

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Saturday, March 12, 2022

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Texas Tech Red Raiders

Coach Mark Adams

Bryson Wilson

Marcus Santos-Silva

Postgame Press Conference



Kansas 74, Texas Tech 65

THE MODERATOR: We are ready to begin our conference with the Red Raiders of Texas Tech, with Mark Adams; student-athletes are Marcus Santos-Silva and Bryson Williams.

Coach?

COACH ADAMS: I want to begin by congratulating Kansas. They have a great team, a great coaching staff, a great program, they make us better every time we play 'em.

They're a team that's extremely difficult to prepare for. Wish we had two or three days to do that. They're just -- they play with a really great pace and they have a lot of players that do certain things extremely well.

I thought the circumstances of our guys, we just did the best we could and played extremely hard, and these guys that I'm coaching are -- they've all got tears in their eyes and this hurts.

We will learn from this, and hopefully it will help us get ready for the NCAA Tournament.

Q. Bryson, what do you feel you all learned during this process getting to the championship game and learning how to fight through things?

BRYSON WILLIAMS: Main thing we learned is that every possession matters. We been through that, but, I mean, it's that much more emphasis on it in tournament play and any game you play in march, just how important every possession is and how much you've got to value every possession.

Q. Marcus, with you coming back, what do you think you helped this team do, not only getting to the conference championship, but the story that will be the NCAA Tournament.

MARCUS SANTOS-SILVA: Can you say that again, please?

Q. You returned for another year; what do you feel is the story for right now that you've helped write with Texas Tech as they got to the conference championship?

MARCUS SANTOS-SILVA: Basically, no one can sleep on this. Before the season started people doubted us. They had us I think in 6th in the standings, and also they didn't have us in the tournament.

But showing we could fight just prove people wrong this year, no one thought at the beginning of the year that we would make it to the Big XII championship and probably get a high seed in the tournament, so just proving people wrong.

Q. Bryson, how important was David McCormack to Kansas and how difficult was it to defend him tonight?

MARCUS SANTOS-SILVA: He was a huge emphasis for Kansas. He played a really good game. He is a big low down there in the post and he can go over both shoulders, and that's really hard to guard, especially in tournament play.

You feed him any time it was a sure basket. I mean, hats off to him. He played well and they did a good job utilizing him in this game tonight.

Q. Coach, you alluded to it before, but looking back at the OU game when you mentioned how you learn about your team and what they can do in the NCAA Tournament, how quickly do you have to shake this loss off? What did you learn about your team right before March?



COACH ADAMS: Well, two totally different games. Last night we learned with OU that we can still play ugly and find a way to win. I thought we played much, much better today and had much more pace, and I thought there were a lot better possessions on both ends of the floor.

We played a good offensive team, and I thought our defense was good the first half. We held them under 40%, and that's challenging to do and difficult against Kansas.

Second half it wasn't quite as good, but we played a team that was really fast today and last night it was slow, so a lot of contrast.

It's tough to get ready for those two types of teams, but that's what you are going to get in the NCAA Tournament. At least we have little time to prepare. This will help us.

I thought we improved in this game. I was impressed with a lot of things that we did, and I am proud of our guys' toughness. They continued to fight.

One of the obvious things, we've got to make our free throws and we've got to get to the foul line more. I think that was a big, big difference in this game. We've got to finish, find out ways to get better at drawing fouls and finishing those and making the free throws.

Q. Mark, the same question I asked Marcus. You have been on this upward ascent; you have been part of that. What do you feel this team has added to this chapter to what you have all been able to do in the last years?

COACH ADAMS: New guys, totally different experiences, and the one thing that is consistent is we have a great fan base. We got a great administration, high expectations.

The Red Raiders, the fans, we all want to win, and this group came in and embraced those expectations. They're on their own journey and they're doing great. We have already, you know, I think made huge strides in getting to the finals. These guys get tons of credit and they worked really hard for it, and I'm proud of them. Proud of these guys.

We're not finished, I can promise you that. We're not finished.

Q. With the NCAA Tournament Selection Show tomorrow, what do you feel this team has shown the Selection Committee with the way y'all have played?

COACH ADAMS: I would think it would help us in a lot of ways. We're No. 1 in the country in defense and then getting

to the finals of a very, very tough Big XII Conference, I'd hope that would give us some momentum.

But we will see what happens. We have no control over that. We will take what we can get and what seeding that is and who we're playing. We're ready to get in the NCAA Tournament and hopefully, you know, do well.

Q. Bryson, Marcus, your perspective on being able to get to the NCAA Tournament and your feelings going to that?

BRYSON WILLIAMS: It's always a blessing going into postseason play, and this is my first time ever going in my college career, so we're very excited.

And like Coach Adams said, we still have a lot of basketball to play. We're not finished. We have a lot of guys in the locker room that's learning from this and feeling that loss of a championship and guys that are hungry off this.

So we're using this as fuel to the fire and we're going to stay hungry and be ready to bounce back.

Q. Coach, you got the chance to coach Division I long time ago back at UT Pan American. What did you learn from that experience that you carried with you this year?

COACH ADAMS: I tell a lot of my colleagues and they feel the same way, coaching is coaching. When I was in junior college or NIA Division II or Division I, that's something I enjoy. I just feel very blessed and like to be around these young men and hopefully can make a positive influence in their lives.

I love this team. It's a great experience. I love the game and they have a passion like these two guys do. There is a -- maybe this level is maybe a little more stress and few more people maybe notice and care a little bit more about it but it's still basketball.

Q. Coach, 18-0 at home. You won so many big games this year. More wins than anybody as a first-year coach at Texas Tech. First time in the championship game in 17 years. Talk about the blessing and now another blessing as you head into the Tournament next week?

COACH ADAMS: Yeah, thanks, Pete. Coming off this loss we're pretty down about it, but you're exactly right. We're just so excited about the confidence that these guys have, and our home court win streak there and being undefeated and the great fan base we have.



Very, very blessed and thankful that I get to be here and coach these guys at a school I truly love, and just so excited that I get to lead this group and represent Texas Tech.

Again, we're -- winning this many games that we have with these guys says a whole lot about them. We've got the resume. We feel like we can be very competitive all the way to the National Championship, and that's our goal.

Won 25 games and we're going to get a good seed, hopefully 2 or 3 seed along with that. Played the toughest teams, beat Baylor twice, which is a huge accomplishment, and play Kansas as close as we did for all three games.

It gives us a lot to build on and be confident about as we move into the Tournament.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, congratulations and good luck.

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