

2026 Phillips 66 Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Arizona Wildcats

Coach Tommy Lloyd

Motiejus Krivas

Brayden Burries

Postgame Press Conference



Arizona 81, UCF 59

TOMMY LLOYD: Yeah. Well, thank goodness we got off to a good start, because there were stretches of that game I didn't think we played very well.

But the objective in these tournaments is to get to the next one, and that's mission accomplished today. And obviously we know tomorrow's going to be a tough battle with an Iowa State team playing in their backyard, but we look forward to it.

Q. Coach, lots being made of the court. This was your first time on this glass court. What did you think of it, and what was your takeaway from playing on that court with the guys?

TOMMY LLOYD: Well, I didn't play. I coached, so I was on fine footing. You can ask these guys. I mean, they would be able to give you a better answer about that.

But for me, I mean, listen, we'll play on asphalt. We'll play on asphalt with double rims. I mean, we're fine with that. And if the other team has to deal with it, then we'll deal with it as well. But I'll let the powers that be make those higher up decisions.

Q. For Coach, Iowa's been playing really well, and they're going to have a lot of fans here tomorrow. How do you guys disrupt their rhythm and get them out of sync?

TOMMY LLOYD: Well, we played them a week ago or so, or ten days ago. We'll obviously look back at that and see what worked and what didn't work and see what kind of adjustments we can make.

But we have a lot of respect for Iowa State in their program, and I have a lot of respect for T.J. and the job that he's doing, and I have a lot of respect for their players. Like I said, we're looking forward to the challenge. We're looking forward to the opportunity.

Q. You were talking about human nature last week in Colorado. Was that a little bit of it tonight, where you have a 20-something point lead early and just maybe tough to get one like that?

TOMMY LLOYD: I mean, I don't know. Maybe. You know, I really challenged our guys. Sometimes in these tournaments, you know, you get in them and I've been fortunate enough to coach in enough NCAA tournaments and conference tournaments that these early-round games, it can be kind of a sterile environment, you know, unless you're playing in your backyard and you have your entire fan base there.

I think our fans all waited to buy tickets, They all assume that we're going to San Diego, and they're making a lot of assumptions now, and they've saved all their money. I just didn't feel like we had a great presence in the arena today.

So you know what? Then it needs to become all about us. We need to internalize and kind of band together and become a stronger unit, and we need to create energy for each other and draw energy off each other in those situations.

So I think it's a great lesson learned from our guys. Now, listen, I'm going to give them credit for getting the lead and getting off to that great start. That was good. But yeah. It just felt like we had a little bit of a letdown, and I'm sure UCF's urgency they played with had a little bit to do with that.

Q. To the question of earlier for the players, what was it like playing on the floor today? Was there any sort of correlation to playing on hardwood floors, or is it just that different?

MOTIEJUS KRIVAS: It's a little bit different, but no big differences. I think it's good for the fans on the arena and the TV, so all thumbs up.

BRAYDEN BURRIES: Yeah. I think you've just got to get used to it real quick. Just the first five minutes when you're warming up, just get used to it. But other than that, it's pretty good.

And then like the only thing I didn't like was if you're shooting a free throw and you're on the other side, the LED lights get in your eyes a little bit. But ain't no big deal, really.

Q. Just for anyone who wants to answer, I mean, they came out with urgency, but you all kind of got back real quick and got to such a big lead in the first half. Was starting fast, was that part of the message to the players also?

TOMMY LLOYD: I mean, it wasn't part of the messaging. A lot of times I tell the guys, let's get a feel for the game and kind of hang in there and try to figure out what works and see if we can build with some runs later in the half or early in the second half.

But, you know, hey, we came out. And they had played the night before, and maybe it took them a little bit to kind of get the lactic acid a little bit, and our guys were able to take advantage of that and build an early lead.

I'm never going to shy away from building an early lead, because to me obviously it gives you a buffer to absorb some of these late-game runs. And it doesn't always feel good when teams are chipping away at your lead, but it's nice to have that lead and be able to have that margin for error, you know, down the stretch.

Q. Coach, you mentioned that maybe your fan base didn't show up today like you expected. Iowa State fans tomorrow night, they're going to obviously be out in full force. This tournament, do you want to see it moved around and get a better setup for your fan base?

TOMMY LLOYD: I mean, listen, you guys are asking a lot of questions here. I want to talk about the ballgame. 100 percent. Would I want this in Vegas? Yeah. 100 percent I will. But you know what? I didn't ask to be in the Big 12. We got put in the Big 12. I didn't have any input on it, but I love being in the Big 12. So if they tell me we're going to play in Kansas City, we're loading up the plane and going to Kansas City. We're not going to sit there and overthink it.

You guys can do all that stuff or have another coach give you opinions on what he would want. I just want to get on the floor and try to kick ass and play 40 minutes. That's it.

Q. I mean, speaking of Big 12 and not about anything else, this is y'all's second tournament. How have you enjoyed seeing the Big 12 tournament just coming from PAC 12 and other tournaments you've been in?

TOMMY LLOYD: Well, you've got to understand the PAC 12 tournament was in Las Vegas, so it was McKale North. So we were Iowa State, we were Kansas. So it obviously feels really different for us now.

But listen, it's what we signed up for, so there's no complaints. I mean, I'm not going to be bitter towards Iowa State fans or Kansas fans for coming to support their team. It's not an easy haul to get from Tucson to Kansas City.

So we have an amazing fan base. It looks like the tournament's going to be here for a while, so I think we better figure out how to win in Kansas City. That's where my mind's at.

Q. (No microphone.)

TOMMY LLOYD: Well, I mean, it's a monster. It's a monster. We've been in it two years. Every game's tough. With UCF coming out today, what are they, the eight, nine seed? Eight seed. And they're a really good team that's going to be in the NCAA tournament. There's no easy games.

And, you know, the other team always has a lot of talent and is well coached, and we understand that. We understand that. We respect that. And we enjoy the competition and love the opportunities.

(FastScripts by ASAP Sports)