

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Baylor Bears

Scott Drew

Postgame Press Conference



Baylor - 74, Kansas State - 68

SCOTT DREW: The first game of the tournament is always the most important. You don't win that, you go home, and I thought K-State, really credit Coach Weber, they really improved and have really been playing good basketball. I thought they were really good today, and I thought they forced us into a lot of those turnovers.

I thought we shot it well, but us with 21 turnovers is definitely not what we've been about all year. So hopefully, we got them all out now, and the rest of the tournament we're good and solid with the ball.

Then on the glass, second chance points, we did win that, but normally we do a better job keeping -- or getting more offensive rebounds than the opponent. So, again, credit Kansas State for being tougher. We'll have to be tougher if we want to keep playing in this tournament.

Q. Scott, were they doing something different this time to force those turnovers?

SCOTT DREW: I think they're playing with a lot of urgency. They were being very physical, and I thought we were a little tentative. In the first game, you have a little jitters. A lot of our guys hadn't played in the Big 12 Tournament, so they were really excited, and sometimes that makes you play hesitant.

But I'd really give Kansas State credit because I thought they had a great defensive game plan. I thought they forced us into some of those turnovers. I thought, obviously, 13 turnovers from our point guard position is something never -- it hasn't happened much, and as coaches, we've got to do a better job preparing them to make sure they know exactly where their reads are. So we'll do a better job next game, hopefully.

Q. And tomorrow will be the first time Oklahoma State, when y'all have played them, they have Cunningham

and Likekele in the lineup. What kind of challenge is that?

SCOTT DREW: I think that makes it exciting as well because, when you play somebody twice and you play them a third time, human nature, you're excited when you've got different matchups, and Oklahoma State, we've had two great games. One game Cade didn't play. One game Likekele didn't play. So now they're at full strength, and we already know how good they are and what a great coach Coach Boynton is. So we're excited.

Q. Scott, they gave you some trouble with, I guess it was the pick-and-roll left Bradford pretty open. What did you all do to adjust to that? He only scored three points in the second half.

SCOTT DREW: I think our defensive intensity really picked up. We got a lot more physical and tried to contest things. Again, credit K-State, first half I thought they executed their offense at a fast clip, and we were a step behind on a lot of it.

Q. Coach, you mentioned the kind of first half to second half and a lot of your guys not having played in the Big 12 Tournament. Was nerves settling kind of the big difference between the first half and the second half? 13 of your 21 turnovers came in the first 20 minutes.

SCOTT DREW: Definitely that's a part of it, and K-State playing as well as they did is a part of it. I've always said the team that plays the night before, the first half, they have the advantage. In the second half, it's the team that had the bye. So we knew first half we needed to match their intensity and execute.

We shot it well, which is disappointing because, if we would have -- meaning, you cut your turnovers by ten with the shooting percentage we had, that's -- you can't afford not to get shots up when you're shooting it well. So hopefully, again, we got them all out of our system today.

Q. Scott, not to harp on the negative, but for so much of the season, your bench has been so good and



productive. In the last, basically since the COVID pause, they haven't been as productive. Any way to pinpoint why that is? Is it because your starters are doing so well?

SCOTT DREW: I thought each of them have had big moments. I thought Adam -- I mean, Matt really played well in a couple games. So it's one of those things where the blessing to having depth and different guys that are capable of getting 20, it's not always your night. That's the great thing about our team is, hopefully, you got -- you'll find someone who is hot. Tonight we didn't share it as well as we needed to, and credit K-State's defense with that. But sometimes you try to take over rather than trusting your opponents -- or trusting your teammates.

That's one of our biggest blessings is we've got so many different weapons that you just have to give your teammate an advantage, and if you do that, we're really good offensively.

Q. How do you feel like John's doing?

SCOTT DREW: I think John is one of those guys that, again, hadn't played in a conference tournament. No matter who you are, the first time you're in a Big 12 Tournament, it's just like the NCAA. You come over on the bus. You've got the police escort. That's why this tournament is great, it gets you ready for the NCAA. You come in the arena, the arena is tremendous, and you're in a tournament environment. So you're out of your element. You're nervous.

Again, this is great experience for all our guys.

Q. Scott, you stayed big in the second half. What did that give you over going small like you usually do at times in the second half?

SCOTT DREW: Analytically, Flo and John -- but Flo really first half did a great job on their big guys, so we chose to stay big. That's the great thing about the versatility is each and every night, the challenge for the coaching staff is to find out what lineups were working. Again, K-State, they've got two big guys, and both of them really competed and played well.

Q. As good as you all played offensively, defensively, do you feel like some of the issues today were the same as you've had post-COVID or a little unique compared to some of the challenges you've had since your return?

SCOTT DREW: Both. K-State is really -- because you didn't know who you were playing until last night, and

they're a really tough quick prep team. Coach Weber has a million sets. They execute them so well. That's one of those teams that it's really dangerous when you don't have prep time because they can make you look bad, and they did on several of their sets.

Q. Coach, it's survive and advance time of year. How beneficial is it to have a game like that where you're pushed and some things are exposed, but still be able to play tomorrow?

SCOTT DREW: Definitely. During the time, you don't want to go through it. You want to be up bigger. You'd love our first two games to be able to do what we did, but I knew personally coming in you're not meeting a Coach Weber team three times like that. They're really playing well. They were confident.

And with us, especially so many guys for the first time getting a chance to get a tournament win in the Big 12, you want them close like this because that's the rest of the way they're going to be like this. So you've got to be able to execute and operate in pressure situations.

Q. Scott, on a night like tonight, how do you balance the desire to look at what went wrong and right in this game with preparing for Oklahoma State? How do you kind of draw the line on how much you focus on either side that have?

SCOTT DREW: Well, we're not playing K-State tomorrow, so we're definitely going to spend the majority of the time with Oklahoma State, but definitely, each game you play is a learning experience.

So in a normal situation, say you give 100 percent to the past and current. For tonight, it might only be 25 percent, but we will definitely pick some areas that we didn't do well and show guys so that we can help make sure they're better prepared for tomorrow night and the future.

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