

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 9, 2023

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

TCU Horned Frogs

Jamie Dixon

Mike Miles

Charles O'Bannon, Jr.

Postgame Press Conference

TCU, 80 - Kansas State, 67

JAMIE DIXON: Really proud of our guys. As I told them in the locker room, we did what we asked them -- were asked to do, and the preparation the last two days was just efficient, smart, focused, and just so proud of them.

So really happy for Chuck. He's, as you said, Mr. Postseason. It's his time like it's our time, and we're ready. Mike was tremendous. Damion was really good, too. All of our guys played well. That's what we said. Every guy gave us good minutes, and that's hard to do against a really good team.

So I'm proud of them and how they play. They are so unselfish, 17 assists, 9 turnovers, but we did what we wanted to do on the defensive end, and we forced turnovers. And that's what we did to beat them. When we didn't -- we lost the first time, we didn't do that. And we really did what we were asked to do.

Q. How are you feeling right now?

MIKE MILES: I'm good. It kind of stung when it happened, but it's good right now. I'll get treatment tonight and be ready for tomorrow.

Q. Chuck, this is your highest-scoring night of the season, second highest for your career. When did you know that shots were just falling for you tonight, and how good did it feel out there?

CHUCK O'BANNON, JR.: Today it felt good. All season I struggled to knock down shots. But I stayed confident in me, coach stayed confident in me and teammates stayed confident in me and I just knew if I stayed consistent, it



would work out for me in the long run.

JAMIE DIXON: You also had seven rebounds.

CHUCK O'BANNON, JR.: Yeah (chuckles).

Q. You guys got off to that low start. How big was it for Chuck to keep you guys afloat until you found that groove in the first half?

MIKE MILES: We came out kind of slow. They got to -- I forgot what the score was, maybe 9-2, but first media time-out we all came together and knew what we had to do. You know, play defense. And when you make shots, everything's better. You know, so Chuck started making shots. I started making shots. And it gave us energy on the defensive end to get the win.

Q. You've talked all year about how you've put an emphasis on rebounding and defense into the culture of this team. How did that lead into what your team was able to do tonight?

CHUCK O'BANNON, JR.: Well, like I said before, I haven't been shooting the ball well this season. I wanted to do other things to stay on the court to help the team, and my rebounding, blocking shots, getting steals, being in lanes, improving defense, that was what I wanted to work on other than scoring the basketball.

Q. You guys forced 19 turnovers, with the point guard, smaller player, how important were Chuck and DB in slowing down their offense?

JAMIE DIXON: He's really good. You're not going to shut him down. It's hard to keep him out of the lane. He's so experienced, and he's gotten better each year which I just marvel at.

He's really good, Nowell, start there. We wanted it to make it tough. He's going to score points. He's going to have the ball in his hands, and he's going to get in the lane because he's so quick, and we wanted to make them tough shots. He had one open three he missed early. We were lucky on that one. A lot of the other ones were contested.



And what we really wanted to do was not let him get others shots, and that was really our emphasis. Coach McNeilly did a great job on the scout, and that was his big emphasis. I thought that was a big part of it.

And I think, also, too, and he alluded to it a little bit earlier, the slow start, but we came in that huddle as they talked to at the media time-out, and I felt good. I felt good. I told them that we got good shots. We probably had better shots than they had. We didn't finish around the rim. We had some layups. We didn't finish strong. But as long as you're getting good shots, you feel good, and that was the message at halftime.

You know, Nowell, he's going to keep going. You've just got to make it as hard as possible and don't let him get other guys better or shots, and that was our emphasis.

Q. 14 offensive boards that led to 25 second-chance points for you tonight. How important was that early on when the shots weren't falling?

JAMIE DIXON: I didn't even notice that yet, but thanks for letting me know.

Probably the thing that disappoints me the most this year has been our offensive rebounding. It just has not been where I thought it would be, and I can't figure out why. But that's what we need to be, and so many guys, Xavier was terrific, JaKobe and Emanuel is always good at it.

But Chuck's three helped, and we really emphasized it this week, and so you know, we took good shots. I thought we got good shots. Our feeling is, if we take good shots, that's where you get offensive rebounds. And yes, you're not going to make every shot, and we know we're not the best three-point shooting team in the country, so those are the ones we've got to get and we have to take them.

I want Mike to take open threes. I want all our guys to take open threes because we're going to get that rebound. That's got to be our mentality.

Q. You alluded to this, but the three-point shooting, you guys are shooting 50 percent from the three-point line. What allowed you guys to be so successful from the three-point line?

JAMIE DIXON: I thought the shots. They were good shots. We really passed the ball well, and I talked about that. The passing, the unselfishness, it was evident throughout. We didn't take any bad shots really all game long. I'll have to struggle to come up with one or two.

We took good shots, and that's usually why you shoot a

good percentage, and sometimes you don't when you get good shots, and that's why that rebounding has got to be key.

But you know, we did a lot of shooting yesterday. We did a lot of shooting these last two days in preparation. The guys worked so hard. They prepared so hard these last two days. They were focused. They were ready. My coaches came in after the warm ups and said, "They are ready. They are ready." They were ready to play a good team, and that's a really good team that we beat; well-coached and good players.

Q. How good did it feel to see him have that moment on this stage?

JAMIE DIXON: You must have been in our locker room. I was so happy for him. I was so happy for him, and that's what I said to him. I mean, I was just so happy for him because he's kept a good attitude. We rotated, and we changed it around a little bit, and one game he didn't play a lot he said, and he was in the gym the next day. He said, "That's fine."

I'm just happy for him. That was the first guy I mentioned when we got in there.

Q. Quick turnaround, you play Texas tomorrow night, and you split the regular season series with them. What do you look forward to about that matchup?

JAMIE DIXON: Haven't even thought about it. Played them a week ago or so. This league, you know you're going to play somebody ranked. And then you play everybody twice, so there's just so much familiarity and teams are so old now, so you get even more familiarity with the guys.

Yeah, we know what they do, and they know what we do, and it will be a great game.

Q. You've obviously been coaching for a while -- first year as head coach of a roster of guys that have not played a bunch of games at this time of year. What's the biggest challenge for a team and a program that's trying to establish itself at this time of the year with not a lot of experience?

JAMIE DIXON: They have got good players, that's the first thing. They have got a good coach, that's another thing.

I think today was our day. We played well and shot the ball well and made free throws and took care of the basketball. They are good, and they got off to a good start. Remember, they were up on us quick. They were ready.

We just stuck with it, and we really played unselfish and good basketball.

So ain't nobody looking forward to playing them in the NCAA Tournament.

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