

# Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 14, 2024

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

## Baylor Bears

## Coach Scott Drew

## RayJ Dennis

## Yves Missi

### Postgame Press Conference

Baylor - 68, Cincinnati - 56

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Head Coach Scott Drew is here along with RayJ Dennis and Yves Missi. Coach?

SCOTT DREW: First and foremost, we knew Cincinnati all year long has played everybody to about a one or two-possession game, including us the first time. We knew nothing would be easy. The other thing is when you get a double bye the only downside to the double bye is that first half, you gotta get them jitters out and get used to everything and I think second half was a lot truer to what we are offensively. We scored 44 points instead of 24. Defensively we were really good. On the glass, we were good. Turnovers, too high to advance in postseason. Hopefully we're better tomorrow.

**Q. RayJ, that first half I saw you shaking your head a couple times. Obviously there was a lot of balls that went in and out. How do you keep your head in that so that you can come back in that second half?**

RAYJ DENNIS: Yeah, I mean, first and foremost, I want to thank my Lord and Savior. We're blessed to be out there. Always keeping that in mind. For my coaches and my teammates always putting confidence in me and they all keep their composure so there is no reason for me to lose mine and that's why the game is played as two halves.

**Q. Coach, your zone really seemed to bother them, was that a focus with the way they have shot from the perimeter in the first two games?**

SCOTT DREW: We are definitely aware of how well they have shot it and what they're capable of, but why the zone was effective, the guys, the players, really played hard,



competed and tried to challenge, contest as many shots. And I thought Yves blocked a couple, altered a couple and the guards really did a good job in not giving them too many easies, because they've been on fire from three.

**Q. Coach, Aziz Bandaogo didn't play against you guys in January, has a huge affect on the game for the Bearcats every night. What was your plan for him, get him into foul trouble?**

SCOTT DREW: Definitely he's an elite shot blocker, he had four blocks in 14 minutes and he played in my brother's conference last year so I was well aware of what he was capable of doing. Again, I think Yves and Josh did a good job of being aggressive and putting him in tough positions so he could get in foul trouble because obviously he really affects the game at the rim when he's in.

**Q. Scott, you've had other games where there's been tough shooting first halves or turnovers. The fact that you're only 2 points down at halftime, does that give you like a sense of peace because you've been in that situation before?**

SCOTT DREW: Yeah, I think coaches are always nervous about everything. So definitely not a sense of peace. More frustration. But the great thing is, we have players that are really coachable, and they don't make the same mistakes multiple times.

They're at a point in the season they're coaching themselves, too. So they tell us what they're doing wrong or what we can do better. That's a blessing. God has given us a great platform in the Big 12 and we got great role models in these young guys. I got an email this morning from an autograph they signed before the game and how much it meant to a Kansas Jayhawk 10-year-old and how kind they were. It's a joy coaching them. First half was rough on us all, but we were pleased with the defense. We were pleased with the rebounding.

**Q. You shutdown Lukosius last time. So two times in a row did you think you could do it again after watching him play earlier?**



SCOTT DREW: He's been on a terror, and great players find other ways to affect the game. 5 assists, 1 turnover. So he did a good job of getting his team buckets.

**Q. Yves, Aziz didn't play in the match-up the first game. Walk us through what this battle was like for you tonight.**

YVES MISSI: It was great, he's a good player, really excited to play against him.

**Q. Coach, between the double bye and the caliber of this team, do you feel this team is equipped to win that Big 12 Tournament title that has alluded you?**

SCOTT DREW: Definitely we know that and that's something that we would love to make happen. Unfortunately there is a lot of teams that want to win it, too.

I think second half is definitely how we're going to have to play tomorrow and moving forward if we're going to be in this tournament and probably aren't going to survive if we have another half like we did the first half.

**Q. Coach, congrats on the win. How do you prepare for Iowa State tomorrow night?**

SCOTT DREW: The first thing is it's late. I don't know about you guys, I'm ready for bed. We'll watch some film, get to bed, wake up. And the good thing is Iowa State, we played everybody, so at least you got the cliff notes version of what you need to do. Defensively both Cincinnati and Iowa State do have some commonalities, both of them really aggressive, really physical. Do a great job causing turnovers, so hopefully we can learn from today and be better tomorrow for that.

**Q. RayJ, there was a moment in that second half where I want to ask you about one of your teammates, but he's a guy that's not here but Caleb Lohner really took control of the glass and it set you up even for a couple of really nice three's. Has he done that all year and what kind of a teammate has he been for you?**

RAYJ DENNIS: Caleb is probably one of the best teammates I've ever played with. Everybody wants to play a ton of minutes every night, and that's not the case always, but he's always really positive, a really good dude. Tonight he played extended minutes and honestly kept us in the game and kept our energy in the first half and was great all night.

SCOTT DREW: Caleb is his golfing buddy.

**Q. Yves, your first experience with the postseason.**

**You've had RayJ and J.B. and guys tell you what it was like. Did it live up to it? What was it like out there tonight?**

YVES MISSI: It's really interesting, just a bubble, playing three games, if you win all of them, and you come here, watch other team plays and prepare yourself. It's a great experience.

**Q. RayJ, great game. Tell me what feelings have you gone through the last couple of days knowing that games have been played and you guys are waiting while those are being played?**

RAYJ DENNIS: You're definitely anxious because you want to play, and you're a little jittery, but also we're blessed to be in the position we are and have that two-day bye and get to see, and we get to catch Cincinnati after they played two games and we are a little fresh, so it's kinda both ways.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you very much.

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