

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Baylor Bears

Davion Mitchell

Postgame Press Conference



Baylor - 74, Kansas State - 68

Q. Davion, 21 turnovers, that's a little unusual for you guys. What was happening today out there?

DAVION MITCHELL: I mean, I feel like Kansas State, they got better defensively. They were well coached. They were well prepared. We were a little rusty. We had to sit out a game, and they already played a game, so they was kind of like -- they wasn't tired. They were like just ready for it, and we were just coming in.

But that's no excuse. We had a couple of errors. I feel like we're going to get better the next game. I mean, it just happens.

Q. Tomorrow you play, both Cunningham and Likekele will be in the lineup. Both of them weren't in the lineup the first two times. How difficult of a challenge is it having those two guys back for them?

DAVION MITCHELL: Definitely difficult, especially Likekele's leadership. He's a really good leader for that team. You can just tell on the court he's one of their leaders. I mean, we usually prepare for both of them, both of them to play. We never prepare for just one of them to play. It just usually happens. So we'll just stick to our game plan and hope everything works out.

Q. Davion, it was 55-52, and you hit that step-back three. Was your mindset that you needed to be more of a scorer than maybe in some other games?

DAVION MITCHELL: Not really. I just took what the defense give me. That's what I try to do is whatever they do, I try to take it. I try to be aggressive every game. Even if I'm trying to get my teammates open, even if I'm scoring. I mean, I just took what the defense gave me.

Q. And team defense since the break maybe hasn't been up to the level you all were playing at since

before the coronavirus break. What do you need to do defensively to get back to that level you were at?

DAVION MITCHELL: Just keep watching film and just keep talking on defense. I feel like we're not talking enough. Me myself, I'm not talking enough. That's one thing I should do. On the ball, you could say I'm pretty good, but off the ball, I've got to keep talking and start helping off the corner and stuff like that, like little errors that we need to fix, and we will do it this time.

Q. Davion, how much of an adjustment is there just to a new arena, facing a team that you mentioned that had played last night. How much of that for you players is there?

DAVION MITCHELL: Definitely an adjustment, especially for guys that have never won a tournament game. Me myself, I have never won a tournament game. This is my first tournament game I won in college basketball. Definitely an adjustment. It's a neutral site. I feel like we've got to get used to it though because the whole time in this postseason we're going to be playing in neutral sites. So this game, then we just win one another day.

Q. You talked about it's survive and advance time of year. How beneficial is it to play a game like this where they maybe exposed some things but you still win and you're playing tomorrow?

DAVION MITCHELL: It was definitely good for us. We knew it wasn't going to be easy. It's definitely hard to beat a team three times. We knew it wasn't going to be easy. They had a really good game plan. They play really hard. They play really tough. They just won yesterday, so they had a lot of momentum coming in. We knew it was going to be tough, and it was good for us in the long run.

Q. Davion, what was the biggest adjustment you guys made down the stretch to be able to secure the win in this one?

DAVION MITCHELL: I think that run we went on when, I think MaCio hit the and one, and then we came down and got a stop. John ended up getting a great contest for the



big, and we had a run in, and Mark ended up running the floor and passing to me and hit a wide open three. I think that really separated us. That run really hurt them. Then throughout the game, they was just kind of playing catch-up.

Q. Davion, it seems like every time you guys play Oklahoma State, even going back to last year, the games are always really fun to watch but really close, grind it out games. Why is that? You think these two teams bring out the best in each other?

DAVION MITCHELL: They're really well coached. Mike Boynton is a really good coach. He let his players play. He let his players play with freedom. There's a lot of space on the floor. They've got really good sets. They're really talented, and they really play hard. Not just they're talented. Every time they play us, I feel like they play the hardest they ever play, but it's going to be a fun one.

Q. Also, you guys obviously, everyone missed the tournament last year after you had had that great season. Now finally, after this great season, it's all starting for you, the postseason. How would you describe just kind of the mood in the locker room, especially since you guys have had this great record and everything? Any pressure? Any nerves? What's it like in there?

DAVION MITCHELL: I just think it's definitely different moods for everyone, especially guys that have never been to the tournament, like I remember me and MaCio talked about it. He's never played in an NCAA Tournament. So I know he's really excited for those bright lights. I mean, I played in an NCAA Tournament before, and I know it's a really fun atmosphere. Everyone in the world is watching. You literally got to -- you win or lose. You win or go home, so that's the fun part about it.

Q. Davion, I just wanted to ask you a little bit about Oklahoma State. So much attention has been put on Cade Cunningham because of how special he is, but Avery Anderson, their guard, has really been picking it up here lately. He had the game winner against West Virginia. What's your impression of him, and how do you guys have to account for him tomorrow night?

DAVION MITCHELL: He's a really good player. He's actually one of the better guards in our league. I mean, he's just overlooked because of Cade, but he's a really good player. He's really good defensively. Offensively, he's picked it up from last year. He's really improved. You can tell he worked on his game a lot, but every game he's definitely a difficult cover for anyone just because he's so fast, and he's always aggressive. He gets to play with

freedom. I think, when you play with freedom, it's kind of hard to guard.

Q. MaCio Teague's now led the team in scoring the past two games out. I was just wondering if you could describe -- if you've seen anything in particular from him that's really allowed him to flip the switch these past couple games and what it's like to play with him.

DAVION MITCHELL: MaCio works really hard in the gym. I mean, it was only a matter of time for him just showing. I'm just really proud of him for being aggressive and shooting the ball and just not listening to anyone on the outside. He's being himself, and he's always being himself. He's being aggressive. He's picking up defensively. He's talking. He's a really good leader for our team.

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