

American Athletic Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Dickies Arena

Rice Owls

Rob Lanier

Trae Broadnax

Postgame Press Conference



Charlotte - 64, Rice - 61

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started with an opening statement from Coach and then take questions for the student-athletes.

ROB LANIER: Credit to Charlotte for making their way back into the game, changing the tenor of the game in the second half. I thought there was about an eight-minute period in the latter part of the first half where we played some inspired defense and played at a pretty good level.

We touched on that a little bit in the second half. We didn't have that same fire defensively. Then the scoreboard started to change a little bit, and I thought we got affected by that.

And then, you know, free throw blockout, we give up an offensive rebound late in the game, something that we started talking about back in June, about how critical those situations can be when it comes to winning and losing. That's the third time it's happened this year where we've given up an offensive rebound on a critical free throw miss.

So, again, credit to them for finishing the game out. We had our opportunities. It's kind of been the same story for us throughout the year. We've been in a lot of these close games and haven't found a way to win it. I told them that I'll take responsibility for my part in that, and going forward the guys who come back, they have to share in that responsibility so we can grow and we can change the face of what this program is all about.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions, please.

Q. You mentioned this has been the same story all

year. Does that make it any less painful when it comes to this season ending how it did?

ROB LANIER: Less painful? No. No. (Laughing.) I don't know how to measure the pain, but it's disappointing nonetheless, particularly in tournament time when it's the end of your season. But the short answer is no, there's no less pain.

Q. When it comes to being on the sideline or other side of the court for that last kind of minute, did you kind of get some of the sequences that you want and things didn't go in? What did you see from your vantage point?

ROB LANIER: I thought we got some good looks. I thought we had a couple of rebounds that we got called fouls on, offensive rebounds. So I didn't have a chance to take a look at that contact, so I don't know how consistent those calls were. But we had the ball in Trae's hands. Trae's been great in those situations for a good part of the year.

So, yeah, I didn't have any qualms with some of the looks that we had and some of the effort that we made. We had free throw opportunities that we could have converted on. And to their credit, Rosado stepped up and made four late and Graves stepped up and made some, and when they finally missed one in a critical situation, we needed to get the rebound and we didn't do that.

Q. Trae, for you, what's it like as a player on the court who's been in so many of those late situations and things just haven't gone the right way this year?

TRAE BROADNAX: To be honest, I think when they don't go the right way, I think there's a lot of anxiety that rises up, just because we haven't got over the hump in so many of those close games down the stretch. But I think most of the time it just takes for us to make one play. You know what I mean? And you can turn the entire thing around in terms of results so that you can get that monkey off your back, but we never got to the point where we could do that, so...



Q. How appreciative does that make you of having another year of eligibility and the potential to come back and right some of these wrongs?

TRAE BROADNAX: Well, yeah, I mean just like Coach alluded to, I think it begins with us taking responsibility of what happened, and looking forward to the opportunity to come back and right some of those wrongs like you said, just because I've seen it before.

ROB LANIER: Did he just make a verbal commitment?
(Laughing).

TRAE BROADNAX: Well, I've seen it before where schools have just not had it one year and they lose at the buzzer again and again and again and come back and turn it all around. So I definitely want to be a part of that going forward, and whatever the road looks like, that's what I want to do, so I'm definitely excited.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you.

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