

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 9, 2017

Steve Prohm Deonte Burton Monte Morris Iowa State

Iowa State - 92, Oklahoma State - 83

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by the Iowa State Cyclones, Coach Prohm, his two student-athletes today, Monté Morris and Deonte Burton. Coach, congratulations on your victory. Your thoughts?

STEVE PROHM: It was just a great win. First game is always they say toughest to get, but proud of our guys. We were up 12 first half. They cut it to three. They responded the second half, I think they got it down to 2; but our seniors were great. When our seniors -- they go 21, 14, 13, 17. We're a tough team to beat. So proud of them, and now it's on to the next game. These two guys next to me, they're the catalysts. Deonte is a tough, tough match-up, and Mr. Bob Cousy down there is the best point guard in the country, 21 points, 10 rebounds, 9 assists. I don't know how much tape we're watching with that Bob Cousy Award not to have him as a top-5 guy in the country. He's not going to say it so I just want to say it for him. He would have been a great representative for that award and what it's about, for what he's done for this program on and off the floor. He's going to finish as the national assist-to-turnover ratio in the country, the best ever. Lead Iowa State as an all-time assist leader. His team is in the top 25. Lost 2 NBA guys off his team last year, and he had it all on his shoulders and he's responded in every way.

I'm going to make up my own award for him at the award ceremony at the end of the year, but I told him then I wanted to win this game because he deserves that recognition and for some reason he got slighted on that and it's just disappointing because he would have been an awesome ambassador for that ward.

We beat a really good team, and this is a Sweet 16 match-up, I said that the other day and got tons of respect for Jawun Evans. He is as good as anybody in the country as well and Coach Underwood is one of the elite coaches. So it is a great win and now it's on Kansas or TCU.



Q. Monté, does that lack of recognition inspire you or motivate you?

MONTÉ MORRIS: Definitely. I just got to play with a chip on my shoulder. Obviously I haven't showed enough, so I'm going to take it head on and play with a chip on my shoulder and not talk much and be silent, how I move and just play on the court.

Q. Monté, they were having trouble in terms of getting back in transition and closing out on you guys at the 3-point line. Does that make you want to push it up more? What are the thoughts going on in your head when you see their defense sagging off like that?

MONTÉ MORRIS: We've been working on getting the ball out quick. Coach been pushing me Donovan as far as playing with pace, and Deonte does a great job when we get scored on giving me the ball and going out quick so I can find the shooters. We did that a lot tonight and it hurt 'em. We was making shots and it was good for us.

Q. Monté, did you have any idea you were close to a triple-double in the final minutes of the game?

MONTÉ MORRIS: Yeah. People was telling me, Greg came up to me, GA, and let me know, but you don't play for stats you play for the win. That's extracurricular and I'm just fortunate we got the win tonight.

Q. Deonte, you guys seemed to get a lot of high efficiency shots, a lot of shots right at the basket and a lot of open threes. Is that the game plan? Don't settle for anything mid-range, try to get to the basket for the open three?

DEONTE BURTON: We just -- the game plan was -- well, Coach always tells me, don't settle; so, yes, the game plan was not settling and to be aggressive and the plays panned out.

THE MODERATOR: Guys, we will let you go back to the locker room. Congratulations. We will see you tomorrow. Questions now for Coach?

Q. I know you guys feature the 3-point shot, but 8 out of 9 in the second half that's pretty good?

STEVE PROHM: Yeah, in the first half in that stretch we were up 12. We had a small lineup and we didn't

get a lot of good shots and the couple that we did, I think Naz was short on a couple and Matt Thomas. But I think Matt and Naz shooting in the second half and then Donovan off the bench, those two big 3s were huge. Naz's in the corner were big and Matt kinda got us going and that's the thing we do best is we can space people out and make shots.

We were 12 and 24 from 3 and we were close in rebounding, too many offensive rebounds, but the 3 point shot is a good weapon for us. When we share the ball and make shots we're a very good team and this last ten games our team has improved a lot in a lot of areas.

Q. Steve, would you have minded seeing Monté be a little selfish in that final 30 seconds and try to pick up an assist?

STEVE PROHM: No, not in that -- if it was with a minute -- I told him to hold it and Monté just backed it out and held it and Naz being a great teammate he went and took the turnover for him, but not in that situation. I don't know if it was the Baylor game or the Oklahoma State on senior night, but Monté was a rebound short of a triple-double. He's had a triple-double and then in two games he has been an assist shot and a rebound shot in two out of the last three games.

I love that kid. I'm just really proud of the growth he's made. He's had an unbelievable career here, and he's going to go down as one of the best. I don't think he would have wanted it that way, and I wouldn't wanted to do that to the game and I wouldn't want to do that to Oklahoma State. So if it happened in a minute, minute and a half, that might have been different, but not in that last possession.

Q. When you're playing Oklahoma State that can score in bunches and handle the ball, I think they had only 5 turnovers, do you go in thinking we've got to outscore these guys? It's going to be hard to stop 'em, but we will probably get some stuff on offense?

STEVE PROHM: No, our guys are already thinking offense a lot, so we really preach to them if we can -- the better defensive team will win this game, or have a chance to put themselves in position. Our guys are going to think offense already. That is in their DNA between our four seniors because they can all really score. They can make tough shots. Oklahoma State is very good offensively. We were lucky tonight with some threes, you know. Forte missed a couple. Carroll missed a couple, but we held them to 39% defensive field goal percentage, and that was huge. But run good offense. They are very good in transition. They have got one of the elite top guards in the country

in Jawun Evans who is tough to corral. That's why they play the way they do, and I know they're No. 1 or 2 most efficient offense in the country.

So it's going to be high scoring. I think it's been 96-86, 82-79, or 86-83 last game and this game was in the 90s. But you've got to preach as much defense as you can to our guys if we want to continue to win at this time of the year.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Coach. Good luck tomorrow.