

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Kansas State Wildcats

Coach Jerome Tang

Dug McDaniel

Coleman Hawkins

Postgame Press Conference



and he had the clinching and-one, but how big was it to step up with him not playing a lot of minutes today?

COLEMAN HAWKINS: I thought, you know, we did a good job of just, you know, trying to execute as well as possible. We had four guards, one big, not playing with the game plan we were planning on doing or a lineup that we planned on having in.

But we stayed solid to our principles and did a pretty good job of limiting their opportunities and finding ways to score. Yeah, David is a big part of our team and his rebounding, his efficiency at the rim. Some guys just stepped up. And maybe it wasn't the scoring, but defensively and being able to execute.

DUG MCDANIEL: You know, David is to me, the heart and soul of this team. He's been here for three years, so his expectations from Coach Tang, he kind of understands him. He kind of lays that at us.

Some might look at it as a bad thing; we looked at it as a blessing in disguise. He should be fresh for tomorrow, and I hope today showed him we have his back. Guys are going to step up if he goes down, and I felt like it brought us closer today, for tomorrow.

JEROME TANG: I told him in the locker room 17 minutes, he will be able to be fresh tomorrow and fly around. Excited about that.

Q. Dug, first half you got things going; what turned around?

DUG MCDANIEL: I just had to be more selfless. I felt like I was into myself worrying about me and what they had going on, and when I gave myself up for the team things started going well for me.

That's credit to Coach and my teammates. They really picked me up during halftime and just let me know just play my game and everything else going to work out. So I tried to do it all for my guys and worked out in my favor.

Q. Coach, what would you equate your fast start to?

Kansas State 71, Arizona State 66

THE MODERATOR: Joining on the dais now is Kansas State Head Coach Jerome Tang and Dug McDaniel and Coleman Hawkins. Coach?

JEROME TANG: First of all I want to thank my Lord and savior for the blessing that I have to work with these guys on this team at Kansas State. And we don't take it for granted, what we are able to do at a really, really high level. So blessed. Proud of these guys.

In single-elimination tournaments at the end of the year it's usually about who wants to stay together longer, right? I love being around these guys and they love being around each other. It was a lot of fun.

Congratulations to Coach Hurley and his team. They did a great job. It was a tough match; another Big 12 battle, and thankful to be on top.

Q. Coach, you held Arizona State to under 40% shooting both from the floor and from three. Who was working for you guys on that side of the ball to generate defense successfully?

JEROME TANG: I think we eliminated their catch-and-shoot threes and had to take dribble threes, so that was part of the scouting report. The guys did a good job of that.

And then some of it is they just missed shots. That happens sometimes. Credit to our guys for what they were able to do but sometimes dudes just miss shots.

Q. For all of you, David only played 17 minutes tonight

... when all is said, we're done.®



JEROME TANG: I don't know that it was anything more -- it's about making shots. It's a make-miss game, and early on we were able to get some good looks and the guys rolled up and made 'em.

And then when it became a grinder we was able to play a grinder game, so I was proud of them for that.

Q. Coleman, tell us about your night and feeling it early and just kept on scoring.

COLEMAN HAWKINS: Yeah, I mean, I thought I needed to make up for the poor performance against Iowa State. I felt like I wasn't very good at all defensively; on offense I didn't play confidently.

And today I took my knee brace off and felt a little bit more free. Went out there and just played. Didn't really think too much and just shot the ball confidently.

Yeah, you know, I've been a part of tournament teams that won the tournament so I just wanting to out and be aggressive and, you know, as we win more games in this tournament. A lot of stuff is going to get scouted, stuff with start breaking down, so it's going to be about who can make plays. I felt like we did a good job of that tonight.

Q. Coach, what do you think of Coleman's performance tonight?

JEROME TANG: It was great. I was nervous because he took off the knee brace but Luke said it was okay. So I trust Luke. You just want your guys to be healthy. I loved their aggressiveness. I loved all the guys aggressiveness.

I thought they took advantage of how we prepared for this in some of the things we did and some of the things we didn't do. I thought it gave them legs so we're going to figure out how to give them legs for tomorrow, too.

Q. Jerome, Baylor tomorrow, overall quick look on them, a team you are very familiar with in a tournament setting. How do you think it's going to play out, keeping the legs ready for the guys tomorrow?

JEROME TANG: Yeah, it's -- I mean, obviously I know Scott really well, but there's only a couple of guys on that team that I recruited or know so that's not -- this is about K-State, about trying to win a basketball game, and that's what we're going to do tomorrow.

Q. Coleman, knowing the gravity of this tournament and the winding down of your college career and what this season might mean, how important is it for you to

be able to go into this as a leader of this team, as a veteran, and set the tone with your play and verbally in a game like this?

COLEMAN HAWKINS: Yeah, I feel like my experience can really help me. My message to the team before we started the game was if there is anyone in the country who can do what our task is to do, it's us.

I feel very comfortable with this group. I feel like we can beat anybody in this conference. I feel like, you know, March is made for these type of moments that we're up against. We're going to play as hard as we can, and go out and compete every night and try to accomplish something special.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

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