

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Texas Longhorns

Matt Coleman

Postgame Press Conference

Texas Longhorns 67, Texas Tech Red Raiders 66

Q. Matt, big free throws at the end but at what point in this game did you feel like, man, I've got to take over?

MATT COLEMAN: I mean, Courtney looked at me, the bench looked at me and said, "Man, it's time to go." It wasn't just me. My teammates, Jase, hit some big shots, Jericho, Kai had a hell of a second half and all the little things put together allow me to have the opportunity to shoot two free throws at the end of the game and make both of them.

Q. Along those lines, were you surprised that -- let's be honest, as well as Tech played, y'all never -- it never got totally away. Y'all were always kind of right there.

MATT COLEMAN: We know just like, since I've been here, any time you play Tech, you know it's going to be a grind game. It's going to go both ways. Both teams are like going to play hard, going to be aggressive and the most aggressive team usually wins. You know, we had 20 turnovers. Everybody didn't play well and we just still figure out a way just to grind it out and come out with a win.

Q. Just on that note, Jase even said he was confused that you were down one after you hit the three. He didn't realize y'all had gotten that close down the stretch. How much did it feel like you just weren't there, and at the end you found a way to get back in it?

MATT COLEMAN: There was a stretch where they got like three offensive rebounds and we were down four or five and I'm looking and I'm like, we've just got to get a stop. Then we came back, we got a bucket time-out and just like, yo, if we get a kill, we're going to put ourselves in the best chance to win this game, and we did that. We had an opportunity, the last possession in our hands, and you know, just trust your work.

Q. You've played a long time with Jericho, is this the



best he's ever played?

MATT COLEMAN: Yes he's just been very dominant, just asserting his presence. I wish the refs would be a little more lenient so he could play a little bit more minutes but this is the best basketball I've experienced playing alongside Jericho Sims for sure.

Q. Earlier this year you recited the exact situation and time on the clock at Texas Tech your freshman year when you went to the free throw line, was that in your head at all going to the line there with 1.8 seconds?

MATT COLEMAN: No, not at all. I wasn't even thinking about that.

Q. Jase credited you, things were chaotic throughout parts of the game, for calming guys down and not letting people lose their heads. What were the conversations like on the floor as you guys -- the turnovers are piling up and you're losing some of the 50/50 balls and offensive rebounds and you're still right there in the game?

MATT COLEMAN: The biggest thing is we have to be more aggressive. I think with the 50/50 balls, with the second chance points, they were just being tougher than us. And I was telling my teammates, telling myself, this is what we do every day. We have to grind it out, trust each other and just go after everything, and I think that's what we did and we made enough plays to win.

Q. The popular theory is that you, Courtney and A.J. had to have great games if you are going to win and that didn't happen tonight but you still found a way. Is this a step in that journey becoming maybe a better and more complete team?

MATT COLEMAN: I think just credit to Jase, just having Jase out there really gives us an even different dynamic when he's making shots, when he's guarding, he's just being tough and credit to Kai Jones, he had a hell of a second half just with his energy and his presence.

So I can only imagine how things would go if we get



everybody playing at their peak or however you want to say it.

Q. Is that something that can help you guys in the NCAA Tournament, a game maybe you shouldn't have won but y'all did?

MATT COLEMAN: Yeah, when it comes to NCAA Tournament, it's do-or-die. Ain't nobody is going to play perfect. Just whoever plays the best that day comes up with the win.

Q. The first win is always the hardest.

MATT COLEMAN: I was saying that all day.

Q. It is. Do you think that this is kind of a psychological hump maybe y'all have gotten over, a team that swept you, now you're going to play a team that y'all had success and can carry on the rest of the month?

MATT COLEMAN: I think just continue to be ourselves, trust our identity and do what it takes to do what we know what it takes to win and that's just being unselfish and playing hard and starting on the defensive end.

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