

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 10, 2022

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

TCU Horned Frogs

Jamie Dixon

Mike Miles Jr.

Damion Baugh

Emanuel Miller

Postgame Press Conference

TCU 65, Texas 60

JAMIE DIXON: Certainly obviously proud of our guys, how we responded. Certainly a tale of two halves, shoot 29 percent in the first half, 65 in the second half.

Just more aggressive getting to the basket, not settling on shots, but it really started with our defense, and we really talked about it at halftime where it was obviously a disappointing performance. I liked how we played early. I thought we were the more aggressive team. It was a close game. It was back and forth. But I felt good about it.

But then we missed some shots, some lay-ups, some open threes, and we have a tendency to let that take away from our transition defense and what we're doing in the half court on defense. That's a battle we have and we really addressed that at halftime and really told them that we had a chance, and we had an opportunity and that they would slow it down and we would play better.

We adjusted our ball screen coverage. I think that was good and important for us. I thought Eddie did a great job in that regard and Xavier. And I thought these guys were terrific getting to the basket and making good decisions at the end of drives. Mike, Damion especially, we got a ball to Emanuel some, too, and that was good for us.

Again, it wasn't going to be -- we told them it wasn't going to be a game about three-point shooting, jump shooting, it was going to be about finding ways around the rim, around the basket, penetration, and then getting it done on the glass with a concerted 30 seconds of defense.

Proud of them, and certainly a heck of a response to an



18-point deficit.

Q. Mike, what was the message at halftime, and just talk about the perseverance you guys showed in coming back and rallying back and what that kind of does for you guys going forward.

MIKE MILES JR: The message was to stay confident, not to get down on ourselves. We knew it wasn't going to be easy to come back from an 18-point lead, but we stayed together and ultimately came back. We played good in the second half, played better defense, rebounded more and got better shots, so that was the message.

Q. Obviously Mike goes down with that ankle injury and you had that big and-one that put you up for the first time since the first half. How important was it to be cohesive even when Mike was out?

EMANUEL MILLER: It was huge. Collectively as a team we all fought together, the players, the manager, the coaches, well all dig deep and fought together. Being down 18 at half in Division I basketball is not easy to come back from, let alone to do that in the Big 12. I thought this team showed grit, I thought we fought together. I thought as a group we showed what TCU basketball is about.

Q. Damion, kind of what these guys were saying, there's no such thing as an 18-point play in basketball, but how does everybody keep their composure and just keep chipping away at the thing?

DAMION BAUGH: We just came together like time-outs, huddles, anything, just keep telling them kills, get three stops at a time. Basketball is a game of runs. They had their run, so it was time for us to make ours.

Q. Damion, can you talk about the pass to Eddie that put you guys in front, kind of what you saw in that play, and then for Mike, just a second question, how is the ankle and can you give us an update there?

DAMION BAUGH: When we took the ball out, Allen, he had switched on E Man, so I knew they was going to switch and he was going to play me going half court. So I



back-cut it and I knew when I turned, Eddie Man was going to be right there so I just threw it over the top to him.

MIKE MILES JR: It hurt. You know, I twisted it. I landed on somebody's foot. But I went up and went in the back, got it taped extra even more, and I just wanted to get back there and help my team. But good job for them, they came back even with me out. I'm proud of them and I'm proud of the way everybody played when I was out, and I just wanted to come back and help them get the win.

Q. Coach, don't want Eddie's defensive performance to get lost in this. There were three possessions in the second half where he pushed Christian too far into the basket where they couldn't get clean looks, and they weren't getting shots and y'all were going up and making them --

JAMIE DIXON: Well, we call that walling up. His hands are like this. So we weren't pushing, we were just walling up. But yeah, you must be with the other team.

It was a wall-up, and we teach that, and I think Eddie -- Eddie is not here, but I told him great job walling up. I didn't tell him that he pushed in the time-out afterwards. I told him he walled up well. That was something I thought we did well on their lane line drives and at the end of possessions getting in the paint. And I thought we did a better job contesting their mid-range jump shots, as well.

Eddie was good, like you said. That was huge. He changed shots early but he also guarded on the perimeter with the ball screen defense, and then one time even switched out to guard a scramble situation, guard a guard on the perimeter, too.

He was tremendous. I think it really shows, and I don't know why he's not up here, but he was probably the key to the whole thing with it. I guess I'll get mad at Steve for not having Eddie up here.

He had 10 points and nine rebounds and made the game-winning basket on a great pass by Damion, a good adjustment. We called the play, we adjusted. We thought they'd be aggressive without a switch in. We pushed it higher up and gave us room to back-cut, and then that's what Damion did. He read it and made a good decision on that penetration. We say either bounce pass or lob and he made the lob and he threw it high, so it was great execution.

Just proud of how they handled that deficit, and I just -- I think the biggest message we had was, guys, we just missed shots, and we can respond, we can respond, and we will, we will. Continued getting shots. I felt comfortable

because I thought we were getting good shots and that was a concern coming into the game. We didn't shoot it well, we missed lay-ups, but it carried over into the second half.

Q. Coach, y'all really limited Andrew and Marcus today. Curious what did you see in those first two games on how to attack them defensively, and what did you think about the job that your guards did on preventing them from getting to where they wanted to get on the court?

JAMIE DIXON: Main thing we wanted to keep them off the free-throw line and they didn't get to the foul line. That was the biggest emphasis. Our losses have been fouls, and then it goes to -- against them, as well.

I think that was the biggest thing we did to them. We made them take tough shots, and I think we guarded the mid-range. And kind of as I alluded to, we didn't get in a situation or jumped at the end where he got in the paint and we stayed down with more discipline. And that's a word we've been using a lot in the last week or two at the Kansas win and the Texas Tech win, it's just to be more disciplined.

We've got to keep doing that and stay with it.

Q. Coach, whoever you're going to play is someone you just played. You guys played Kansas twice last week and West Virginia. What sort of an effect is it that you played someone so recently when you see them in tournament play?

JAMIE DIXON: Well, we played everybody pretty recently. We had seven games in 15 days, so anybody we're playing we've played recently, if you look at it. I'm just proud of how our guys handled it and what they did. We're going to enjoy this win for another hour or so and figure out who we're playing.

But I think this team went through a lot, and we didn't complain about it. We didn't talk about it in the media. We just battled and fought and won a big game against Texas Tech and Kansas, and then a one-possession game against Kansas.

I thought we were a little worn down against West Virginia. I thought it hit us there, but we didn't complain. We didn't complain about the schedule that was given to us. We just responded.

No, you can say we played every -- we just played Texas, too, so we're proud of this, too. So during that run we pretty much played everybody on our NBA swing.

Q. You've been busy this morning. Bruce Weber at Kansas State resigned this morning. Any thoughts about competing against him in his time here?

JAMIE DIXON: I don't know if there's a better man in college basketball, what he's done. He's a great coach, a great person and a dear friend, too.

I didn't know that, so I'm just hearing it now. And he did an unbelievable job at Kansas State. He's had a great career, a great career. And he did it the right way.

Q. Mike, obviously you guys were here last year. Losing to Kansas State in the first round, haven't beaten Texas in a couple years, as well. What does this win do for the confidence of the program, especially going into March?

MIKE MILES JR: It gives us a lot of confidence. Last year even though most of the guys weren't here, I was here and we lost by 20 to Kansas State, and I just didn't want that to happen again. We all stayed together, and getting this win over Texas, it means a lot. They did it to us twice. We didn't want to get swept by them a third time, especially in this tournament. We wanted to get to the next round and what's that we did. There's a lot of confidence. Whoever we play tomorrow just beat us a week ago honestly. But we're going to prepare and we're going to get ready.

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