

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Sunday, March 13, 2022

Texas A&M Aggies

Tampa, Florida, USA

Amalie Arena

Buzz Williams

Henry Coleman, III

Wade Taylor, IV

Postgame Press Conference



HENRY COLEMAN, III: He said it perfectly. I don't think there's anything that he said anything wrong. We prepared for it. It's something that we prepare for and we're ready for.

Q. I guess the next few hours is a little on pins and needles waiting to see what happens with the show tonight?

THE MODERATOR: Question was for who?

Q. Henry and then Wade.

HENRY COLEMAN, III: To play in the greatest tournament in the country is something that every kid dreams of, you know, shooting in the driveway and stuff. It would be a blessing for us to be in that tournament, but I think even we're not, we'll handle it in the right way. There's a lot of love on this team. I care a lot for these guys, so we'll handle it the right way.

WADE TAYLOR, IV: I tell you what, what Henry said about our response. Of course, we want to be in it, and we feel like we played hard and worked hard enough to be in it, so we're going to hope for the best, and whatever happens, we're going to handle it the right way.

Q. Henry, the bracketologists have you guys getting a bid. If it comes to pass, what do you think you guys can do in the NCAA?

HENRY COLEMAN, III: I think we'll take it one game at a time just like we've done all season. We're not looking ahead. We're focused on what's right now, what's right in front of us, what we can see. We'll focus on that first game. We'll focus a lot on us, too. I think we're a good team. I think we're a talented team. We play our best with high energy and a lot of effort. We're a really tough team to beat.

Q. Buzz, I wonder what in your past, if anything -- not much comparable to losing eight in a row -- has helped you figure out what to say or do or guide those guys through and out of eight Ls in a row. I know that has to be mentally taxing on all those guys?

Tennessee 65, Texas A&M 50

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Congratulations to Tennessee. Coach Barnes, his staff, his team, their administration on winning the SEC tournament championship. Very deserving. They beat us from start to finish. We had no answers for their tactical decisions, nor their talent, and they're more than deserving of what transpired over the last two hours.

Q. Henry, y'all have done pretty well in this tournament dealing with your opponents' superior size. Why do you think y'all had more difficulty against Tennessee's size today?

HENRY COLEMAN, III: I think it was overall effort from our team from the defensive standpoint and rebounding. We were a little bit out of position, but I think in the second half, we did a pretty good job of trying to hit some of their big guys, and I thought our guards in the second half helped us on the boards to get a lot of those rebounds.

Guys like Aaron Cash and Ethan Henderson really came in and kind of brung us the energy we needed to get some of those rebounds.

Q. For both of them, Wade first, not that fatigue was a factor, but just having to play four games in a row, how hard was that?

WADE TAYLOR, IV: I wouldn't say it was hard. Of course, it did a lot on our legs, but we prepare for that, going back to when we first started in August going through boot camp, individuals, you know, long practices prepared us for this. Playing those four games was another hump we had to get over, and I thought we handled it pretty well.



BUZZ WILLIAMS: It was an incredible experience. This is my 28th year as a college coach, and it had never happened. So I would say that our response, the first game that we lost, we were 15-2, 4-0. It was the largest crowd in Reed Arena history. We made one three against Kentucky and lost by six. I think the next game we played at Arkansas, we were down 20-4, and ended up losing in overtime by three.

In those eight games, included at Tennessee, in those eight games, four of those eight games were one or two possession games. 7-41 to play at Knoxville, and it was a three-point game. I think we ended up losing by ten.

I don't know that there's a specific answer on what is the right way to handle an eight-game losing streak. If there is, I haven't read the book on it. What I tried to do was just tell our guys the truth. After the eighth loss, it was at Auburn, College Game Day, they were number one in the country. I think we lost 17 that game. That was the largest margin of defeat this season.

What we did, any time we take a day off, we start the next day early, and we call it early bird. So when the game at Auburn was an early start and so we got home earlier than normal for a weekend road game, and our staff, we stayed up through the evening into the morning, and we studied what transpired during the first four wins, what transpired during the eight losses, and what would be the differences between the two, and then how can we present it in the lowest common denominator to our team in a way that they could understand. So we came up with four categories, showed it to them numerically, showed it to them on the screen as far as the clips. This is what we have to concentrate on. This is what we've distilled is the difference between winning and losing. And this is how our practice itineraries are going to change so we can spend more time on the things we know helped us win.

Our guys throughout the eight games received all of the teaching and coaching. From that point, I think we've lost one game since. I think that's right. Today would be two, right? I think we've won 7 out of 9 since then. It's just -- their response to all of that and then all of the work the staff did to get to that point, that's -- even though it wasn't fun, it's been an incredible learning experience.

I mean, that's I think 4 was here for the first time today, so half of our scholarship players have been up here over the last four days, and you can tell even in how they articulate the answers to the questions, there's residue of all of those lessons from the month that we lost.

Q. I don't want to steal your question, but I'm going to

follow up on it. Coach, in the last 48 hours, you beat the number four team and the number fifth team in the country, and after the first four minutes, you played the number nine team in the country straight up. How do you go to the committee and say we should be in?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Yeah. I'm not sure how you earn the selection to the NCAA committee. Do you know that process? And that's why I try not to partake in conversations that I don't understand the whole process. Like I understand there's a committee, and so my question at the foundation is how do you get invited to the committee? Then is there a transparent way not on the internet that we as coaches who are responsible for these families that we can articulate, this is how you do it, and you see as each day in March passes how the opinion of others that are not on the committee seem to overwhelm the world.

I not try to get into that because I feel like my responsibility is to the children and the families they represent, and so I don't know, to be honest. I don't know is it good enough? Should it happen? I do think this numerically is the best league. Maybe it's 1B numerically. I do study the numbers. I'm slightly more intelligent maybe than I come across. I know what the numbers are, and I do think that how the last three and a half weeks have transpired for us I would think for sure has to help our résumé. Is it good enough? I don't know.

Q. Y'all have been shooting from three-point range so well since you have been here. Today you had an off day. Do you write that off as an off day, or what factors do you think were involved in that shooting under the -- what you all have been doing?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: I would say maybe it's -- what is the word that you say? Regress to the mean? We've probably shot it better in Tampa because our guys like Florida, I guess, and then today it just kind of regressed back.

I also think, Olin, that numerically Tennessee has the seventh best defense in the country, and so I always want to make sure that I give credit to the players and to the opponent and their staff. As good as they are offensively, defensively numerically they're even better.

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