint. But if you limit them to one outside shot, you've got a chance. If they get into the paint, you have no chance, and that's all we talked about.

**Q. Larry, could you give me your thoughts on Temple and the NCAA and if they belong in there?**

COACH BROWN: Well, shoot, they beat Kansas when Kansas had everybody by over 20. I've talked to Bill. Bill's playing without Cliff, he's playing without Perry Ellis, Selden's been hurt. They're playing in the finals of the Big 12. Everybody says that's the best team. Shoot, I don't know how they judge it. Last year on Sunday I knew how good this conference was. I didn't have any idea that Connecticut was going to win it, it doesn't make me sad at all that Kevin won it, but I knew how good our conference is. I know how good our conference is now. I know since Fran has gotten those kids healthy and the transfers eligible, if you look at their body of work, it's pretty darn good. They had a terrible road trip. I can't imagine spending four days in Texas, you know, playing us and then having to go to Tulsa. I think you should wipe that road trip off the map. But they deserve it. I thought Louisville was a top 5 or 6 team last year, thought Cincinnati, Connecticut and Memphis were much better than 7 or 8 seeds, and I was hopeful we would get a chance. But I'm

hopeful it happens because they're a deserving team.

**Q. Coach, you joked about defending the three well here, not defending the three well, excuse me. Do you have a preference on who you would want to face tomorrow if you had the choice? Do you want to go against Kevin and kind of get the revenge from that last match-up?**

COACH BROWN: I don't look for revenge. I don't want anybody to play poorly, I want the best team to win. I love Kevin Ollie. You know, I mean nothing against Tulsa, I love the way that team's played. Fran summed it up best, the job they did and the way they competed until the last day for a championship is remarkable, but you know, personally, Tulsa should be in and I hope people recognize that, and it would be nice if Kevin gets the chance to defend the championship. When I saw Boatright miss a free throw and then knock down a 3, you know, he deserves something pretty special to happen to him. I'm just thankful we're there and I don't wish anything bad on anybody else.

**Q. Do you see making the championship as kind of a turning point for SMU?**

COACH BROWN: The next game?

**Q. Yes.**

COACH BROWN: We had a turning point a long time ago when Keith Frazier decided to come, and Emmanuel Mudiay decided to come, and Markus Kennedy decided to come and Nic Moore, all these kids. This is a whole different animal now. We're going to be here for a long time. You don't win this conference and say the next game's the turning point. I got this silly idea, if you play 18 games in a conference and you win the conference, that body of work is much more significant than a three-game tournament. I can't figure that one out. I can't figure out how you go to the NCAA Tournament with a losing record in the conference. I haven't figured that one out. But winning the conference playing 18 games and beating the national champs twice last year and then you go ask me if this is an accomplishment? You must be an economics major. No, I'm kidding.

MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach. Good luck tomorrow. They'll be tipping at 3:15 on ESPN.

