

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - Troy vs Nebraska

Thursday, March 19, 2026  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA  
Paycom Center

**Troy Trojans**  
**Scott Cross**  
**Theo Seng**  
**Thomas Dowd**  
Media Conference



Nebraska 76, Troy 47

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Troy Head Coach Scott Cross, Thomas Dowd and Theo Seng. We'll have an opening statement from Coach Cross and then open it up to questions.

SCOTT CROSS: Thank you for being here. I would like to thank the good Lord for the opportunity to just have your guts absolutely ripped out. It stinks, but I told our guys in the locker room, they're not defined by this basketball game.

They played an amazing team. Nebraska is one of the best teams. I've been doing this since 1998. They're really, really freaking good. The way they shoot the basketball and the way they defend, watching it on video, you're, like, man, there's no openings as you watch it on video.

Obviously we game-planned. We tried to put our guys in a position to be successful. I thought we did do some great things offensively. I did think we got a couple of good looks in the first half, but it's tough. It's tough. It's fast. They're big.

Definitely the game plan going in was to make it as difficult as possible for Sandfort. He's one of the best shooters I've ever played against. As I mentioned in the press conference earlier, he has a Steph Curry-type release. When he got going, I thought that really changed the game, got the crowd involved.

The crowd was very, very good. It's going to be tough.

Whoever they face is going to have their hands full. I would imagine they would have a home court advantage regardless of who they play.

Again, thankful for these guys right here. These two guys are warriors. Thomas Dowd is one of the toughest guys I've ever coached. He gave his heart and soul out there. Theo Seng just came back from knee injury, played injured and played really, really well. Glad that he was able to at least his last game as a college athlete be able to play it on the court.

It was an honor to play that game against a really, really good basketball game. I wish it could have been different, but that's the way the cards go sometimes.

Again, I know there's probably 290 Division I teams that would do anything to trade places and be in this position right now. Very, very thankful for this opportunity.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Scott, you mentioned the crowd. I assume that's going to be one of the craziest atmospheres of any game this tournament. How do you think your guys handled that?**

SCOTT CROSS: Yeah, I mean, I thought we did well. When they hit threes, I mean, obviously it just gets really, really loud in there. We've played in tough environments. San Diego State was a really, really tough environment, but this was very similar. It's an NCAA Tournament game. I don't know how many thousands they had there, but there were a lot.

I'm sure it energized their guys and helped them play even more and more aggressive and more confident, but you know, our fans were as loud, too. It's a long ways. Our fans that were there, they cheered their hearts and souls out for us. I'm thankful for them making the trip out there to support us.

But yeah, I mean, the Nebraska Cornhuskers, they definitely should have a home court advantage moving forward.

**Q. You guys were up 15-12 about the midway point of**



**the first half. Then Nebraska had those big runs. What is it about what they do that they can get, like, a 9-0 run and in basically a minute, minute and a half, and how hard is it to stop when they start doing that?**

SCOTT CROSS: They beat us at our own game. Like I said, we do play very similar styles in the way we play. Offensively, we're a little bit different. They run some amazing stuff that's really hard to guard, but defensively, we're both super aggressive. We're no middle. We pressure. We attack when the ball goes baseline. They're very, very aggressive, and they turn teams over.

I thought for us I want to have ten more field goal (technical difficulty, no audio) -- and they turned us over. They only turned the ball over six times. We turned it over 17 times.

In the end, they got 19 more shots than us. Well, it's hard to win a basketball game if the opposing team gets 19 more shots. So if you look at the points off turnovers, the second-chance points, it was 36-8. They had a 28-point advantage. There's the game right there.

You know, we've been great at that all year long, but you know, again, it's a very similar style, and they were just better at it today than we were.

**Q. I know you said that the difficulty of the moment, but that almost 300 teams would love to be in your position right now. Just what can you say about the journey with this special group of guys and what the overall season means for the future of Troy?**

SCOTT CROSS: Yeah, I think these guys would agree. This is the most fun I've had coaching basketball. I said that yesterday. Not going to change losing one game to one of the top-10 teams in the country with a chance. Wouldn't shock me if they won it all. They're really, really good.

These guys have been amazing to coach. They play hard. They're tough. They're connected. It's hard to do what we did this year. To go back-to-back in a very, very evenly matched Sun Belt Conference with 14 teams, it's hard to do.

I think it's because of their toughness and their connection we were able to do that, and so super, super proud of these guys. I mean, I think the future for Troy basketball is very, very bright, and it's because of these guys right here.

**Q. A two-part question for the players. What in particular impressed you about Nebraska? For Thomas, you went down early in that game, probably the first minute. What was that? Were you okay?**

**Were you okay during the game?**

THOMAS DOWD: I think it was Hoiberg went up for the layup, and I walled up, and he kneed me in the groin. So, I mean, it was just kind of strained the whole game.

But, I mean, kind of just piggybacking off what Coach said, the way they move the ball on offense, you know, I feel like we're a pretty good team at rotating. I don't think we had our best game defensively, but you know, it's hard when every single time you rotate, the ball keeps getting swung or fed inside. You're just rotating the whole game. You get really tired doing that.

I mean, their defense, it was hard to create advantages and get into the lanes, like Coach said. They do a really good job of not letting there be any openings.

THEO SENG: Just to add on to that, I feel like the way they stayed composed in the beginning of the game really impressed me. I think we came out 3 for 3 from 3, and they stayed poised, kept playing hard defense. Once they started hitting shots, everyone was feeding off the crowd and each other's energy from there.

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