

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Colorado Buffaloes

Coach Tad Boyle

Trevor Baskin

Andrej Jakimovski

Postgame Press Conference



Colorado 69, TCU 67

THE MODERATOR: Joining us on the dais is Colorado Head Coach Tad Boyle, and he is joined by Trevor Baskin and Andrej Jakimovski. Coach?

TAD BOYLE: I would just first say that when you don't play your best, and we were far from our best today, and you figure out how to win a game in March, it says something about your guys.

This team has come a long way. We've been through a lot together and they've stuck together, and to see them with the fight today, even though we didn't play our best. I mean, you give up 22 offensive rebounds, you turn it over 15 times, and you win, it's kind of a head scratcher.

They did what they had to do. I thought these guys, Trevor and Andrej, played like seniors, and that's what you need this time of year. You need your veteran guys that you count on play the way they played today. And I thought Julian and Ruff and RJ Smith. Everybody that played really contributed, but I really give a lot of credit to these guys.

Trevor's season has been a little bit up and down; Andrej has been probably our most consistent perimeter defender, but the way he's played the last two games has been off the charts. I mean his energy and just his ability to make plays.

And Andrej has made plays when we needed them. Players got to make plays at the critical time of the game. These two guys did it and we got enough stops at the end.

But we were far from our best, and I guess it's a good thing

and a bad thing. We better be better tomorrow.

Q. Coach, you saw this team just on Saturday. Different look; you beat them by a significant margin. You saw them today; a little different flavor today. What went into the preparation and how do you feel they executed the game plan?

TAD BOYLE: I mean, I thought defensively for the most part we did a good job. I thought TCU came out with more energy than they did in Boulder on Saturday.

They were more aggressive defensively. They are always an aggressive defensive team, but they were much more aggressive today. Again, that contributed to our turnovers. Quite frankly, I expected them to rebound the ball after the first game, when we outrebounded them by I think 2 the first game and 17 the second game.

I know Jamie Dixon's teams. Like he doesn't put up with that stuff. They came out today with the defensive and the offensive rebounding mentality that I expected to see on Saturday in Boulder. We saw it today and we didn't handle it very well.

You give up 22 of those suckers, it means they're being more aggressive and they're the tougher team. We played with toughness in the second half, but I thought in the first half we got punked a little bit.

Q. Coach, how would you say your shot was falling in that second half? It looked like the guys got more comfortable as the game went on and do you think the shootarounds helped?

TAD BOYLE: Yeah, we have done a lot of shooting over the last month of our season in practice and even, you know, days that we were planning on taking off. I remember after the big Monday game with KU, I was planning on giving them two days off, but I gave them one day off and then we had a shooting day where we just shot for like an hour.

So we've got a lot of shooting in. When we make nine threes and we guarded the way we did today we can beat

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anybody but we've got to rebound better. Our ability to make shots -- we are a much, much better shooting team than we've showed this year.

I think you saw Andrej make a few today, which is what we really needed. RJ made a couple and Trevor made plays in the lane in transition, and he always gives us great energy. Yeah, when we shoot the ball it really helps. It's pretty simplistic, I know, but it is pretty critical in March. When you get open shots you better make 'em.

Q. Tad, you mentioned the offensive rebounds and the turnovers, especially in the first half. You were able to curtail some of those numbers a bit in the second half. What went into that and what was the talk at halftime?

TAD BOYLE: Well, the talk at halftime was really simple. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out it was our turnovers, having ten of them in the first half. And they're up 15 offensive rebounds in the first half.

So that was all we talked about, really. I mean, we held them to 26% field goal percentage in the first half and we're down one. Like I have never had a team I think play as poorly in the first half as we did and we're only down by 1. Usually we are down by 10 or 12 or 15.

But in the second half I felt our guys competed a little bit harder and battled. But, look, TCU has some monsters in there: Udeh and Diallo. They got Posey to help, a rebounder. So they came at us; we did a better job in the second half.

Q. Andrej, one of the adages beating a team twice in a season, two times in a row in quick succession, it's a hard thing to do. How did you guys maintain the momentum from your win on Saturday and not let them beat you at the things they had a chance to correct?

ANDREJ JAKIMOVSKI: Yeah, like you said it's hard playing a team three times in a short period of time. I think we did really good job in the last game, especially rebounding the ball.

And credit to them. They came out way more aggressive this game. They got 22 offensive rebounds, which is unacceptable. We gotta do a way better job there.

And our talk in halftime was just go out there, compete hard, just for 20 minutes. We can win this game. I think we did really a good job with taking care of the ball in the second half. We made some shots, and I'm glad that we got the win in the end.

Q. Trevor, Coach mentioned in his opening that it's been a bit up and down for you, especially in Big 12 play. One, how have you maintained the confidence? And two, what's it mean for you to have not just this game, but you played really well on Saturday, as well?

TREVOR BASKIN: I think it's trying to stay even keel. There are always going to be ups and downs. I've been in college for a while so I've always tried to take the veteran approach of put in the work and your time will come.

It happening now. I've played well in the last two games, in terms of defensive and having an impact. Which I was finishing a little better than the last two games, but that's beside the point.

I think it's just not buying into -- Coach always says, don't count the time, but make your time count. So I'm really just trying to make the most of the minutes I'm in, and I've done a better job recently of having an impact outside of just scoring the ball.

Q. Tad, you started Seby and Bangot down the stretch of the season, but started the seniors on Senior Day. I was wondering if today was more of a don't change things if it's not broke.

TAD BOYLE: Yeah, Oliver, pretty much when you play as well as we did on Saturday and you win by 20 and we got off to a great start and that's sometimes how I judge the lineup, did we get off to a good start because that's the responsibility of a starter, and it's not your individual responsibility but collective responsibility.

There was no way I wasn't going to start Trevor. He had 16 rebounds. I mean, and it's funny. I've told Trevor a few times throughout the year, and I've told a lot of our guys, you want to play more, play better. Guess what? He's playing better, he's playing more. Pretty simple deal.

You know, like you said, it's not about the offensive efficiency. It's about taking great shots, defending rebounding, helping your team make the wing plays, and making things happen. He does a great job of that.

So, yeah, it was more just we won by 20. Let's stick with it. It wasn't a slight on BD or Seby, by any means. Those guys are going to be good players. But they're young. The one thing these guys have and Elijah has and Julian has and Ruff has is experience. Sometimes that counts in games like this, and tonight I thought it did.

Q. For both of you Andrej and Trevor, you guys had a slow start to conference play, but over the past three weeks I think it's safe to say you're playing some of



your best basketball in the season. How do you continue this momentum into tomorrow's game against West Virginia and hopefully further?

ANDREJ JAKIMOVSKI: Yeah, I think playing the first tournament the first game is the hardest, and we won this one, so we have been practicing really hard the last, I don't know, like four --

TREVOR BASKIN: Six months.

ANDREJ JAKIMOVSKI: Yeah. We've been struggling, ups and downs, but we're just going to give everything we got. We are going to try to win one game at a time and, you know, that's basically it.

TREVOR BASKIN: Kind of to build off what Andrej said, there's a lot of games the start of the Big 12 season where we kinda let one slip here or there.

So I think it's trying to get better and better. Our team has done a really good job of being resilient. A lot of teams when you start 0-12 in conference play can, like Coach said, start to point fingers, and no one did that.

Everyone has just really stuck together and been a resilient group, and I think we're starting to win some of these close games now and obviously we have to take one game at a time. We've got to work on being 1-0 tomorrow; we're 1-0 today.

But it's always about the next game. You can't dwell and obviously we have to learn from our wins and losses but we can't let it affect our next game.

Q. Tad, I was wondering if you could follow up on that. Is this a different team than it was earlier in the year because of the talent you lost last year and does being the 16 maybe give you motivation and the guys this tournament?

TAD BOYLE: I don't know if it gives you motivation, Bruce, because it's about winning the game that's in front of you. But I feel like with this team in November the schedule that we had was, I thought, appropriate for what we had, and more importantly what we lost off last year's team, and what we had coming in.

So we kinda got our feet wet. I would have liked to have been more competitive against Michigan State and Iowa State in Maui, but for the most part we improved, got better, figured each other out a little bit in November and December.

But in January, I feel like we did not get better. I felt like

we plateaued, we did not improve from game to game, we let some get away from us, West Virginia in Boulder was one of them. I look at the Central Florida game, the Cincinnati game at home so we let some slip away, and I thought January we plateaued.

But February -- and the schedule favored us, Bruce, in January, it did not in February. I said to myself -- I don't think I shared it with these guys, but -- we can get better in February and still not win games, and that happened.

We played pretty good against Houston. We played pretty good against Kansas. We weren't great, but we played better than we did in January. Then, you know, like Trevor said, these guys stuck together.

They didn't point fingers and we won a few, and now, hey that's why they have postseason tournaments. I'm thankful for the Big 12 that we all get to come here because the 16 seed can sometimes surprise some people like we did today and now it's our job to go do it tomorrow.

It's a new season. So I'm very thankful and I've loved coaching this team. As hard as this year's been, the losses, losing sucks, there is no way to sugarcoat it, but you gotta find -- I remember Dick Bennett said one time you gotta find guys you're willing to lose with before you find guys you want to win with. I feel really good about the character of this deal.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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