

# Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

**Shaka Smart**  
**Marek Isom**  
**Kerwin Roach**  
**Andrew Jones**

Texas

Texas - 61, Texas Tech - 52

THE MODERATOR: Okay, we are now joined by the Texas Longhorns, Coach Shaka Smart, three student-athletes, Andrew Jones, Kerwin Roach, and Marek Isom. Coach, congratulations. Your thoughts?

SHAKA SMART: I thought the second half our guys really made a decision in the last 10 minutes or so just to be aggressive and attack and did a great job playing together. Helps when a few of your shots go in as opposed to the first half. Really proud of the way our guys hung in there and stayed together even though the game didn't start off great and we had some adversity.

**Q. Where has that been all year?**

ANDREW JONES: We finally started to gel and click tonight. That's finally what happened. We played with more energy and aggressiveness, and we wanted to play for each other. I knew Kerwin was on a roll. In the second half I decided to be going to him, feed the high man.

KERWIN ROACH: We just own it. We was feeling it. We had a connection. We was just running with it.

**Q. Can you talk about when you finally got that driving dunk to go down? You've been trying to get one of those for two years it seems like, but it finally went down and that energized you guys followed by the back-to-back threes. Did you feel that that stretch right there? Could you feel the momentum get goin' in y'all's favor?**

KERWIN ROACH: Definitely. It was part of it. My bench got into it. I was feeling it for my bench. I just let my hair down after all that. I just let it loose.

**Q. Andrew, could you address specifically the wild scramble play. I think Kerwin -- I mean Kendal**



**knocked it loose. You get it off the baseline and kicked it to Snoop on the intentional foul, that sequence there, what happened?**

ANDREW JONES: It was me who tipped the ball out of No. 2's -- it was one of the guard's hands, and we know that he's a nonshooter and he's a driver. So I played off, got my hand on the ball, poked it loose and Kendal aggressively dove for the ball like Coach always said. Once I seen the ball get loose and nobody had it I thought I seen ball and I had to go get it, diving school --

SHAKA SMART: Paid off, huh?

ANDREW JONES: It did. I saw Snoop run the floor and that's one thing we know about each other. If one of us going for the ball and we have it go out, and I knew Snoop was going to be running. So I just threw it ahead.

**Q. Mo, looking at the box score 1 for 13 for you guys from 3-point range, first half, I don't know what the locker room half-time talk was, but how important was it to keep sticking with it and you guys got the ball inside to Jarrett, sticking with the plan despite what happened in the first half?**

MARELK ISOM: We did a good job of finishing the first half off strong and keeping it close. Even though shots weren't falling we played with good energy and we knew that it wasn't going to be like that the whole game. But we wanted to make sure we came out in the second half aggressive on defense and still getting stops, and in the second half we did a really good job of doing that. That ended up leading to a lot of our offense and we got some easy ones, and we finally got a few to go down in the second half.

**Q. Snoop, for any of you guys, did it finally hit you the season was going to be over if you didn't get-goin'?**

KERWIN ROACH: Definitely. Coach said in the locker room this could be our last 20 minutes, and I think when he said that, everyone switched a flip and it was like this is gar and bar. We have got to play for our fans. Probably going to be that last game, so go out there and play for them.

ANDREW JONES: We were not trying to go home. We knew in previous games that we could get Tech.

We didn't play our best at their place; and we just, you know, at halftime we all dug in and started playing harder. One more degree and we started playing for each other.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, guys. We'll let you go back to the locker room. Congratulations. Good luck tomorrow. Questions for Coach?

**Q. Coach, just thoughts about playing West Virginia? You guys exerted a lot of energy tonight. They will take more out of you. What are your thoughts about playing West Virginia?**

SHAKA SMART: Excited. Excited about the opportunity to play 'em. One of the two teams that played just now was going to get the chance to play them and one of them was going to go home. So we'll definitely take the opportunity to play them.

We played them in two games. One at our place, one at their place. I thought we had some stretches where we really played well. They keep coming at you in waves. They've got a toughness about them. That obviously comes from Coach Huggins and his staff and the players they recruit, and I think for us it's about turning the page quickly from this game, and as Snoop said, letting our hair down and being aggressive and playing with nothing to lose.

**Q. Ending the year like you did on that tough stretch what is it when you have to kind of pull up your boot straps and get going after halftime. What's a win like this do to kind of reenergize?**

SHAKA SMART: We've been in a lot of games that we're -- that have played out the way that this game was playing out through the first 30 minutes or so. So it was a similar script. I knew that we were going to have to change the script if we wanted to win. I thought, you know -- obviously a lot of it has to do with if you can make shots. When you're 1-13 the first half that makes it tough from outside.

So we made just enough shots and then we went on a run and our guys got a lot of energy from that run, and I think they gained confidence from that. When we play with confidence we're a different team, and that's what we're going to have to do tomorrow.

**Q. With 10 minutes left, did they finally get it? Did it flash before their eyes that this is going to be it?**

SHAKA SMART: I told those guys, I said, what have you got to lose? You've got nothing to lose. We have a great opportunity to attack. The game is not over. Our guys were saying all the right things, but we've said all the right things before and not necessarily gone out and done what we needed to do.

You know, maybe it was the reality that, you know, this would have been our last game if we didn't really battle and let loose. I thought the play that you mentioned where we played with great aggressiveness, dove on the floor. That was a huge difference maker and that's the way we gotta play. That's the way I want our team to play all the time and obviously we have a long way to go to get to that point. Plays like that were the difference.

**Q. Was there a concerted effort on your guys part to go inside? Coming out off halftime?**

SHAKA SMART: Yes, you know in the first half of the 13 threes, a lot of them were good looks. Eric got stone cold wide-open looks in the first two possessions of the game. But if they're not going, they're not going, and you've got to figure something else out. They made a good adjustment at their place on Jarrett. Instead of letting the ball come in directly they fronted and fought the ball in. So we felt like we could lob it over the top to him a few times, and we did that.

Today it wasn't his best scoring day, but I thought it was impactful that we were able to play through him for a stretch in the second half, and it opened it up for other guys and he also made his free throws.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you and congratulations.