

March 11, 2011



Quarterfinals – Game 5
Dayton - 68
Xavier - 67

An Interview With:

**XAVIER
COACH CHRIS MACK
TERRELL HOLLOWAY
DANTE JACKSON**

MODERATOR: We're joined by Xavier head coach Chris Mack and Xavier student-athletes Dante Jackson and Tu Holloway. We'll ask Chris Mack to give an opening statement and we'll take questions for the student-athletes, dismiss them, and then take questions for coach.

COACH MACK: Obviously a very hard-fought game. Comes as no surprise. We knew that Dayton would come out with a lot of energy. I felt like we played uphill the entire game. I told our kids in the locker room. It doesn't surprise me that we were able to come back to put up an incredible fight against a team that was playing well. But at this time of the year you can't play uphill.

I give Dayton a lot of credit for coming out early and strong and really putting us back on our heels. But to overcome a 18-point deficit is a tough thing to do.

I thought one of the difference-makers in the games was Luke Fabrizius. He hasn't played well necessarily against us in games past, but

tonight -- or today he obviously played extremely well and big free throws down the stretch. Credit to him and credit to their team.

Q. Dante, you talked about, before the game, how important it was to get a big start on them. They came out and got a 21-3 lead. For lack of better words, what happened there, and how were they able build that big lead?

DANTE JACKSON: We didn't come ready, as coach talked about at halftime. We just weren't ready, for whatever reason. They came out they hit some shots and, I mean -- they hit some shots. And their confidence. They were bouncing around and, I mean, we just didn't -- we just didn't come ready and they just made a lot of shots.

Q. Can you talk about how the defended your ball screening differently with five different coverages?

TERRELL HOLLOWAY: When we play Dayton, they always defend the ball screens. They always do a good job. So I didn't think they did anything different. I felt like it was the same as in the past. It was really tough.

Q. Tu, can you talk about that last possession? Were you trying to get a specific shot or just any shot?

TERRELL HOLLOWAY: For the last shot I was actually trying to attack the basket but I know we only had five seconds left. I was trying to catch the ball on the run and try to make a play, but

actually Staten got a hand in there on Kenny (Frease) and they was able slow us down a little bit. But it was a good shot. I actually should have squared up more and try to shoot. I shot that like a one-legged runner.

Q. Tu, can you talk about the shot before that with about 23 seconds left when you got into the lane and got the and-1 there?

TERRELL HOLLOWAY: I was just trying to attack the basket. I believe we were down one or two, whatever the case may be, but I was just trying to attack the basket. We ran like a 1-4 low set, just me trying to bring my man down there and create a play.

Q. Most importantly, you guys have a pretty big tournament coming up. What is the most important part of preparation in the next couple days to get ready for the tournament?

DANTE JACKSON: I'd just say we've got to come to practice ready to practice. No excuses. No explanations. We're going to take whatever we can from this loss and learn from it and just be ready to go whenever we play again.

Q. Tu, how did foul trouble affect the team, do you think?

TERRELL HOLLOWAY: I would say it messed up our rotation a lot. We don't really play too many guards, and some guards that hit the bench a little more were supposed to come in and play. But they're all good. And if that happens, you know, Andrew and Jeff are ready to come in and play.

Q. Chris, can you talk about that last possession and kind of what you wanted Tu to do to head out that last time out?

COACH MACK: Well, we really felt like wherever he was going to be on the floor, they were going to deny him. So it's something we ran at Wake years

ago. Chris Paul won a game at NC State. What we wanted to do was sort of lob the ball into Kenny (Frease) and give Terrell (Holloway) time to, while the ball is in the air, to really get a head of steam going towards the other end of the floor, which he did.

There was just a little bit of a collision there during the handoff so that the timing got a little bit more disrupted than we would have liked. But Terrell had several options -- he would have several options had he caught it clean. And, you know, with 5.8 seconds left there's a lot of time.

I mean, he can go the length of the floor in four seconds. We could have gotten an offensive rebound. You know, a lot of times when there's penetration in those circumstances there's a big flood to help and it leaves unattended bodies to block out. So it wasn't to be. Disappointing, but Tu did what he could.

Q. Coach, what's your coaching strategy when you get down by such a large margin early on? Do you tell the kids, hey, look, there's a lot of time or we want to get to this point with this much time left? What are you telling the kids?

COACH MACK: That it's a long game. We don't ever necessarily set goals, like let's chop it to ten with eight minutes remaining because if you start to do that, you don't meet those goals, your kids start looking around like this isn't going the way we want it to.

So we just stay the course and we continue to emphasize what we feel like, going into the game, would lead us to be successful. And that is offensively, don't get out of your element, continue to move the ball and share the ball, drive it to the box, post it. And on

defense, we have to be a little bit stickier. And that's what we did to get ourselves back in the game.

But deviating and starting to draw up new plays and new defenses in the timeout I think only adds to the uncertainty that your kids already have in those huddles. So we weren't surprised that our kids were able to mount a comeback. Just disappointed we couldn't finish the deal.

Q. Coach, this is probably the most important week coming up here. What is the most important part of preparation? What's the next step for you guys?

COACH MACK: Well, our kids will be excited to play. As tough as it is, you know, or as bad a taste as we have in our mouth right now, in two days when the selection show airs, I'll see a completely different team, one that's excited and is able to turn the page. It's hard to see that right now in this moment, but I've been around enough teams and gone on in the NCAA tournament that we'll move past this and also learn from it.

And hopefully when our kids take the floor Thursday or Friday, we'll play with that sense of understanding what it felt like to lose because at this point, as you all know, lose and go home.

Q. Coach, talk about how Dayton beat you on the boards today.

COACH MACK: Well, we couldn't get any defensive rebounds because they weren't missing. I think it's that simple. They were able to get defensive rebounds because we missed, especially early on. I think if you maybe chart from after the first ten minutes of the game on, I'm sure the rebounding battle was about the same.

Q. The team wasn't ready today at the start. Do you agree with that?

COACH MACK: I think it's easy to say that because you're down 18 to 3, but our kids were ready to go.

You have to give Dayton a lot of credit. They steamrolled in here from something they gave at UMass. The kids had a lot of the confidence, a lot of energy, and they played like it early on. And maybe it's my job or it is my job to make us more ready.

But I thought we were ready. I thought they hit some shots and, you know, again, they were more ready to play.

Q. When you guys played up there in Dayton, you used a lot of zone. Why didn't you play more zone today?

COACH MACK: Well, number one, they were shooting the lights out early on. They were shooting 57 percent from three. The one time we went zone, they pinged it around, got an easy layup. It's not a defense that we practice a lot, and so I'm not going to go out playing a defense that we don't practice a lot. We'll throw it here, we'll throw it out here and there, but we're certainly not going to play long stretches at a time at it.

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