

# Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 14, 2019

## Scott Drew

## Makai Mason

## Devonte Bando

Baylor

Iowa State 83, Baylor 66

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined on stage by Coach Scott Drew and the Baylor Bears, student-athletes are Devonte Bando and Makai Mason. Coach, we will look to you for an opening statement?

SCOTT DREW: Well, I thought first of all you really gotta credit Iowa State. I think everybody in the league knows when they're on. They're capable of being a Final Four team. Reminded me when I saw their game when they played at K-State how dominant and explosive they were. As far as with our guys, one thing I shared with them in the locker room I thought was we only had two players in the locker room that had played in a Big 12 tournament before. That's not a lot of experience.

The great thing about it is this hopefully will help us come next week from the standpoint the best thing the Big 12 does is runs it just like the NCAA Tournament, everything from the police escort to the time, to the routine, and hopefully that will allow us to have a better chance to be successful in the next tournament. So if that happens, then this has been definitely well worth it. Otherwise everybody hates going home after one game.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Devonte and Makai.

**Q. Makai, how eager were you to play today and how did you feel out there?**

MAKAI MASON: I was definitely pretty excited. Any chance you get to step out on the court and compete is going to be fun. Especially, you know, the Big 12 Championship, just to experience that was really cool. Obviously, not the result we were looking for but a good experience for us, and hopefully we can build on that.

**Q. Makai, y'all were right there with 'em, kinda back and forth, they ended the half on a 12-3 run. How much steam did that take out of you guys?**

MAKAI MASON: That's tough any time you are going



into the half with some momentum. That's definitely tough. But like Coach said, they're an explosive team. When they're on, it's really tough to beat 'em. They're super talented. They just kinda clicked tonight.

**Q. Devonte, when they were making shots like from the outside how hard is that to defend and could you guys just not figure out what they were doing, or was it just that they were hot tonight?**

DEVONTE BANDOO: Definitely they were tough to defend today. They were making a lot of shots. When a team gets going like that it starts with, you know, them seeing the rim at first, getting a good look, which we've got to do a better job first half taking that away. We're in a good conference where players see the ball going in a couple of times. They can do a spectacular thing.

**Q. Devonte, this is for you as well. You heard Coach say hopefully this tournament gives you guys experience as a guy who is looking forward to March. What do you think you got from this experience here in Kansas City so far?**

DEVONTE BANDOO: What I learned, it's physical. The refs don't call a lot. The atmosphere is different, just something that I've got to learn from it and build on. So I'm glad I got the chance to experience it. I wish I had experienced it with a W, but it's something I do appreciate with this experience.

**Q. For both players, obviously you guys have regrouped a couple times this season. Didn't finish the regular season or the tournament the way you wanted, but what do you need to do between now and next Thursday or Friday to get ready for the NCAA Tournament?**

MAKAI MASON: We've got to recover a little bit and then just focus on our next opponent. I know the coaching staff is going to do a great job and we gotta lock in as players to try to get better every day. We're going to watch the film and try to learn from it. I think the biggest thing is we can't punch second or react to a punch. I feel like they came out first and hit us and it's tough when you're back on your heels to respond.

DEVONTE BANDOO: Absolutely, same thing. You know, we gotta go back, rebuild, see what's ahead of us. You know, just learn from this for hopefully the NCAA Tournament.

**Q. Makai, you played in the NCAA Tournament three years ago. How exciting is this for you to get back after all the injuries you've had?**

MAKAI MASON: Yeah, like you said, it's been a pretty long road, so just to get the chance to compete on that stage again, you know, it's what you dream for as a kid and that's what you're, working for pretty much your whole basketball life to this point. So just to get to that moment, especially with this team, kinda been doubted the whole year. It's going to be a special moment.

THE MODERATOR: Guys, we will let you go back to the locker room. Thank you. Questions for Coach?

**Q. Scott, you said before the game that first couple games y'all got back in transition really well. Were y'all not getting back today, or was it more just them making shots?**

SCOTT DREW: I think on turnovers, especially live ball turnovers, sometimes it's impossible to get back. I thought 14 turnovers for us was way too many. Then there were some other times where we didn't get back quick enough. So credit Iowa State for pushing it and then credit them for making shots.

Defensively if you can't stop people in transition it's not good and if you can't take care of the ball they go hand-in-hand. And I thought especially in the last 5 minutes of the first half we tried to make too many one-on-one plays and those bad shots or turnovers led to their points as well.

**Q. Scott, first couple of games I think Iowa State was a combined 15 of 41 from threes. Were they doing anything differently or were they just making shots?**

SCOTT DREW: I think they got a couple of players, Talen Horton-Tucker is one of them. Seems like if he's on, he's on, and if he's off, he's off. The first two times we faced them he was off and we faced him now and he was on, and I thought that opened things up for them.

Other than that, he was the major difference. Everybody else, Shayok had 20 the last time we faced him. He's a really good player. I thought defensively he was locked in today, too.

**Q. Scott, I know you would prefer to have a couple more games in the tournament, but you got pretty close to a full week now to prepare for the NCAA Tournament. What do you want to accomplish in that time? How do you approach it? In terms of regrouping a little bit with the way you finished, what's your priority list?**

SCOTT DREW: Well, I think first of all you gotta look at

the glass being half full and that means Makai gets a couple days to take care of his foot. Jared Butler, gives him a couple days to take care of his knees. Mark Vital is nursing an injury. That will give him a couple days. That's a positive to hopefully get healthier. The second thing besides that is hopefully we can spend a couple of days working on executing and trying to be better offensively and trying to get back into a rhythm. We've been so blessed in previous years to have basically one or two starting line-ups, and it seems like this year we've had more different line-ups, different combinations, and I know that's been tough on the guys, tough on us. Hopefully we can keep everybody healthy and then get back to kinda like how we were playing when we were playing really well.

I know in the Big 12 you can lose a couple games and it looks like you're not playing well, but at Kansas we didn't play bad. Kansas State, we didn't play bad. At Oklahoma State, you take away transition defense and we played okay. It's not like we have been playing bad. It's just the margin of error isn't high in this conference, and you have to be at your best to win, because you can't rely on them having off nights. Obviously Iowa State didn't have an off night. If we take away this experience and it helps us for the postseason that's definitely been worth it. I know it will put a hunger in everybody now knowing, hey, it's a great environment and we want to be there longer than 24 hours.

**Q. When you were set up half-court defense, did you like the way your guys were playing? Were you contesting shots well enough?**

SCOTT DREW: Obviously not. There is always some defense breakdowns that you can correct. Then it comes down to them making some tougher shots. I thought because we had a couple of breakdowns because they made some shots, they got some confidence. Then it makes it easier to make tougher shots. That's what we allowed them to do. We allowed them to get confident so they could make tougher shots and the tougher shots it's hard to do something about those because if you got a good player if you're up on 'em, they can drive, which they got guys that can do both. They can shoot and drive.

So the goal is, don't give 'em anything easy so that now they're not making those tough, contested shots so you can take away the drive.

**Q. Scott, because of what you already done, do you go into this weekend feeling good about NCAA and all that?**

SCOTT DREW: I mean that's the blessing of being in the best conference in America. You finish fourth and you finish 10-8. In the past, teams with 8 wins have gotten in. So that's why you go through this grind is so

you have a chance to reap the spoils, and hopefully it works out that we get 80% of the league in, if not, 70%.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you very much.  
Good luck next week.

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## Steve Prohm Talen Horton-Tucker Marial Shayok Iowa State Cyclones

Iowa State 83, Baylor 66

THE MODERATOR: Okay, we are ready to begin with our first news conference of the day with the Cyclones of Iowa State. Head coach, Steve Prohm, two student-athletes, Marial Shayok and Talen Horton-Tucker. Coach, we'll call on you first for your thoughts on today's victory.

STEVE PROHM: This was obviously a great atmosphere. This is the elite conference tournament. You know, I've coached for a long time, but I love coming over here the last four years. Our fan base obviously travels incredibly well, unbelievable venue. But it was a great win for us. Obviously wish Baylor all the success in the world as they go on to the NCAA Tournament, but this was a really good win for our team. I thought we really competed. We kept the rebounding to -5. That was our goal. We didn't know if we could win it, but if we kept it in a reasonable range we thought we had a good chance. Then we did a good job outside of the initial thrust defending the 3-point line and that was the biggest two keys to the game. Our core guys played well. Tyrese made shots. Lindell off the bench, but collectively our team was bought in and competed the right way.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for our athletes?

**Q. Talen, can you talk about your game and how you got it going early? Good to see that a couple go down early?**

TALEN HORTON-TUCKER: I would say my teammates feeding me the ball, having that confidence in me is a big thing for me as a freshman and with them passing the ball and having the faith in me to knock down those shots is big. I credit them for everything they did for me this year and so far up to this point.

**Q. For either one of you, thoughts of the next game, either a chance to redeem yourselves against TCU or a chance for a rubber game against K-State?**



MARIAL SHAYOK: Both opponents are pretty tough. We've got to bring our A game from here on out, the rest of the season. So whatever wins we're going to get right tonight and lock in on the scout.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, gentlemen. Congratulations. Questions for Coach?

**Q. Coach, the opportunity in the next round, you went to K-State each one on the other's home court and then you got swept by TCU which is not normal for you guys. Your thoughts about the next round?**

STEVE PROHM: We're glad to be there. We'll watch this game this afternoon and the assistant who has the scout he has both teams prepared and we will go back to my room and whichever team wins start preparing for them. I thought we were detailed today. We had several days to prepare for Baylor so obviously that helped. As you get further in the tournament play with the quick turnarounds you don't have as much time to process it to your kids so you gotta go off your habits and be fundamentals. Both teams present different problems, obviously TCU beat us twice. We didn't defend them the right way and then Kansas State, they were able to slow the game down at our place and at their place we were able to get the lead and make the game at a little bit faster pace.

But obviously both teams are really good and congratulations to K-State on winning the regular season, but it will be a great atmosphere, semifinal tournament, Big 12, it will be a lot of fun.

**Q. Coach, I think in the first couple of games against Baylor y'all were like 15-41 from three. What was the difference today? Was it creating stuff? Knocking down open jumpers? What was it?**

STEVE PROHM: You know, when you make shots life is a lot better. That's just the reality of it. In some games you can break down to really the Baylor game at our place last five possessions. Marial, the shots he made today he missed, a wide-open three in the corner. Babb missed one. Marial missed a layup and a 15 footer and you lose a possession game. When this team is making shots and competing the right way defensively it's a very good basketball team. When you get really those three guys Talen and Tyrese and

Marial 12-23, we're going to be tough to beat if we compete the right way.

**Q. How inspiring was that crowd out there? It was filled with Iowa State fans.**

STEVE PROHM: Yeah, until you really get here there is really nothing like it. As a kid, you go to these conference tournaments and in college, you know, when I worked with a team in college you go to the conference tournaments, but until you come here and experience Iowa State basketball and Big 12 in Kansas City, it's really unreal. It's surreal. This is an 11:30 game on Thursday, so you can imagine what it's going to be like tomorrow night at 6. It's incredible. We showed our guys a hype video from a couple of seasons ago when we were here and just the pep rallies, the hotel. We've got an elite fan base that love their school and love their sports and have a lot of pride in their school. You can see it by the way they come out and support it.

**Q. Do you think Baylor played better defense than maybe the numbers indicate? It looked like you guys had a lot of contested shots today.**

STEVE PROHM: You know, I would have to look at the tape and see. Our biggest thing from an offensive standpoint is more just about us, are we playing in transition? Is the ball being moved the right way? Are we cutting the right way? Are we playing with the right pace? When you're getting stops to hold them to 66 is how long because it means you're getting stops and able to play in transition. Anytime you have an opportunity to play in transition, somebody's defense isn't going to be as good as they are when they're set up in the half-court. Obviously you've got to attack their zone a certain way and attack their man a certain way. We did a lot better job attacking their man today than we have in the two previous games. Some of their physicality in the past has bothered us.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you.