

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 14, 2025

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Texas Tech Red Raiders

Coach Grant McCasland

Kevin Overton

Christian Anderson

Postgame Press Conference



Q. Kevin, last night you didn't make a basket; tonight you showed the toughness that this team has had all year long being undermanned. Talk about leading the way with 20 points.

KEVIN OVERTON: I was just doing everything I can to win. Couldn't really find the rhythm yesterday; today I was just trying to stay in the flow of the game. I took the shots that the defense gave me, and some of them went in and some didn't, but I was just playing to win.

Q. For both of you, last couple games against high-profile teams you have found a way to keep yourselves in it. What does it say about the team when you are shorthanded and you are never out of the game when maybe you should be?

CHRISTIAN ANDERSON: I think it goes to show much work we put in in practice and how everybody on our team wants to win and how we all know what it takes to win. Like you said, we were a little bit shorthanded, but, yeah, even with that, through some fatigue I think we still played strong.

We had some great moments and sometimes we didn't, but I think that's just due to a little fatigue. Other than that I think we played very hard the whole game. And, yeah, it's just on to the next.

KEVIN OVERTON: Yeah, I think it just goes to how we work every day. We are a very deep team, so we just understand whenever guys are out everybody else can step up. Like what Leon Horner did today. He hasn't played all season but he stepped in and was ready to go.

So it just shows our depth and how we're connected as a group and everybody can fill the roles that we need to win.

Q. From either injuries or an opponent, being able to use your bench deeper, how much do you think that helps you going into March, where you're all in different levels of confidence now as you can get more playing time moving forward?

CHRISTIAN ANDERSON: I think -- can you repeat the

Arizona 86, Texas Tech 80

THE MODERATOR: Joining us on the dais is Texas Tech Head Coach Grant McCasland along with Kevin Overton and Christian Anderson. Coach?

GRANT McCASLAND: Great environment. Love the Big 12 Tournament, and thankful to be a part of it. When you step into a great game against a great coach like Tommy Lloyd, we knew going into the game they would be super physical.

Felt like our ability to match the effort on the glass, our ability to be physical defensively without fouling. Man, I thought we had great stretches. We were a little shorthanded.

And that played like KO with 20 points, people talk about his points and Christian with 19, but to me it was our competitiveness that I loved.

I told them in the locker room, this is not where it ends. That's the beauty of what we've done this season. This is just the beginning of another season for us that we are excited to be a part of.

We didn't win the basketball game, but I thought we grew as a team and got better, and guys like Leon Horner came in and played awesome when he hasn't hardly played this year; and Federiko hasn't been playing a ton because we had to make sure he was healthy, and he gave us unbelievable minutes and was awesome defensively.

So just a gritty game for us. And we didn't find a way to win, but that's a credit to Arizona and how talented they are and how physical they are.



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question? It was a little long.

Q. You guys are playing deeper in your bench now, either from injuries or just the opportunity comes in the games. Do you think that helps you guys with everybody being on the same page?

CHRISTIAN ANDERSON: Okay, yeah. I think it does because, you know, everybody -- even when some guys are hurt we kind of have to play a little more important roles, and, yeah, we have to push through fatigue.

I think it helps both our conditioning and it kind of helps us have a feel for, you know, what it takes in the big moment to win, even when some guys are hurt. So I think it's definitely going to help us in the long run.

KEVIN OVERTON: I think it gives us a balance especially for this last stretch we have. Two of our best players, getting them back gives us more depth, obviously, but I think we will have a better feel playing in games like this and being able to play those roles it will help us down the stretch coming off the bench especially for me and Christian.

GRANT McCASLAND: You know, tonight Elijah Hawkins and JT Toppin have been carrying a huge load for us all season long. That's what makes this team so special. That's why I have so much confidence in us going into March because then we got two new guys -- if you look at this roster there is one guy that played tonight that was a part of our team last year and that was Kerwin, the only player.

You look at Arizona's roster, they had a pretty significant amount of returners. And then if you look at the two guys that -- I mean, you know, we got a lot of talent on our roster, but the two guys that led us in scoring and the three guys, other than Christian and he's played significant minutes, none of these guys average double figures.

It says a lot about this team and the talent we have. I think we're ready for anything if we have our whole rosters. I told them in the locker room, man, we got a lot of confidence in how we can do this and this experience will only benefit us moving forward.

Q. Coach, now playing in this tournament, looking ahead toward March Madness what can you say about the lessons you're taking away and what do you want to apply now going into the new season that you're optimistic for?

GRANT McCASLAND: One, I told the guys in the locker room, what's important is that we execute the game plan

defensively. I think this is probably our worst defensive performance or close to it on the year maybe other than UCF.

We couldn't get timely stops, and when we did they got offensive rebounds and for put-backs. I mean, it was 11-3 on second-chance points, and we actually had as many offensive rebounds as they did. We just couldn't convert them.

That's credit to them. They're a physical team. But we made some pretty significant errors on scouting report things that we should know. The game happens fast, so give them credit, because Arizona has an extremely talented team. They're aggressive and athletic and Tommy does a good job keeping the ball moving so it moves quickly.

But we've got to pay attention to those things if we want to win and make a run in the NCAA Tournament. So if there is anything I take away from this, it's we've got to fine tune those details, because I thought our scrap and our effort level was great, especially considering the circumstances.

Our execution with what we did defensively was not great. In regards to personnel and actions that we knew they were going to run that we weren't able to do a better job making it difficult.

Q. Coach, back home some issues on campus that have closed the campus, so no Selection Sunday show for the fans. The fans can't wait to see where you guys are going and getting tickets and going wherever the Red Raiders go.

GRANT McCASLAND: Yeah, no, I mean, this is what you play this season for, this opportunity. And we wanted to celebrate with everybody and we had a great plan together. I don't really get involved in plans, but I got involved in this one because I wanted people to enjoy it with is.

We have a great time. We love each other. We always get to be in the locker rooms together, but just to include people was important to us, and so I just want everybody to know that we wanted to have everybody a part of it, and we're really disappointed we couldn't have an opportunity to celebrate with people.

But just know our hope is that we continue to play so we can have as many people a part of it on the run and the journey but we are excited about it and we wouldn't be where we are if it wasn't for the Red Raiders across the country and in Lubbock and we look forward to the first game and hope everybody can make it whenever we end



up.

Q. Coach, what went into the decision to sit Darrion and Chance tonight, and what are your expectations for them next week?

GRANT McCASLAND: Great question. Start with Chance. He obviously didn't play the second half of the game yesterday, and I had no expectation other than let's do everything we can to put ourselves in position to win and to play and let's see if we can play. Chance last night was in pretty severe pain, and then this morning he woke up and he was definitive that he could not play. Our hope is that we do get him back for the NCAA Tournament, though.

And Darrion Williams was in a similar boat. If you saw him last night he was limping pretty much the entire second half and trying to play through it. When he got up this morning he didn't do much in the walk-through and tried to warm up and said he couldn't go. So it wasn't like it was a master plan. Honestly we just tried to prepare them as best we could to play them today, and if they and the training staff felt like they couldn't go, they couldn't go.

We weren't holding them out, to be honest. We felt like those guys, if they could play, they would, and neither one of them felt like they could do what they needed to do to put themselves in position, but they also know we need to be healthy for next week. So our hope is that we get both of 'em back, and that's the expectation.

Q. JT throwing up in the tunnel, was he battling --

GRANT McCASLAND: I think he was trying to be extra hydrated, and I think he drank too much water, so he's all right. I love these guys. I'm so thankful for them. They don't always -- today was a tough environment for them to play in, and they gave everything they could to this team and that says a lot about these two guys, Kevin and Christian. It's awesome. Thank you two. I love these guys, and I love this team. We'll be ready for March.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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