

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Four

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Dayton, Ohio, USA

UD Arena

Texas Longhorns

Coach Rodney Terry

Tre Johnson

Kadin Shedrickj

Media Conference



We're excited for the opportunity to play them.

Q. The fact that 14 SEC schools have made it to the tournament so far, what are your initial thoughts, and how do you feel about that?

KADIN SHEDRICK: 14 SEC teams making the tournament is definitely historical. Think it goes to show the depth of the league this year. And it was challenging night in and night out.

I think that definitely prepared us for this opportunity we have in front of us. It will be nice to play a school from a different conference now and get a different look than what we've been going through the last few months.

TRE JOHNSON: Just shows how good the conference is or can be, I would say. Having all those teams make it, it'll kind of be good and see how good teams and how far they get throughout the tournament, to see how good the league is against other schools from different conferences.

Q. Kadin, we'll start with you and your excitement at seeing Texas's name Sunday night?

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, it was definitely a long 48 hours after we lost on Friday to Tennessee. There were a lot of questions not only in our locker room but across the country about whether we would make it. When we saw our name come up on the screen, we were thrilled for the opportunity to be able to come to Dayton and compete another day.

Q. Tre, your excitement being in March Madness?

TRE JOHNSON: Yeah, it was for sure a long week, just thinking about it over and over, lots of prayers. But when we saw our names pop up there, everybody was excited. I was just grateful overall to have the opportunity. And most guys don't get to say in my position that they were able to play in the tournament, and with this group just means a lot for us to make it for sure.

Q. Does Dayton remind you of anybody that you've played? I mean Xavier. Do you think they have a resemblance to anybody you've played this year?

TRE JOHNSON: Just watching them, they remind us a little bit of Vanderbilt. Their style of defense, their up-tempo, their speed up and down the court. Just their size, how their players are all interchangeable and stuff like that. It kind of reminds us a lot of Vanderbilt.

KADIN SHEDRICK: I think their offense kind of relates to Kentucky a little bit. They like to do a lot of the zoom dribble handoffs that Kentucky likes to do. And then as Tre said, Vanderbilt for sure definitely defensively.

Q. Now that you guys are in, do you feel like you have kind of a new lease on life? Because the Texas team we've been seeing the last couple of games hasn't been -- you've had a lot of guys hurt. You're complete now. Do you feel like it's a new team?

TRE JOHNSON: I don't feel like it's a new team. I would say we were kind of playing the same way or just having to step up in our roles when guys went down. We still had the same confidence of winning games and stuff like that.

But I feel like it's a breath of fresh air because of having everybody back, knowing we're at full strength and there's no excuses, just going out and playing as hard as we can with our new depth back.

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, I'd agree with Tre. I think it's great to have everybody back and healthy. I think we kind of showed flashes of what we can do when everybody is feeling really good these last few games, and hopefully we have some more games down the road to be able to build on that.

Q. Tre, you've had a phenomenal freshman season. What's enabled you to have so much success early on



in your career?

TRE JOHNSON: I would say just the faith from the coaching staff and then just the players on my team to have the faith in me to just help put me in certain spots because I wouldn't be doing half the things I'm doing without my teammates.

I feel like I also do things on my own just with my work ethic and working out and stuff like that, but back on to my teammates and the faith that they have in me just to pass me the ball and stuff like that, because I'm a freshman playing with a lot of older guys, and them having faith to pass me the ball and stuff like that, it just means a lot.

Q. Tre, someone said you had a phenomenal season as a freshman but you also have a high draft stock. What are your thoughts about entering the draft or staying with a team like the Texas Longhorns?

TRE JOHNSON: I haven't thought about nothing like that. My thoughts have been recently making the tournament, getting in. Now it's just been focused all on Xavier. I'm just taking it one step at a time and trying to enjoy all the moments I can with my teammates.

Q. Kadin, when is Texas at their best?

KADIN SHEDRICK: I think Texas is at their best when all the guys on the court are really locked in on defense and playing active, and then our offense when we're sharing the ball, setting good screens for each other and just playing good team basketball. I think we did that the last few games.

Q. Tre, what's the best quality of this basketball team?

TRE JOHNSON: Best quality of the team I would say is our speed and size. We have a lot of taller guys, but we're still mobile and active all throughout the roster.

Q. Tre, when you go through a shooting slump during a game, how do you balance that with everybody knows you're a very unselfish player, but everybody knows how you can score and how you can get hot in a hurry. How do you balance that with, well, I don't feel like I've got it today, but the coaches and teammates say, no, no, you've got to keep shooting?

TRE JOHNSON: Even when I know I'm not on, I still got to keep shooting open shots if I get the opportunity. I can't pass anything down.

But still just being aggressive on offense while also doing something in other categories like maybe getting more

rebounds than I usually do, more assists, be more of a facilitator because every time I get the ball, people are going to look, people are going to load. So even if I'm having an off-night, still getting other teammates involved or helping our rebounds, doing other things on the court besides just scoring.

Q. Tre, do you have a favorite March Madness moment growing up?

TRE JOHNSON: I would say when I saw Villanova and Kris Jenkins hit the shot at the top of the key or Arike's two back-to-back game winners. Those are probably the two best memories I can think of.

KADIN SHEDRICK: Favorite March Madness moment was probably just playing in it. It's special. It's like nothing else. It's what we all dream of growing up, and having played it a couple times now, I'll always cherish these moments. I'm really excited for guys like Tre on our team and the other guys that haven't been able to experience the tournament to finally be able to feel the magic of it.

Q. Kadin, are there moments throughout this year for what Tre has been able to do and sort of stepping on the stage as a freshman in that conference where you're even a little surprised at his success?

KADIN SHEDRICK: No, I wasn't surprised at all. I knew who Trey was coming in. I saw how hard he works the whole off-season, and I knew what he was capable of. He's one of the most confident players I've ever been around. He has a lot of good things going for him off the basketball court that help set him up for success on the basketball court.

Q. Watching the video of you guys when the announcement came down, no one was more excited than Rodney about you guys getting in. How much are you guys talking about how you want to get this done for him?

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, we all want to do it for each other. We definitely want to do it for other coaches and we want to do it for the guys in the locker room, as well.

We like to say, if one of us -- everybody eats is how we want to try and play. So if we're doing well, then the coaches are going to do well; and if the coaches are going to do well, we're going to do well. That's just how we see it. We want to get it done for the guy next to us, and that's how we're going about it.

TRE JOHNSON: I feel like what Kadin said. Before we start trying to play for the coaches or anything like that,



we're first playing for our teammates, the same guys going through the same struggles with us every day in practice. I just feel like us doing it for our teammates, it will lay over for Coach because we all care about one another and we're going to try to do the best for each other.

Q. (Question regarding shooting free throws and technicals.)

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, they all asked me how I do it. I said, it's just work. We've got to get around to talking about technical free throws. I might have to start taking them for Tre if he gets me. Now that I got to my thousand-point mark, I might let him keep taking them. It was definitely a cool moment to get back to shooting free throws well, and hopefully I'm able to continue that the next few days.

I didn't change anything. I know I've been a pretty decent free-throw shooter my entire college career, and this has been a down year for me, and it was going to come back at some point.

Q. You played in a number of close games that have been decided within five to ten points. Do you think having that experience in competitive games helps you going into this tournament?

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, that 100 hundred percent helps you go into the tournament. When it gets down to the last four minutes and it's a really close game, it's about who knows how to win those games, or even if it goes to overtime, I think we've been lucky enough to -- I think we've played in three overtime games this year, and we won two of them.

I think those are really good experiences for us, as well, leading into March because things can get really stressful in those moments, but now that we've been in them already, I think that experience will help push us through to the finish line.

TRE JOHNSON: I feel like they have helped us out, especially having a lot of close games earlier into the conference. Just teaching us how to cherish possessions those last final four or three minutes and also just keeping us how to win games, and to come together, be more connected on defense in crunch moments like that. I feel like it has prepared us for the tournament.

Q. Tre and Kadin, just asking what's your favorite pregame song before going into a game.

TRE JOHNSON: "Peace of Mind" by Lauryn Hill.

KADIN SHEDRICK: I don't even have a pregame song I've been listening to. I kind of just bounce around. I'll go on like an artist's essentials. So recently I've been doing Gunna essentials and just clicking shuffle. I like to listen to what the young guys listen to. They like to listen to rappers I've never heard of before. That kind of gets me going a little bit. No, I just listen to whoever I can find.

Q. Tre, with the accomplishments for you this year, do you feel like you're one of the leaders on the team?

TRE JOHNSON: I'd say Kadin is more of the main leader on the team. I wouldn't say I'm a leader. I'd just say that I just hold my teammates accountable the same way they hold me accountable. If I'm leading by any way, it's more by example than by me talking about it.

Q. Kadin, going back to the music and you being an old guy, which is shocking to me, what is the biggest difference in sort of this duo up here on the stage, you as a graduate to Tre as a freshman?

KADIN SHEDRICK: Like what's the difference between us?

Q. Yeah, amongst being the older guy in the room and trying to have that connection when you've got quite the age gap.

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, it's definitely -- actually it hasn't been too -- it's been pretty easy. Tre is an easy guy to get along with. We're roommates so we spend a lot of time together. They've paired us up as partners a lot even in preseason. We played a pickleball tournament with the team and Tre and I were partners, and we won of course.

It's easy. They set us up pretty well for us two to get really connected. And then I have a lot of older guys on the team that are easy to get along with. But I think Tre and I have built a pretty good relationship, and I think that the coaches really helped us out there.

Q. Tre, do you give him a hard time for being an old guy?

TRE JOHNSON: Sometimes I do. At times he shows his age and I've got to remind him. But no, he's young at spirit. He's just got an old age beside his name.

Q. As a guy who's much, much older, how does he show his age?

KADIN SHEDRICK: Much, much older is crazy.

TRE JOHNSON: It just be certain things out of nowhere.

It's nothing I can be specific about, but it's not all the time. I've just got to remind him when he do.

Q. Tre, from a college basketball perspective, what have you enjoyed most about this year, just playing college hoops?

TRE JOHNSON: Just the memories that I made with the team. That's probably been the best thing, just hanging out with my teammates, just different memories. That's probably the best thing for sure, outside of basketball. It's probably been the best thing. Just the memories that I made with my teammates.

Q. Following that up, what's been the biggest challenge?

TRE JOHNSON: How hard you've really got to play to win. I feel like I didn't know how hard you've got to play to win the college game when I first got here, and then being in some of those close games just made me realize that you really can't take no plays off or anything like that. You've got to play very hard just to win one game.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, before we open the floor for questions, just your excitement and the feeling that was Sunday night and seeing your name on the board for the Selection Show.

RODNEY TERRY: Well, we're super excited about being here, being in this tournament. You never take it for granted, the opportunity of being here. I'd like to thank the Dayton staff that does a great job here and has done it for over 20 years, plus years here, in the NCAA Tournament. The welcome that you guys gave us the other day and what you've been able to do in terms of the environment that you have here in March, it's second to none.

I talked to our guys about this venue and how great of fans you have here in Dayton. I was a young coach at UNC Wilmington, and we got a chance to play an NIT game here, and man, what great basketball fans here. Great venue, just a great setting.

I know, again, there's a big rivalry between Dayton and Xavier, and we'd like to think that hopefully Dayton, you come over to our side and give us a little bit of home-court cooking a little bit as opposed to being on the road.

But one of the best venues in all of college basketball here in Dayton. We're excited about being here and competing against a really, really good Xavier well-coached team.

Q. One of the things you've preached over the past month, two months, is every game being an NCAA

Tournament game. Just curious, with you guys having that mentality over the last stretch, how does that prepare you for now being an NCAA Tournament game?

RODNEY TERRY: Well, I think if you're playing basketball in March or mid-February and even for us in the SEC it was pretty much throughout January that you were playing NCAA Tournament and March basketball. Every possession really matters. The urgency that you have to play with really matters. Rebounding, having a defensive presence really matters. It really decides the outcome of games.

It will be no different tomorrow. Xavier may be the fastest team we've played all season long. They put tremendous pressure on your transition first down defense. You've got to get back. If you don't, they're shooting a lay-up or they're scoring a three. Sean has done a great job with this group in terms of the pace that they play with. It's really, really fast and puts a lot of pressure on you to get back and set your defense.

Freemantle is a really good player inside, and he makes everything go, as well. This is just a terrific basketball team that we're competing against tomorrow, and we know we're going to have to have a lot of urgency defensively, and we're going to have to do a great job of trying to rebound the basketball and get out and play fast ourselves.

Q. As far as the players are concerned, how much do you lean on guys like Kadin Shedrick, Tramon Mark, who have been in these types of games, to trickle down to the other teammates that are doing it for the first time?

RODNEY TERRY: Yeah, this time of year it's really, again, about your players being excited about being in the moment. I said to our guys today we practiced earlier over at a junior college, and I said, guys, the teams that have success this time of year are teams that have tremendous juice and energy, and they're excited about this opportunity.

Sometimes it's not the best team that wins this time of year. For 40 minutes, you've got to be the team that comes in and puts your will on that team for 40 minutes in terms of how you're going to play.

But really the non-negotiables are you're coming in, incredible energy, activity. You don't have to play perfect, but you've got to play hard and you've got to play selfless and you've got to play together.

Q. Rodney, when you put Tramon at the point in the

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

SEC tournament, everything seemed to really click and flow, and obviously he's bigger and can see over a lot of people. Did you dabble and think about doing that earlier, and what do you think has made the difference in the offense since then?

RODNEY TERRY: We did. He actually played a lot of possessions earlier in the season, some at point -- not exclusively like we did there in the tournament. But there was a lot of thought process in terms of wanting to do that earlier. But for the sake of our rotation, we weren't really allowing to do that.

I thought it was much more functional for us when we got Chendall Weaver back in our lineup because Chendall is really good at execution. He's a great ball mover, and he's a guy that already has a feel for what we're doing and how we do it.

When you have another guy out there that can execute along with Kadin that knows what you're trying to get done and now you're putting the ball in Tramon's hands, it makes things flow a lot easier for us. We were able to do that.

We were able to also slide Pope off the ball and give him scoring opportunities to shoot the basketball, as well, as opposed to just facilitating all the time, which was good for us, too.

Q. I was talking to Julian Larry and Jayson Kent about Ryan Conwell, and the vibe I got from them is they were all pretty close-knit at Indiana State. I'm curious to get your thoughts on how much do you glean from your guys who have played with each other, even as you put together your own form of scouting with your coaches?

RODNEY TERRY: Yeah, Conwell is one of those guys that can go for 40 on any given night. He shoots the basketball, he's a green light shooter. He can shoot it at any time. He's one of the hottest players coming into this tournament right now in terms of scoring the basketball. Puts a lot of pressure on you. He's a dual threat.

He's what we call a weight. He's a guy that can shoot the ball from the perimeter and drive and score, as well. So he's a dual-threat player. He's one of those guys that you have to game plan for and spend a lot of time with trying to make sure that we understand, hey, we've got to do a great job by committee of trying to go at this guy.

You're not going to shut him down. He's a great scorer. But hopefully you do a good enough job that he doesn't go off and have one of those crazy nights.

Q. Just curious, in a game like this, do you use advanced analytics, or is it just, hey, turn on the film, and we watch it that way?

RODNEY TERRY: Yeah, I mean, we trust the numbers all the time. Throughout the course of the season, we spent a lot of money on that, so it's a resource that you definitely take notice to. We're not going to sit here and say we don't.

But at the end of the day, it also gets down to being able to play your principles defensively. There are guys that may be non-shooters that make shots in games that are a Division I player. Can't just stand out there and let a guy just shoot a driveway shot, or sometimes we call it a HORSE shot. He'll probably make one of those.

Again, you have to play the principles the right way, whether it's a short close, whether it's a guy that can shoot free throws or not shoot free throws. Whether it's a guy that's not a great finisher, play the percentages and not try to foul that guy, not put him on the line, make him make a tough two.

But we do. We do. Other staff collectively does a great job of really giving us all the intel, and now we have to get the intel to our guys to where they can apply it.

Q. Obviously Texas being one of 14 teams from the SEC in the March Madness tournament, can you speak a little bit to the gauntlet that is the SEC schedule and how that's prepared you to succeed?

RODNEY TERRY: Well, again, I'd like to start with giving kudos to the leadership of the SEC and Commissioner Sankey and Garth and those guys. They've done a tremendous job building basketball year by year in the SEC. The last two years, the two previous years, eight teams got in. We left a league in the Big 12 the last two years where we were arguably the best conference in basketball the last two years, and we got eight teams in.

Again, this historic year that we had this past season with 14 teams in is off the charts. The things that our league did in non-conference play, if you looked at our wins versus the ACC in terms of the ACC Challenge that we have with those guys, it was unheard of.

So you knew as you prepared for conference play, it was going to be a monster year in terms of every night there were no nights off. You had to bring your A game. You had great coaches in this league. You had great venues in this league.



Again, I think coming from the Big 12 when we had the No. 1 conference in the country, I think it prepares you for NCAA Tournament play because every night you're playing in an NCAA Tournament game.

You don't play with the level of urgency that you have to play with, you'll get beat, whether you're at home or you're on the road. Our teams are battle tested. Now we've got to go out and do it when it counts the most here in March.

Q. On that topic of just the conference, you feature the Freshman of the Year in the SEC. For you, have you been at all surprised at the success and the level of scoring that Tre has been able to do his first year in the college game?

RODNEY TERRY: We took Tre Johnson, he was the only freshman at media day at the SEC meetings, media day. We took him there for a reason. We expected him to be one of the best players in the league.

We expected him to be a guy that had a chance to face the media, be a guy that continued to grow in that area because those were the expectations of him coming in. He's a top five player in his class in high school and at one point was the No. 1 player in his class coming in.

But just like any freshman, he was going to have to come in and be an everyday guy, be a consistent guy to where he grew each and every day. I thought he did a great job of coming in, really embracing himself and with his teammates, learned to trust his teammates over the course of conference play, and I think his level of play got better as the conference went along, as he was game planning from game to game. He let the game come to him when there were nights that teams were doubling him, he trusted his teammates to let them get some things done.

I think, again, you saw a guy grow every single game. It's easy if you just go out there and say, hey, Tre, you shoot every ball. No, we don't need Tre shooting every ball. We need Tre playing the way Tre Johnson has always played. Tre Johnson has always played the game to win. We watched him play a thousand games in high school. He makes the right play or the simple play in terms of if he's a guy being double-teamed, he's going to hit the open guy. He's going to make the simple play.

I know there are a lot of times, how come you guys can't get him more shots? He's only got two or three shots in this game. Tre Johnson plays that way. He's not a hog. He's not a pig. He's going to pass that ball. He's going to move the ball. When it's time for him to take over, it's time for him to take shots, he'll take shots. But he's going to take what the defense is going to give him. He's learned to

do that over the course of the season.

He's going to have to do that at the next level. He's not going to be able to shoot every ball. He's going to play with other great players. But I think that he's learned to do that. I think his growth has been great from a maturity standpoint. We expected him to be Freshman of the Year in the league. We expected him to be one of the best players in the league. And he lived up to the billing.

Q. I wonder if you've kidded or razed Sean Miller about the Arizona inbounds violation call. How painful is that, and has it stuck with you?

RODNEY TERRY: I don't think I've ever really ribbed him about it. We helped him become an Elite 8 coach. They went on and went to the Elite 8 and had a chance to go to the Final Four.

And the point that Kirk is referencing is I think it was 2011, my last year at Texas, we played those guys in the Sweet 16 game, and we felt like we had the game won. And there was a five-second call, Dick Cartmell made the call. Dick was a great official, by the way. No knock against Dick.

But a five-second -- I do remember that, though. I had it many times in the Mountain West later in my career coaching at Fresno State, and I reminded him every time that we should have been in the Sweet 16. Five-second call, and before we could get to the locker room, Coach Morris wanted that computer because he wanted to make sure that that was the right call. Nevertheless, they got the ball back, Derrick Williams scores an inbounds play, they win the ball game, they go to the Sweet 16. We gave them a -- situation gave them a great gift that day.

But no, Sean is a great coach. He's been a great coach for a number of years. He had some great teams at Arizona. I got a chance to coach against him a couple times at Arizona when I was in Fresno, and we got a chance to compete in the NCAA Tournament last. But his teams have always been very well-coached. They don't beat themselves. They play really, really well and together offensively.

But yeah, that was a great moment in the tournament.

Q. You guys made it into the March Madness First Four, which is a huge accomplishment, but I would like to talk about your women's team. You guys are No. 1 right now in the AP poll for women's basketball. What do you have to say for that accomplishment?

RODNEY TERRY: You know, Vic Schaefer is one of the



best coaches in all of women's basketball. He has done an incredible job in terms of building the program at the University of Texas, first class in everything he does, both on the court, off the court. He had a terrific team last year. He had a team last year that was good enough to win the whole thing.

He had great continuity with a lot of players back from last year's team. He had a couple more added to this year's team, transfer portal, freshmen coming in, and they again, right now as the No. 1 seed, they have an opportunity to cut the nets down. They're really good. Madison Booker, I mean, she could come and play with us. She's that talented. She's terrific. She's a player.

But they've got other great teammates, and they've got a great team around a great player. When it's winning time, she knows when to take over and get things done. She's not only a really good player, but she's a really good person. Much respect for what Coach Vic has done at the University of Texas, and we're pulling for them to win the whole thing this year.

Q. With Tre, as a coach, is there a dichotomy between preparing him for the NBA, which inevitably he will reach, versus coaching him as a collegiate player?

RODNEY TERRY: Yeah, you know, I think, again, I've been blessed to coach a number of one-and-done players, and we knew when we signed Tre Johnson, Tre Johnson was a one-and-done talent.

I think the thing you try to do with those guys is you try to, one, have a great relationship to where you can coach them on the floor, to where they know when you're coaching them, to even get out of their comfort level in terms of there's another level that you can go to, and do you want me to coach you to be a freshman and have just a good freshman year, do you want me to coach you to be Freshman of the Year, do you want me to coach you to be one of the best players in the country.

There were moments throughout the course of the first part of our tenure coaching young Tre Johnson that he had to come to grips with that. I thought that he really embraced that and said, Hey, no, Coach, I want you to coach me to be one of the best players in the country. Is that demanding? Is that holding him accountable to another level other than just a freshman? Yes.

But I think he embraced that. I think his teammates embraced that in terms of how good we were pushing him to be this year, and I think he's excelled at a high level.

Is there still room for growth in his development?

Absolutely. All of our guys still have great room for growth.

Kevin Durant had great room for growth, and he's one of the best freshmen of all time. But again, I think he's really matured in a number of different ways.

You can go back and look in game situations in conference play this year, we put the ball in his hands to win the game in several games with game-winning plays. Did he make those? No. But those were growing moments. As a young player, to put the ball in his hands, to say go win the game for us, that's a growing moment for him.

All great players have failure, but they learn from failure to be better. But they want that ball in that moment. Can he do that a year from now? All day every day. We coach guys that way that had a hard time doing that when they were freshmen, sophomores, but when they were seniors in college, they're scoring that basketball. They're making that winning play. But you have to have that growth. That was some growth that we saw with Tre Johnson over the course of the season.

Arkansas game he should have been at the foul line to win the game, but we're going to let that go, right? That's a game winner, free throw. We'll let that one go.

Q. Looking back at your season, overall, two questions. What's the best quality of your basketball team, and two, what's the most complete game or the best game that you've played on the year?

RODNEY TERRY: I think the thing that's most liking of our team this season, I said it from the start of the year, team chemistry. These guys all -- I have a group of guys that all like each other. They've made so many great memories this year that they'll talk about the rest of their lives in terms of whether they're ribbing each other on the bus, they're ribbing each other after film session.

But these guys have spent a lot of time with each other, and it happened very organically. We didn't force-feed it. But they really, really like spending time with each other, not just on the court but off the court.

Most complete game? I thought we played really well at Mississippi State. I thought that was a game where our guys from the start of the game to the finish of the game, they really executed the game plan in terms of how we wanted to play defensively. We could have done a few things better offensively to close the game out in terms of handling their pressure, but I thought it was probably one of our most complete games.

I thought our game against Vanderbilt in the tournament was one of our most complete games of the year, as well.



I'd probably say those two games. I know we played really well at LSU. But those two games stand out the most in me in terms of scouting report and then going out and executing and just playing the level of basketball that we thought we were capable of playing this season.

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