

# Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 9, 2023

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Iowa State Cyclones

Coach T.J. Otzelberger

Tamin Lipsey

Gabe Kalscheur

Postgame Press Conference



rebounding, how important that was and just how did you accomplish that today?

GABE KALSCHEUR: Yes. It's huge. You know, that gets us second chance points. Get three's. It's not just, I mean, obviously I knock it down. That comes from our bigs, comes from Tamin. Doing the dirty work. Doing the second chance hustle points. That's all to them. That's all credit to them. They do a great job at that. The coaches told us, out physical them on the offensive and defensive rebounding. And we did that.

**Q. Gabe, Baylor guards have been so good all year, and it seems like Jalen Bridges was the one to pop off today and you guys limited that guard play. What was special about your defensive play today on that side of the ball.**

GABE KALSCHEUR: The coaches did a great job telling us to take away the three's. We let Jalen Bridges get off and he was knocking down three's. We limited the other guards at going off. That was what the scheme was for the defense. And we executed on that and just made them take tough two's.

**Q. Gabe, I mean, teams have been pressuring you, you know, having you throw the ball away all season. What's it like today to come out and have a hot performance?**

GABE KALSCHEUR: Feels really good. This is credit to the team just getting into the paint. I couldn't do it without Tamin and Jaren and the rest of the team. Get in the paint and taking pressure on the defense. And finding ways. And pulling behind and knowing -- telling them knowing that I'm behind them trying to get open shots when I can knock it down. Even if it's contested and I've worked on those shots day in and day out, and I feel confident in knocking them down.

**Q. Gabe or Tamin, either one of you can answer this. Day in, day out this league is such a dogfight in terms of the depth in all these teams. And you have a lot of games where you have dominated. There's been some games where it's obviously come up a little short. How**

Iowa State - 78, Baylor - 72

THE MODERATOR: Okay we are joined in the interview room with Iowa State head coach T. J. Otzelberger, his two student athletes are Tamin Lipsey and Gabe Kalscheur. Coach, congratulations. We'll go to you first for an opening statement.

COACH OTZELBERGER: Yeah, I'm really proud of our guys. Great team win. Awesome to see everybody get in the game and contribute. Got tremendous respect for the Baylor program, for their players, their coaches, and everything they accomplished. We know how well we had to play to get a win today. Proud of our guys. Felt like in the areas we talked about, points in the paint, rebounding, things that we really focussed on, our guys did a great job. And especially when we got down, keeping that poise in the second half. Apologize for my voice. Hopefully you have more questions for these guys.

THE MODERATOR: Let's go to questions. Come back for coach in just a bit.

**Q. Tamin, as kind of you're a young player, you got your first experience at the Big 12 Tournament standout performance on both sides of the ball. What kind of went into the performance.**

TAMIN LIPSEY: Just the preparation and energy that our whole team had. Not just one guy in a wins the game, it's everyone connected that puts into that. Just coming out with energy and trying to do whatever I can to help our team and get an edge.

**Q. Gabe, coach mentioned rebounding as a point of emphasis. Could you talk about the offensive**



**does that prepare you to go into these single elimination type tournaments and why do you think it paid off in having the big win you had today?**

TAMIN LIPSEY: Yeah, I think it shows any night, either team can win know matter what the team is ranked. Or what the media saying about the team. It's really who wants to win it more that day and that game. We knew to come in here with a lot of energy, win or go home. We wanted to win. And I feel like when we lose those close games, it's because we don't play for the whole 40 minutes, but, I feel like we did a great job in maintaining our energy through the whole game.

**Q. For you Gabe, Tamin used the expression a lot of energy. It's been a struggle down the stretch in the last few games for you guys. Was the last few days almost like a recharge, or what went into being so prepared for today's game?**

GABE KALSCHEUR: Was a recharge, knowing it's March. And clean slate. And knowing that it's one game elimination. So we wanted to bring it. Did a great job telling everyone who was going to get in. We have a great group of guys. We have a great brotherhood. Knowing that everyone is going to bust their balls out there and give everything they got is a great feeling.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Tamin and Gabe, thank you for coming. Congratulations on the victory. We'll excuse you and go to the locker room. We will see you guys tomorrow. Questions now for Coach.

**Q. Coach, Bridges got off to a hot start. I'm not sure he got a shot off the last 10 minutes or so. What did you guys do to prevent him from getting the ball in his hands?**

COACH OTZELBERGER: He was tremendous. He was 9/9 at one point and finished 10/11. We switched more. We were more conscious with our effort, getting a stick hand up early, trying to make him play inside the three. He got going even early in the second half in transition off an offensive rebound. It comes down to being more intentional, sprinting off and finishing plays. He had a hot hand. We were fortunate in a last ten minutes or so we were able to do the job.

**Q. Coach, comment on the rebounding. Jaren Holmes getting his own offensive rebound on the free throw in the second half, it epitomized your hustle play today. Can you speak to that and the importance of the offensive rebound?**

COACH OTZELBERGER: We like for Jaren to make the

free throws. That's a good alternative. Really heads up play from him, tremendous effort and energy. That was an impactful play. That gave us that extra cushion. Those are the type of plays that, you know, you need to make if you want to beat a great team. It's very well coached. And much respect we have for Baylor. We're fortunate to make just enough of those plays.

**Q. When you look at Baylor, number one team offensively in the Big 12, you have beaten them three straight times. How confident does that make you feel about your team heading into March.**

COACH OTZELBERGER: We are fortunate. We have so much respect for the program. They have great coaches, great players, they have a winning culture. And so for us, we knew how hard it was going to be. We're confident in our guys, the work they do every day. And you know, this time of the year you want to be playing your best. And you know, we're going to need to keep playing our best. Fortunate, thankful for our guys for how they worked each and every single day. A lot of humility knowing what it's going to take moving forward here and beyond this year how well we have to play.

**Q. Coach yesterday you talked about in terms of what you wanted to see from your guys. You wanted them to tap back into the habits that made you guys so successful this season. And really just enjoy the moment. Do you feel that was the difference-maker today and why you were able to have the performance that you did?**

COACH OTZELBERGER: I do. This time of the year, unity and togetherness, having a great locker room is very important. Want our guys to have fun, enjoy this . These are special times in their life. And we want to be in that moment. And really fortunate that all the guys on our team are stepping up and doing that. And that's why we have been putting them all in the game, you know, getting everybody in and be part of that excitement and have fun and be together. So you know, credit to our players for really embracing that.

**Q. Not every season is like this. There's so much depth in this league. And I imagine it can be demoralizing. Every night you're going out and it's a tough opponent. You haven't had an easy game in a long time. Does that get demoralizing when you are heading into a tournament like this? How do you flip out of that not letting that get you down when you're going into these tournaments where like every one matters a little bit more.**

COACH OTZELBERGER: It's challenging because the



league is so good. What we try to do is remind our guys throughout the season that you are playing in the best league in America. The other teams are really good. There's nights that you can play well and still lose. And it's how you handle adversity. Just like life. How you bounce back. Coming together in those tough times and, you know, we certainly had them. You know, we had challenges -- we had lost four in a row. You know, had some stretches where we've had those tough times. Our guys have been fortunate through the work togetherness to come out and come through those. But what a good league. And you know, you just got to be so mentally tough because everybody had their challenges this year, and everybody is going to have them, but it's out of respect for the coaches, players, teams are so good that you know it's part of it.

**Q. Coach, I'm sure you heard that Bill Self missed today's game, in the hospital. And a team you could play. Stressors with the job and late nights and all that stuff. I wonder if that kind of news hits home for a fellow coach.**

COACH OTZELBERGER: Yeah, Coach Self has always treated me well. Respect him and respect their program. Certainly want to wish him the best. Texted him earlier today and letting him know we're keeping him in our thoughts and prayers. For all of us, it takes a lot out of everybody. There's a lot of time demands. And you hope that everybody is doing everything they can. And you wish everybody the best. But you also know it takes its toll. We'll continue to keep Coach in our thoughts and prayers and hope that he's able to be healthy and return soon.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much. We will see you tomorrow. Congratulations again.