

2026 Phillips 66 Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Iowa State Cyclones

Coach T.J. Otzelberger

Joshua Jefferson

Blake Buchanan

Postgame Press Conference



Iowa State 91, Arizona State 42

Q. If you could start us off with some general comments about the game.

T.J. OTZELBERGER: Yeah. I think our guys came out with a great level of energy and intensity from the start. We knew it was going to be important to try to speed them up and score from our defense, and our guys did a great job there.

We're always at our best when we're doing that. Same on the glass. Second-chance points, I think we're 17 to two, another area. We're always at our best when we're doing that. And then I loved how we shared the basketball.

So overall great team win for us, and I'm really proud of our guys.

Q. T.J., I'm just wondering, what's gotten into your ability to continually find guys that play, one, the way you want them to play, and then also developing them along the way?

T.J. OTZELBERGER: Yeah. We look for guys like these two, right, that have tremendous character, that are workers. Certainly, they have to have a necessary talent, but more than that, we look at who they are as human beings, how they are as people, how they work every single day, and then what their dreams and goals are.

And with guys like these two right here -- with Joshua, I was fortunate to know him since, you know, probably his sophomore year in high school. And you get to see what a great person he is, how intelligent he is, and you know what his dreams and goals are. And then you want to

invest in a person like that every single day.

And then with Blake, I was fortunate enough to get to know him at USA Basketball, and just -- he was always that guy that gave you a little bit extra and was -- you wanted him to demonstrate and set the tone. And so when you know the people that well and you know what their character is and you know what their dreams and goals are, as a coach, you just want to hold them accountable to being their best. And we're fortunate with guys like these guys that they hold themselves to such a high standard every single day that we're able to do okay.

So I think more than what we do, it's finding the right people. It's an investment our coaching staff makes every day. And it's just finding people that want to be part of something bigger than themselves.

Q. Joshua, what did you notice from the court on the surface with the slippage and just avoiding injuries?

JOSHUA JEFFERSON: I think in the first half, it's just getting used to it, trying to see which cuts work, which cuts don't work. So it's just an adjustment period. But I think I found the -- I had to change my shoes at halftime, so I think that helped. Probably stay in these for the rest of the tournament.

Q. Blake, you played Arizona State five days ago, imposed your defensive will then. What was the key to doing it against them today?

BLAKE BUCHANAN: Yeah. It was just kind of -- we talked about setting the tone like we did in the second half of that game, just coming out. You know, we showed the film this morning, kind of what we needed to do. But just came out first couple possessions, get those stops, get those steals going, that little early run. And then it kind of just takes care of ourselves when we get that energy going.

Q. Josh, you had 12 rebounds today. That's the second most you've had in a game this season. How much intent was put on getting to the glass in this one?

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JOSHUA JEFFERSON: A huge part. You know, if you win the rebound, you have a greater chance of winning the game. So that's just my goal, to crash the board every single chance I get.

Q. And then Coach Otzelberger, Blake had 17 points. That's the most he's had in a game this season. When he's that active for you on the offensive end in the paint, how easy is it for you guys to just get your offense into a flow?

T.J. OTZELBERGER: Yeah, Blake's like having another point guard out there. Blake is so smart, he's such a good passer. And when we're able to play through him in the short roll and he's got his floater, that's a huge weapon for us.

I loved how he got out and transitioned and ran the lanes today and was able to finish some plays. And then his motor and energy on the offensive glass has taken us to a whole other level. He's had some monster games on the boards, and that's something that's huge for our team. It helps for him to play his best and our team to do that.

So the confidence that you see in Blake right now, the smile he had on his face today, it's so huge for our team. I see how he works every day. I'm proud of him for how great he played out there today.

Q. Coach, I wanted to ask you about the matchup tomorrow. First half of the first meeting you had, you guys didn't come out maybe the way you wanted to, but what do you see from this opportunity ahead of you tomorrow?

T.J. OTZELBERGER: Yeah. We have tremendous respect for Coach McCasland, for Texas Tech, for their program. I mean, he's done an unbelievable job in his time there, and they have an unbelievable team this year and they continue to do great things.

So we know what a tough challenge it's going to be, and we know what a great team that they are, so we're going to do everything that we can to be at our absolute best.

(FastScripts by ASAP Sports).