

2026 Phillips 66 Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Kansas Jayhawks

Coach Bill Self

Darryn Peterson

Flory Bidunga

Postgame Press Conference



DARRYN PETERSON: Probably both. Feeling better and watching film. I see I was taking 3s instead of getting downhill, and getting downhill helps the team. I'm trying to do that more.

Q. Coach, what's your perspective on that as well?

BILL SELF: I think people are going to try to take away his shots off the catch. So with that being said, a lot of stuff he's gotta do is off the bounce.

I think tonight, from my vantage point, in one-on-one situations, he was far better as far as getting shoulders past people and going to score, and that tells me that -- he can always do that -- but it just tells me his body's feeling better. So that's a very positive sign.

Q. Coach, you may not be aware of this, but the Big 12 announced it's going to go back to a hardwood floor for the remainder of the tournament after conversations with league coaches. I know you just played one game on it, but what was your involvement in that, and what are your thoughts on going away from the LED floor and back to a hardwood floor for the remainder of the tournament?

BILL SELF: No, I personally didn't have any involvement in any decision that goes on. If the other coaches are doing it, have juice, then they got more than I got because I didn't have any involvement with that at all.

I think it's the right thing to do, though. Did it bother you guys tonight much, the floor?

FLORY BIDUNGA: Not really.

BILL SELF: I didn't notice us slipping as much. I personally didn't think it was as big a deal, but if you study it and watch the games throughout the day -- and maybe even some tonight, seemed like to me there were a lot of steps that end up sliding one or two inches. It just didn't look quite as clean.

It's cool-looking floor, but I'm excited that the talk tomorrow

Kansas - 78, TCU - 73

THE MODERATOR: Coach Self is joining us along with Darryn Peterson and Flory Bidunga.

BILL SELF: It was a hard game. I don't think we played our best by any stretch, but we were pretty good early, kind of let it get away from us. But TCU is good, and they did some good things.

The thing we did best, obviously, was get fouled and shoot free throws. So that was great to see.

We have to be better tomorrow night. But it was kind of one of those games, survive and advance games. It's good it ended up the way it did.

Q. Coach, as you walked off the floor, you said "ugly." What about tonight made it feel that way to you?

BILL SELF: You've got the game won and make it interesting late. And we didn't shoot the ball well. Usually, when you don't shoot the ball, it tends to look that way a lot. And then we went through stretches where we didn't rebound it defensively.

But all in all, I've had a lot of losses in which we probably visually look better. And I'd certainly prefer the result tonight than those games.

Q. Darryn, seems like the past couple of games you've been driving the ball more to the basket. Is that a sign of you feeling physically better? Is that something you've been instructed to do, make a point to do? Just wondering what has resulted in that.

will be about the semifinals as opposed to the court.

Q. Coach, what kind of impact did you see out of Flory tonight? Obviously he had a high plus-minus when he was out on the floor. What did you see out of him tonight?

BILL SELF: Well, you know, he's plus-31 in a close game. And when he came out, we just weren't as good, bottom line. To me, you know, he's the best defender in the league. To me, he's the best defender in the country.

I don't know that he really had a chance to play to that tonight as much because it's hard playing to that whenever you have two fouls with 12 minutes left in the half or whatever. But, yeah, I thought he was good.

Q. Flory, you were named Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year. Do you think about that at all? Do you let that get to you at all, or is it just awesome, let's move on?

FLORY BIDUNGA: Don't really think about it. I appreciate it. It's a big deal, I feel like. But can't let that lay in my head. Obviously it's a big accomplishment. But we have a lot of games to worry about. Thinking about it won't help me out at all. So just next play, next game.

BILL SELF: You know what, I've coached him now for two years, and sometimes, his dialect, sometimes I have a hard time understanding every word.

FLORY BIDUNGA: You need subtitles. Actually, put up the subtitles over there, for sure (laughter).

Q. Coach, obviously a quick turnaround with Houston tomorrow. Your thoughts, what will you do to get ready for that? And another late start on a team that you guys have already played and beaten?

BILL SELF: Well, you know, that game doesn't really mean anything. I think, moving forward, I'm sure Kelvin wanted to play Kansas. I would if I were him. And we love the opportunity to play the best in our league, and they certainly have been the best or right there over the last three years in which they've been in the league.

So we'll be excited. We'll get back and have dinner around 12:30 and start the scout tomorrow. But tomorrow's game, I don't know if it will be as much about scouting as it will be, you know, who wants the ball more.

Q. Darryn, season high in minutes. All 40 in the second half.

BILL SELF: All 40?

Q. I think so. I'm sorry. 20 in the second half. 37 total. How do you feel about playing that much and how do you feel after playing that much?

DARRYN PETERSON: I feel good. It's been like a test every game. I feel like towards the end of the year I've been feeling way better.

Q. Is it kind of a relief you got to do that?

DARRYN PETERSON: You could say relief, sure.

Q. Coach, what did you think of him going 20 in the second half?

BILL SELF: I didn't even think of taking him out tonight. So it's been, you know, a month ago, you may try to limit his minutes to the point where he could still feel good down the finish line. But I can't speak for Darryn, but I would think that over the last two or three weeks, your body's felt a lot better.

Q. Darryn, how did you feel about your free throws? How important were they? You went to the line all night.

DARRYN PETERSON: Missed three, but I feel like I'm a pretty hard guard. That's why they gotta foul me sometimes. And gotta make them.

Q. How important were they, Coach?

BILL SELF: I think it's important you can manufacture some points when you don't shoot the ball well. He got fouled a lot. So it was vital.

Q. Darryn, I know you didn't shoot the ball particularly well tonight, but you were still aggressive, you were still attacking. What led to you to have that attack mindset all night long?

DARRYN PETERSON: My teammates and coaches telling me to stay aggressive the whole game.

BILL SELF: Can I answer that? The best players have got to be aggressive all the time. And he's the best player. So the same with Flo. We'll be a lot better when these two are aggressive all the time, and they know that.

Sometimes aggressiveness leads to missing shots, but at least you put yourself in position to make plays.

Q. Darryn, I think since the Oklahoma State game you



haven't had any instances of having to come out or anything of that sort. How excited are you as the season and calendar flips to Big Ten Tournament and the NCAA Tournament to just put all of that behind you and just go play and be yourself over the next month?

DARRYN PETERSON: Super excited. Like you said, throughout the year, my body was holding me back. But to finally feel free out there, feels great.

Q. Darryn, could you just take us through what happened with your shoulder? It looked like you were working through it for a moment when you went to the line. Was that a little bit of a battle to get past it?

DARRYN PETERSON: No, just a little tweak. Just a little tweak, nothing serious.

Q. Bill, did you have any concerns at that point? It looked like you gave him some encouragement to stay at it?

BILL SELF: Yeah, but, no, I really didn't. I think he's been through enough crap this year. I don't think his shoulder, unless it's separated, will be one to knock him out.

Q. The other thing, I don't know if you saw it, but you got a little tangled up with Coach Dixon at one point. Could you tell what happened? Were you just running by?

DARRYN PETERSON: I thought he grabbed me. He told me he didn't mean to do it so --

BILL SELF: I told him it was unintentional. He just happened to be running by when Jamie stepped out there. There was nothing to it.

Q. Tonight seemed there were spurts where the energy wasn't there. What was your message to the guys?

BILL SELF: I would agree with you on that. Message to the guys: I felt like tonight was more of a "we've got to win, play not to lose" type of game. And that type of mindset won't get you very far.

But I kind of felt like that tonight. It won't be like that tomorrow night. Who knows how well we'll play, but we'll play more consistently with our energy tomorrow.

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