

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 8, 2017



Lon Kruger

Khadeem Lattin

Kameron McGusty

Oklahoma

TCU - 82

Oklahoma - 63

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by the Oklahoma Sooners, Head Coach Lon Kruger and his two student-athletes, Khadeem Lattin and Kameron McGusty. Coach, we will call on you for an opening comment.

LON KRUGER: Ball game from that point where it was tied that under four timeout in the first half from that point on seemed like TCU dictated. They did things they wanted to do. We were reacting next 25 minutes, and, again, I thought they played great. We didn't do the things we needed to do to make it tougher on them.

So Jamie has done a great job. Their club has played well, and we didn't play well enough for what we need to.

Q. Khadeem, can you talk about what a strange year it's been? You come off a Final Four season and all the struggles you've had and maybe what you're looking forward to next year?

KHADEEM LATTIN: It's been an emotional year, for sure. We've had some -- a few woes, but I look forward to -- we grew a lot this year. We have been through some wars and we learned from each one, and I'm proud of my young guys for figuring that out, and I'm excited for what we're going to do next year.

Q. Can you talk about that 29-29 tie and you came out of the timeout and sort of spurred away. Can you remember what happened? What they were doing right? What you guys were doing wrong at that point in the game?

KAMERON MCGUSTY: They were pushing the ball and getting into transition and we weren't executing our sets in their zone and that really hurt us. That's about it.

Q. Khadeem, you guys lost at various points in this season. Looks like you got a point guard coming in. How much did it hurt that you didn't have a consistent point guard play? You had to use two new guys that played well at times but were getting adjusted to this level of basketball.

KHADEEM LATTIN: Well, first I would like to say that Jordan Shepherd and Darrion Strong did the best they could do. They were some really good guys on the court, and they just continued to grow. So hands down to them, always.

It definitely hurt not having Jordan on the court, a vet who knew what to do. He's just always had a knack for figuring it out on the court, but I'm excited for the pieces that we have coming in and the pieces that we already have.

Q. Kameron, can you give us your feelings now that the season is over and the thoughts going into your head and how you're feeling about it?

KAMERON MCGUSTY: I'm proud of our fight looking back on all that we've been through, losing Jordan, losing some tough games, going through a lot of stuff.

I mean, a lot of teams would have gave up by now, but we kept fighting and pushing and we saw the potential we had and at times it showed what we can really do as a team. I love the way we grew as a team and the way we gelled together this year. I've never been on a team closer than the 12, 13 guys that I'm close with now. I just really loved the way we fought.

Q. Khadeem, when a team shoots 60% like TCU did, how much of that is them just making shots and how much of it is your defense lacking, and how tough is it for you as a team to come back when a team is shooting the ball as well as they were today?

KHADEEM LATTIN: Well, yeah, those guys definitely shot the ball well. But we could have done way more to just make 'em tougher shots for them and tougher shot selections. With that being said, when a team is shooting that high of a percentage you have to give it to them. But they made a lot of those off our mistakes.

Q. Kameron, you guys seemed to struggle to find shots at times tonight. They talked about changing defenses. How much of that was a factor?

KAMERON MCGUSTY: I mean, it was a big factor. But I think we definitely can execute a team running a zone and we just didn't do what we needed to do and that's unfortunate, but it happens. We're going to come out next year stronger, ready to fight and hopefully it never has to happen again.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you guys. Questions for Coach Kruger?

Q. Lon, at times you made shots and got things done. But it seemed like, like John said, it didn't come easy all night for you this season, and tonight were you just having to work too hard for good shots?

LON KRUGER: Yeah, but we haven't been a club that's shot it consistently well over the year. At times tonight we shot is well, at times we didn't. They played zone most of the second half. I thought that troubled us. I didn't think we had very good flow, very good movement of the ball. When we did have shots they knocked those down. Had some free throws there in the second half that made it tough to cut into the lead, and I thought TCU played with better rhythm and better action than we did tonight and seemed to have the upper hand especially the last 25 minutes.

Q. Great year last year, a lot of excitement next season with all these guys back plus Trey Young. How do you rationalize this season? Disappointing year, but is it something you can live with because of the development of so many young guys like Kameron and Kristian Doolittle and those guys?

LON KRUGER: Would have liked to have done more, for sure, to get more wins. But these guys, like Khadeem mentioned, kept working, kept plugging, kept making progress. A lot of these young guys got experience. That wasn't the goal in itself. We wanted to win games as well and disappointed not to win games that we had in decent position to win on the year. But this group did grow. They had great attitudes about making progress all year long, and, again, all of 'em back and anxious to get back to work, I'm sure.

THE MODERATOR: Anything else for Coach? Thanks, Coach.