

# Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Cincinnati Bearcats

Coach Wes Miller

Josh Reed

Postgame Press Conference

Cincinnati 87, Oklahoma State 68

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Cincinnati Head Coach Wes Miller. He's joined by Josh Reed. Coach?

WES MILLER: Well, thought our guys played with great effort tonight and great activity. You know, we got our hands on a lot of balls and I think that's why you see the high steal numbers. I thought we had good pop.

Then you look down at the lines. I think when you play with great effort, you play with great energy, you give yourself a chance to do other things on the offensive end and you look down and a bunch of guys had some really good nights.

One of the things I'm excited about is Jizzle and Simas didn't play their best basketball and that's a good sign for our time, that we have so many guys contributing. You get to 87 and two of your better offensive players, had off nights.

Oklahoma State is a difficult defensive team. They make it difficult. They push you way out on the floor, and I thought our guys had some moments where that frustrated us or we struggled, but we did a great job of getting back and not letting those mistakes compound.

Again, pleased with the effort, and excited to get back and do this tomorrow.

**Q. Coach, you had a very short time in between the last game with Oklahoma State to get to here. What did you do over the time to get to a different result this time?**

WES MILLER: We didn't do a ton on the court just because of the quick turnaround, but we did a little bit -- I



thought getting home was helpful to kinda reset, right? Give our administration a lot of credit for that.

It would have been easy to say get on a bus and drive four and a half hours to Kansas City, but we were able to get home because it was an afternoon game Saturday and let the guys get in their own beds, reset, and we flew out here Sunday night.

We met Sunday night, so they got a good 24-hour breather, which I thought was important. We met Sunday night in the hotel and started to get through -- you don't go through the scouting report because they just did that, but went that you go the adjustments and things.

We didn't focus on what we didn't do. We focused on the things we needed to do moving forward. We had a short but I thought spirited practice yesterday to try to prepare.

I thought the guys did a nice job of making some adjustments, but our activity I thought was the difference between the way that we played as a result and today. We just got our hands on so many different basketballs.

You make those plays by doing some little things to put yourself in that position.

So, again, give our guys a ton of credit for turning the page. They've been pretty good at that all year. Like I've said, not always as swift as I would like, but these guys, they have been able to turn the page and respond all year. They did that again over the last couple of days. I'm proud of them.

**Q. Coach, how good are you when Dillon Mitchell and Dan are that active? They seemed very involved today.**

WES MILLER: Yeah, I think when our team is aggressive, active, and confident we play our best basketball. I thought early in the game offensively, Scott, we were really aggressive. And some of those possessions maybe we would shoot a quick shot or make a more difficult play than we needed to but they were aggressive plays.



I liked the confidence and the aggressiveness. When our team is active, they're confident and aggressive and they play their best basketball, and I thought we had that from a lot of guys tonight.

Josh is sitting here, and I thought he got back to playing the way has been playing well, confidently, making plays. I thought his cutting off the ball in the first half was a separator for us.

I thought Dillon's cutting off the ball was a separator for us.

And then Dan has been consistent in coming into the game and giving us great energy and great pop, and I thought he did that again tonight. And all of the sudden on the fast break there the game opens up for them above the rim. I thought a lot of guys contributed tonight and I thought, again, it started with the little stuff.

**Q. Bryce Thompson had 16 points against you the last time you played on Saturday; only 6 today. How were you able to handle him so well today?**

WES MILLER: Well, he had about 8 I think in the first four or five minutes of the game. In our first game. So I thought our guys made a really nice adjustment at Oklahoma State.

But, again, defense is collective. Josh had the match-up at this start of the game, and I thought he was terrific at fighting through screens and challenging his shots. Again, when all five are that active are moving to the basketball that way and that connected, you have to give your team credit.

Again, Josh did a great job starting on him and guys did a good of getting to help. We were better defending the bounce tonight, not just the guy on the ball, but collectively when the ball was driven.

**Q. Josh, how competitive is it out there when you've got some moves and Dillon is putting some moves on and Dan Skillings, Jr. is putting some moves on. I know it's a team game, but you're going, hey, I've got a few.**

JOSH REED: We were just sharing the ball well, having fun, playing as a team. You know, taking advantage of every match-up we had and just playing free throw line, playing confident.

**Q. Coach, why are you guys so tough to defend offensively when Dillon Mitchell is grabbing half of your offensive rebounds?**

WES MILLER: It hasn't always been this way, but we play great when we are on the offensive board and the rebounding battle has been a great litmus test for us this year. We were aggressive to the rim early. We were aggressive offensively and made some confident plays, and when we missed them we went and cleared the basketball or tipped the basketball out.

Give Dillon a ton of credit and Josh a ton of -- I thought Josh's tip out in the second half really loosened us up and got us confident again. I thought that was a game-winning play.

Aziz, you look down and he has zero offensive rebounds, but if you watch his crash tonight, like the attention he gets and the way they're blocking him out, his effort to the board was great.

So it's like a collective thing, right? When everybody does their offensive rebounding responsibility at the same time -- AZ might have taken two with him and cleared a lane for Josh and that type of thing.

I thought when Dillon and Josh and AZ and these guys and Dan, when they are keeping the ball alive, I think that's important and we set a tone there.

**Q. Wes you played Iowa State earlier this year tough. What's it going to take to come away with a different result against Iowa State tomorrow?**

WES MILLER: I haven't had a chance to dive into that one yet because, gosh, we were so concerned about this one. I'm not just giving coach talk, but I mean it. This is a one-game tournament. We have a couple of assistants and guys that have been working hard on the next game, so I don't know if I'm prepared to answer that yet.

But as soon as I'm done with you guys the next thing I will do is start working on Iowa State.

**Q. What was your strategy on Ousmane today, or did that just work itself out?**

WES MILLER: I tell you what, I think our guys were aware of the game he had and they were -- I could tell in practice yesterday the way they were talking, we were going through their stuff that they were very attentive, because they understood what happened in Stillwater. I thought they were geared up. The other thing, he gets in foul trouble early and that probably affects it, too, so it always, kind of goes both ways, but we did a much better job on him today than we did in Stillwater.

**Q. Josh, how much have you guys been challenged by**

**the coach being staff to play that Cincinnati brand, the effort and activity that Coach has been talking about?**

JOSH REED: Yeah, I mean the coaches and us as a team we've been talking about it a lot, just focusing on the next game, focusing on coming back and getting better the next day. And like Coach was saying, just take it one game at a time and go from there.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

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