

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 16, 2024

Texas A&M Aggies

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Bridgestone Arena

Coach Buzz Williams

Jace Carter

Hayden Hefner

Postgame Press Conference



We always try to reiterate to one another, the coaching staff is talking about staying in the moment, not let that affect what we're trying to accomplish, so...

Q. Hayden, is there anything that y'all think y'all might have been able to do differently on the defensive end the way they were shooting three-pointers, or sometimes you look at a team and they're just hot?

HAYDEN HEFNER: I think we could have limited them getting into the paint a lot more. Once they started getting into the middle drives, spraying out, they're already knocking down threes, and we were there late on contests.

Limiting that number, getting the ball across the paint, being there at the closeout, I think that's one thing we could have done a little bit better.

Q. Jace, with their size inside, the way they're shooting outside, how difficult of a defensive matchup is it to try to double the post but then also get out there and contest? Is it unique to their style?

JACE CARTER: Kind of. I mean, we work on it every day. I think we go against each other all the time. In post-season play, we play so many SEC teams, SEC games, we have reps of it.

It wasn't too crazy. They're fast off the ball. They have a lot of bigs that have good vision, are aggressive. We just needed to monster a little bit better and get out of the paint on a cover two.

Q. How comfortable do you feel with where you are that you'll hear your name called Sunday?

HAYDEN HEFNER: Yes, sir, I can speak for us as a team. I think we're fairly confident. I feel like that we've been trying to just control what we can control. Go out there and just do what we know we can accomplish. With that being done, it's all up to the committee now.

JACE CARTER: I would really piggyback off what H said. I think we're confident. We're going to be where our feet

Florida 95, Texas A&M 90

THE MODERATOR: We're ready to continue with Texas A&M. We're going to go straight to questions for the players.

Q. Jace, was there anything that you could point to that was different offensively, reason you might have struggled offensively in the second half, or was it just simply going a little cold?

JACE CARTER: I don't think anything changed. I think our recipe is our recipe. I don't think we change it who we're playing, momentum, the game. I think they made a lot of shots down the stretch. I don't think it was an offensive problem. I think we scored 90 points.

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Highest OER of the season.

JACE CARTER: I think it was just getting stops. We had a low amount of turkeys. They shot 53% from three, so...

I'd just say it was it was our defense.

Q. (No microphone.)

BUZZ WILLIAMS: You're right. We were bad. 90 points...

Q. Did it feel like there was trouble finding your rhythm in some of the stop-start of the game? Didn't seem like a whole lot of flow in the game.

HAYDEN HEFNER: I'd say that kind of contributed to that a little bit, the stops. When the whistle is getting blown a lot, it's hard to maintain a flow in what we're trying to accomplish.



are. Get home tonight, sleep good. We're looking forward to tomorrow and moving forward.

THE MODERATOR: Fellas, we'll excuse you. We'll continue with questions for Coach.

Q. With their size and especially with the way they shot the ball, how difficult of a defensive challenge was it to double the post but have good contest?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: We did a good job in their secondary and transition, similar to what we did in College Station when we played 'em.

I think you have to make a decision on are you going to let them score at the rim or are you going to try to be in a position to contest the three.

They shot 26% of their shots at the rim. Our defense is wired not give away points at the rim, not to allow the ball to get to the paint. As H said, we were slow on the contest. I thought they did a good job when it came out of the post if we monstered getting it to the next guy, the guy that's in the double, the one that's got to get to the next guy.

I think that's where we were hurt the most.

Q. Y'all shot 46% from three-point range in the first half. Went down to 25% in the second half. Is that just a matter of going cold or anything Florida did differently?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: I don't know if they did anything different or not. 38% from the three for us is a good number. Coming into today for SEC play, we were shooting 26% from three.

I think our percentage from three is a portion of what allowed us to play better here, along with our free-throw percentage and our number of free throw makes.

I would say we would take 38% at any point in the season.

Q. With Andersson and Wade getting into foul trouble early, how much does that disrupt the rotation, change the rhythm?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: I thought the last five minutes of the first half we were a little out of sorts. Maybe a little bit longer. But I felt it more the last five minutes.

Trying to figure out how we could score, how to keep a lead. I didn't want to get the third foul on any of those guys -- Solo, Andy, Jace, IV. To some degree we've got to play somebody.

At the same time we've done a good job since we've been in Nashville of making the game choppy. I don't think it was anything that we were doing.

We got fouled, but we were fouling too much. So now it's kind of choppy on both sides of the ball.

Q. Because your time is up here, what is your comfort level, how are you approaching Sunday?

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Well, I think it's a combination of the last six weeks. I mean, I know you guys know. We lost every game for two and a half weeks in a row, then now we've won every game for two and a half weeks in a row.

Thankful for the last five wins. This is our first loss in March. But I also think the response of our guys from the five losses in a row, thankful, very grateful. I thought they played with great resiliency today on a fast turnaround. Of all of the things that transpired, to lose a two-possession game against a top 25 team, really thankful.

Whatever is going to happen tomorrow, just to be able to be in this position, I think our team has changed over the last three weeks. I think there's some legacy that goes into what has transpired and their response. To be able to play on Saturday three years in a row in the tournament...

I think there's a lot of good stuff. We're disappointed with the result, but we also don't want to miss the lessons that transpired this month, for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Thank you.

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