

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Four

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Dayton, Ohio, USA

UD Arena

Texas Longhorns Coach Rodney Terry Tre Johnson Kadin Shedrick Tramon Mark

Media Conference

Xavier 86, Texas 80

THE MODERATOR: Coach, your thoughts on your season.

RODNEY TERRY: Well, for one, I'm really proud of these guys. I said in the locker room after the game how much it's been a joy and a pleasure to work with these guys each and every day through the highs, through the lows. They really turned into everyday guys in terms of being consistent with great attitudes and a great approach every day.

Through their hard work, they were warranted an opportunity to be in this great opportunity and play in this great venue tonight, and I thought they handled themselves well.

I thought we had one of our better first halves of the year. I thought we came out in the second half, we knew that they were going to come with the run, we withstood their run, and still had a little bit of separation.

I just thought down the stretch, give them credit. They made big plays, big shots, and finished the game down the stretch and ended up winning this ballgame.

Sean is a really good coach. They have a really good team. But I'm proud of my guys, and I love these guys and I love how hard they competed for myself each and every day, and nothing to hang our heads about at all. I'm really proud of these guys.

Q. Tre, if I could ask you about the last few minutes,



how hard it was to get some stops and score after having control of the game most of the game?

TRE JOHNSON: I just think we were playing good as a team, it just got late and we had a little miscommunication on some shots and they made big shots in big moments. Give them to them. But we played good defense as a team almost the whole shot clock. Just had a little bit of miscommunication.

Q. Kadin, it seemed like several points of the second half you had those guys on the ropes. How were they able to get back into it, and what were your conversations like during the time-out when they made that first run?

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, I mean, they were able to get back into it just by staying the course of the game, playing the full 40 minutes. They didn't give up at all, and they hit big shots when they needed to. That kind of pushed them over the edge against us today.

For us in the huddles, we were just talking about continuing to try and get good shots, getting guys off the three-point line, things like that. But credit to them, they played really well, especially down the stretch, to win this game today.

Q. Kadin and Tramon, you're both seniors. What was this crowd like compared to what you've played in before and how much did it impact y'all?

KADIN SHEDRICK: I thought they had a really impressive crowd today. We expected that with Cincinnati being an hour or so away. I don't know how far it is. But they had a really good crowd. I'm sure it gave them a lot of energy. We've played in environments like this all year long, so I wouldn't say it affected us too much. But I'm sure they fed off of it, and it probably helped them a bit.

But it is what it is. It's part of basketball.

TRAMON MARK: They definitely fed off their crowd. They had a great crowd, and like Kadin said, we played in crowds like this the whole time. So it didn't really affect us, but they hit timely shot after timely shot in that second half. And once that happens, the crowd gets more involved, juiced up. And it's tough to go on a run from there, and we



just didn't get stops when we needed to.

Q. Tre, how aware were you guys of the foul trouble that they had? Zach Freemantle and obviously Conwell were in foul trouble in that first half. I'm wondering if you guys were aware of that and made an effort to get into the paint and try to score the way you guys did.

TRE JOHNSON: Yeah, we were both definitely aware of it, especially the last two media time-outs we were talking about it for sure. They just did a good job of not fouling. We talked about it, we expressed it, we drew up plays for it, we just couldn't get them to pick up that next foul.

Q. Tramon, you obviously had a very strong game, but turnovers was not an issue in the first half but it became in the second half. Is there anything they were doing on defense to kind of make those plays?

TRAMON MARK: No, they were doing the same thing in the first half and the second half, too. They just got away with some slippery calls and grabbing, and we've just got to be strong with the ball. We had some slip-ups, and it led to easy points for them, and then that was that.

Q. Tre, you're going to have a decision to make about the NBA. This game, what do you think you learned most from playing in an atmosphere like this and getting to the NCAA Tournament?

TRE JOHNSON: I was just thankful for the opportunity to play in the NCAA Tournament. The environment really didn't bother me as much. I heard them making noise, especially on their runs, but just knowing timely stops, I guess, because especially with the crowd getting into it, we've got to find a way to string at least three stops in a row just to quiet it back down, so now they've got to play us and we're not playing them and the crowd. I guess just knowing when to get timely stops.

Q. How impactful did you think Marcus Foster's threes were, and how hard was it to try to keep them from attacking the paint as good a three-point shooters as they were?

RODNEY TERRY: Give those guys a lot of credit. They made 12 threes tonight. He made four of those. He's a guy that when you're going into the game was a guy that we really needed to try to force them to make tough twos, that he was a capable three-point shooter, could shoot the basketball really well from the perimeter, made some really big ones down the stretch.

I thought Hunter threes were big. He made three threes in

this game. Those are huge threes for those guys. Hugley throws one in and Freemantle throws one in. Between their bigs, they made five threes, and Foster throws in four.

We did a pretty good job on Conwell, pretty good job on Maddox, but give them credit. They made big shots down the stretch, and Foster was a big part of that down the stretch.

Q. You've been in a lot of NCAA games. This is your first First Four. Did this feel like a First Four game, or what did it feel like to you?

RODNEY TERRY: I've been in some great battles with Sean Miller. Sean Miller is a great coach. He and I have had some really good battles against each other. He was at Arizona and I was at Fresno State. Here we had a good battle a couple years ago, Sweet 16 game. We've had a good history with Xavier, period, three games where we played for Sweet 16 to go to Elite 8 games with those guys. Great history between the two schools in NCAA Tournament play.

You get here, just an incredible venue to play in, great fans here in Dayton. I wish we would have had more Dayton fans than Xavier fans, but nevertheless you're always excited about competing in postseason play in an NCAA Tournament. This had the feel of a Sweet 16 game tonight. It really did. More so than even a first-round game.

Two teams going at it, two teams really trying to stop one another. It's kind of a heavyweight fight down the stretch. The last one standing and getting it done was going to walk out of here with the win.

Q. Dayton played in the NIT tonight, that's why their people stayed home. Midway through that second half you pulled Jordan Pope aside because he forced a shot, and I could see you saying, You need to show some poise. How was that important, because you had some uncharacteristic turnovers there that kind of spurred their run. What were you saying to your guys on the side?

RODNEY TERRY: Well, we had four turnovers at the half. I thought we did a pretty good job of taking care of the basketball. We knew they were a team that's going to load to the ball. Any time you drive, you've got to hit the open guy. Three of our turnovers in the first half was because of driving in there, and they got their hands on some balls.

I thought in the second half, for a better part of it, we did a pretty good job of taking care of the basketball. Just give or take here or there, we had maybe a basketball-related



turnover and things.

But I thought down the stretch, when I was talking with Jordan, it was more about keeping his head in the game. He picked up his third foul pretty quickly there, and we had to take him out. We wanted him to stay locked in the game and ready for us at any call for an opportunity to come in and continue to help us in this game.

That's basically what I was talking to him about.

Q. After every team's season, Chris Del Conte always says, okay, I'm going to meet with the coach after the season. Do you know when you're meeting with him, and has he given you any clue about the direction of the program?

RODNEY TERRY: Well, I think at the end of the day I think you always control what you can control. We were excited about being in this tournament. I thought we had a team that was playing really well and capable of making a really good run here. Got off to one of our better halves of the year. First half was terrific.

But we knew, again, as you play this game, there's always ebb and flow, and there's always runs. I think when everything is said and done, I think you always thank the guys that have laid it on the line for you every night, and that was our players. They did it every day for me. They did it every night for me. There's not one guy in that room I wouldn't do anything for the rest of their lives.

I think when you talk about evaluating the season, you do that when the dust settles. Just like you do after any season.

I'm sure there will be an opportunity where we'll get a chance to sit down and talk about the season and what our thoughts are, what our thoughts were about the season, and you kind of go with it from there.

Q. Coach, you talked about how great of a first half it was for you guys, and Coach Miller talked about how easily you guys got to the paint in the first half. What happened in the second half? Did they do a better job defensively?

RODNEY TERRY: I thought we did a pretty good job still getting to the paint. Sometimes you've got to demand fouls to be called. I thought we weren't as strong with the ball in the second half as we were in the first half.

We made those guys have to make calls in the first half and stuff.

They do a good job, but we call them drawing swipes. They're going to swipe when you drive. You've got to be strong with the ball, and you've got to be able to finish those plays or have an opportunity to get to the foul line.

We were probably one, two best teams in the league this year in shooting free throws. So we wanted to make this a paint touch game. We wanted to get to the foul line. I wouldn't say they did anything different in the second half. I just thought we could have played a little stronger in terms of demanding calls be made when we're around the basket.

Q. I know this is not the question you want to answer after the game, but there have already been reports about your job status. If this is your last game at Texas, what will you be most proud of about your tenure as Texas head coach?

RODNEY TERRY: I've been at Texas 13 years, and there's not a year I haven't made the NCAA Tournament or been a part of the NCAA Tournament. I have a lot of -- I have a lot of pride in terms of being a Longhorn. I love being at Texas. I don't think anyone has been a part of Texas basketball that's been more successful than myself. I've been a part of the top five seasons in this program's history of this program.

Our guys -- I give our guys a lot of credit for putting themselves in a great position to be here tonight. At the end of the day, it's in God's hands. At the end of the day, I live my life, I'm a believer, and if God has plans for me to be here, then I'll be here. If He has plans for me to be somewhere else, He's the one with the master plan at all times. That's what I live my life by. I don't live my life by no man. I live my life by God. I got strong faith.

Q. Just being a part of this game, it definitely felt like a playoff game but not a play-in game. Can you describe just the intensity of coaching in this game?

RODNEY TERRY: Yeah, I don't think -- I think anytime you get to the NCAA Tournament, I wouldn't say it's a -- it's an NCAA Tournament game. Two teams -- every team that's in this tournament, they've had a good season or they wouldn't be here. Most of the time you're playing on a neutral court. But nevertheless, you're excited about the opportunity, right.

So again, we give Xavier a lot of credit. We've had some great battles with those guys over the years. I'm happy for Sean. His team persevered and won this game. It was a great game for this tournament.

It didn't end the way we wanted it to, but I'm proud of my



guys for what they did this season. They got to the NCAA Tournament. They had an opportunity to win a game in the NCAA Tournament. They're going to be winners in the game of life. They're going to be great husbands, great fathers, and that's what I'm most proud of.

I gave our guys three things to take with them the rest of the season and the rest of their lives. You never, ever disappoint three people: You never, ever disappoint people in terms of your relationship with God. You always have a relationship with God. Man is going to always fail you. God is never going to fail you.

You never disappoint your family. You never want to disappoint your family and your loved ones.

At the end of the day, you have to love yourself more than anybody. If you can look in that mirror and you can feel good about yourself, nothing no one says, no weapon formed against you ever in life is ever going to dictate what you do about your destiny in life.

If they learned anything all season long, they learned those three things to take with them the rest of their lives, to be great fathers, great husbands, go back and be great contributors in their communities. Boy, I'll tell you what, they've gotten all they wanted to get out of their experience at the University of Texas because we know that they're getting a first-class education.

They wouldn't be at this institution if they weren't first-class individuals. So I'm proud of them, proud of the way they stayed the course, and we came up a little short tonight. Give Sean a lot of credit. Give Xavier a lot of credit. I hope they have a lot of success in this tournament.

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