Baylor – 68
South Dakota State – 60

An interview with:

THE MODERATOR: Coach, an opening statement.

COACH DREW: Before the game, I know our guys were prepared for a very good game. South Dakota State coming in, we had a lot of respect. We knew they were a great team and we're pleased to get the win. I think in the beginning of the game we showed our jitters a little bit, then after that, I was very pleased with how we calmed down and got back to playing basketball.

We only had four turnovers in the second half. We rebounded very well. Defensively, especially the last ten minutes of the first half, I thought we guarded well.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the Baylor student-athletes.

Q. Brady, first couple of minutes you're in a zone and you quickly switched out. How does that help the three guards it seemed like that's been effective in the man?

BRADY HESLIP: Definitely. When we go man, we're a feisty team on defense. We all work hard and try to rotate and play for each other. But that team's a really good team overall, and they can really shoot the ball. So once we realized that, we had to switch to man.

Q. Pierre, Coach Drew talked about little nerves there at the beginning. Did you feel that? I guess maybe talk about how you guys kind of answered that early punch from them?

PIERRE JACKSON: Yeah, I was extremely nervous, but once we got down there and warmed up, I was fine.

They came out there swinging, knocking down open shots, knocking down contested threes. Coach called a timeout, and we had to regather ourselves, and we switched to man. A.J. came in and brought the defensive punch that we needed, and we got stops and got the lead.

Q. Brady, when they got up early, coming into this game, this was kind of a sexy pick as an upset. When you guys got down early, was any of that running through your mind?

BRADY HESLIP: No, not at all. We've started games sloppy before this year, and we found the resolve to come back. Today was no different. We knew that was a great team, and we didn't think they were going to come out there and just give the game to us. We were ready for a 40-minute fight.

They really came out swinging and knocking down shots and making some great plays and playing unselfish. So none of that crossed our minds. We knew we were going to regather ourselves and rebound from it.

Q. Quincy, you guys pretty much controlled the boards. Is that something like you all felt you had to do against a smaller team?

QUINCY MILLER: Yes, definitely. We knew we had to rebound. Coming in, that's what Coach Drew is always talking about, rebounding the ball.

Q. Pierre, what's it a struggle particularly early to get the ball inside? Were
Baylor – 68
South Dakota State – 60

An interview with:

THE MODERATOR: Coach, an opening statement, please.
COACH NAGY: Well, just looking at it, number one, you're so worried about their inside players, and their guards really hurt us tonight. We talked after the game, just very frustrated that we didn't play our best.

Baylor had a lot to do with that, but we certainly had a lot of opportunities we let slip away. Thirteen turnovers was too many. What beat us was the first half. They were more physical, and that just shouldn't have happened. That's where we lost the game was in the first half, not the second half.

The thing about it is even though things didn't go well for us and weren't going well for us most of the game, and most of our guys just didn't play at the top of their game, our kids didn't quit. I was really proud of them of that. But, you know, that's of little consolation when you're talking to kids after a game like that.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Griffan, as a senior you guys got off to an incredible start in the game tonight, that had to increase your confidence in the team with that 8-0 jump?
GRIFFAN CALLAHAN: Yeah, it definitely did. We came out really hot, shooting the ball well and getting stops. But we started boxing out and that's where we lost it on the offensive glass. They got some second-chance points, and they just beat us up in the first half.

Q. Nate, you guys had some uncharacteristic turnovers and stuff that you guys aren't maybe used to. How did you handle that? How would you react to how you guys played despite those uncharacteristic turnovers happening to you guys?
NATE WOLTERS: Yeah, I definitely had too many turnovers, and as a team we had too many. When you play a great team like that, they thrive in transition, so that was a big part of the loss.

Q. Nate, what do you think that was? Nerves are going to show up, often they show up early. You didn't have the nerves early, but it seemed that you and Jordan -- did you feel a little nervous as the game was going on?
NATE WOLTERS: I wasn't nervous. I just lost the ball a couple times. There's really nothing you can do about that.

Q. Chad, does that make it tough when you knew you had a big lead early. You looked like you fought back and might have a chance to win at the end, so it was not like you were overwhelmed or anything. Does that make it tougher, the fact that you had a chance to win at the end?
CHAD WHITE: Yeah, I'd say it does a lot. We came into this game expecting to win, and we had our chances. They just beat us up on the rebounds and we lost our opportunity.

Q. Griffan, talk about the crowd. It really probably felt a little bit like a home game. When you guys got going, it was loud in there and they were all for you.
GRIFFAN CALLAHAN: Yeah, it was great. Our fans are great, and our fans got some other fans into it. That helped out and got us going a little bit. But in the end, they were just too much for...
Q. Griffan, aside from giving up the rebounds, you guys seemed to defend their bigs pretty well. Can you talk about what was key to that? I think Jones finished with two points or something?

GRIFFAN CALLAHAN: That was a key coming in. We’ve got to dig really hard on Acy and Jones. That’s what we did. We have to make our guards beat us, and they did beat us. We stuck to our game plan, but their guards got some big shots for them.

Q. I realize it’s tough to look at the long-term now, but is there any way to speak to the experience of playing in NCAA Tournament games? Is that something you’re going to look back on 20 years from now and say I got to play in the big dance? What was that experience like for you?

GRIFFAN CALLAHAN: Oh, yeah. It was a dream for me. I’ve always dreamed of coming here, seeing it on TV. It’s just an amazing experience for me. Yeah, I’ll never forget it. I’m happy to be a part of it.

Q. Chad, how about for you guys? You guys will miss Griff, but you’ve got everybody else coming back. What does this do in terms of fuelling the fire going forward or expectations? How do you think this changes things for you guys to be back?

CHAD WHITE: I don’t know. We’ve got to replace Griff, and Griff’s a role model of mine. We’ve got to have some players step it up. Yeah, our expectations are up now, and I think we have a target on our back now.

Q. Nate, they were the third seed. You guys had a chance to beat them. I know you’re sad now that you lost, but you’ve got to be really proud of the program.

NATE WOLTERS: Yeah, they’re a really good team, and we knew if we shot the ball well, we’d have a chance and we did that early. We just couldn’t make plays down the stretch. We couldn’t get the rebound when we need it or a big shot when we need it, so it was tough luck.

Q. This is a big week for you guys in terms of being here and tons of national publicity. Lots of people know about your program now, and you get a picture on “Sports Illustrated.” What’s that part of it like, sort of being elevated in a way you guys aren’t used to?

NATE WOLTERS: It’s definitely good for the program moving forward. We definitely wanted to win this game, but I think more people know about South Dakota State now, so it definitely helps for the future.


Q. I’m just wondering how you felt your team handled itself in its first-ever experience like this?

COACH NAGY: We weren’t great. I’m proud of them. I really am, because we did play well, and obviously the way the game started it was like, holy cow, we’re really going to handle this. But I was frustrated. I’m not going to lie to you. I was very frustrated and angry at halftime about the way that we competed.

In order for us to beat Baylor, we were going to have to compete better than we did in the first half. We just did not compete. I thought once they settled down, they really whipped us physically.

You can say what you want, but we don’t want that to happen to us. I don’t care who it is. So I leave here with some frustration. I know our players do too. But at the same point, I don’t want to take any credit away from Baylor. This is the best team we’ve ever played in the history of South Dakota State. We know that. We knew it going in. If you’re going to beat 12 on the boards, you’ve got to do better than 10 for 30 from three. We needed to make four more threes, and we had those looks and we’ve made them.

Q. Can you talk about your team’s effort in the second half? It would have been very easy and understandable for them to just fold when they were down by a ton of points, but they just kept fighting back.

NATE WOLTERS: Yeah, they’re a really good team, and we knew if we shot the ball well, we’d have a chance and we did that early. We just couldn’t make plays down the stretch. We couldn’t get the rebound when we need it or a big shot when we need it, so it was tough luck.

Q. Nate, they were the third seed. You guys had a chance to beat them. I know you’re sad now that you lost, but you’ve got to be really proud of the program.

NATE WOLTERS: Yeah, they’re a really good team, and we knew if we shot the ball well, we’d have a chance and we did that early. We just couldn’t make plays down the stretch. We couldn’t get the rebound when we need it or a big shot when we need it, so it was tough luck.

Q. This is a big week for you guys in terms of being here and tons of national publicity. Lots of people know about your program now, and you get a picture on “Sports Illustrated.” What’s that part of it like, sort of being elevated in a way you guys aren’t used to?

NATE WOLTERS: It’s definitely good for the program moving forward. We definitely wanted to win this game, but I think more people know about South Dakota State now, so it definitely helps for the future.


Q. I’m just wondering how you felt your team handled itself in its first-ever experience like this?

COACH NAGY: We weren’t great. I’m proud of them. Really am, because we did play well, and obviously the way the game started it was like, holy cow, we’re really going to handle this. But I was frustrated. I’m not going to lie to you. I was very frustrated and angry at halftime about the way that we competed.

In order for us to beat Baylor, we were going to have to compete better than we did in the first half. We just did not compete. I thought once they settled down, they really whipped us physically.

You can say what you want, but we don’t want that to happen to us. I don’t care who it is. So I leave here with some frustration. I know our players do too. But at the same point, I don’t want to take any credit away from Baylor. This is the best team we’ve ever played in the history of South Dakota State. We know that. We knew it going in. If you’re going to beat 12 on the boards, you’ve got to do better than 10 for 30 from three. We needed to make four more threes, and we had those looks and we’ve made them.
Yeah, the way things were going, we could have easily bowed out and gotten beat by 25, and our kids didn't. They didn't quit and I'm proud of them for that.

Q. Coach, I know you're thinking about this loss. But what does this mean moving ahead? Everybody back, you've got to feel good about getting back here again and things like that.

COACH NAGY: We could have a better year than we had this year and not get back here. We know that. How difficult it is, the stretch, and then it comes down to three days in March. You better be playing well.

It's one of the things I told the players after the games. We've had the experience. It is going to be hard for us to replace Griffan. It just is. His leadership, his toughness, we'll have to have people fill those gaps for us. But that's the way it always works.

I told him, a year from now I want to be standing here celebrating a victory instead of feeling like we're failing.

Q. What was your reaction as the game goes on? Despite the struggles, you get a lay-up, down 4, you miss it. You get a three at the end, and you miss it. What's going on at that point when you have it, it just doesn't fall?

COACH NAGY: It's a little frustration because we had our chances. It wasn't like we didn't have our chances, we had them. I do think we played so few players tonight. We played six most of the game. That probably had something to do with it. It just seemed late when we really needed that three, we just didn't have the legs to put it in.

The altitude can affect you, but Baylor's playing in altitude too, so you don't use that as an excuse. But we just didn't have the legs. When you're shooting threes, you have to have the legs.

Q. Coach, it looked like Nate and some of the other guys were having trouble getting a handle on the ball at times tonight. Is there any way to sort of explain that phenomenon at all?

COACH NAGY: No, not necessarily. There's no way I can explain it. We had a pass in there to Jordan that slipped out of his hands on a lay-up. It did just seem like Nate really struggled to get a handle on the ball tonight, and I don't know why that is. I don't know why that is.

Q. Talk about Jordan's night for the second game in a row. He really struggled. Any idea why? Secondly, although a win certainly has a definite price or a lot of benefits for you, does being picked by a lot of national pundits, having them think well of your program and really giving Baylor a battle, do you think that will pay off in the short term with recruits or whatever?

COACH NAGY: Number one, I don't know why -- I mean, Jordan got off to a great start. He hit that first jumper, and it really felt like -- I think most of all, and I talked to Jordan about it, I think their length bothered him. He's not used to having a 6'10" guy covering that much ground coming off a screen. It just seemed he was unsure as to whether he should shoot it or pump fake and drive.

When he was open I wanted him to shoot it, but he just kept feeling like they were right there. He got the one tipped, and I think that probably bothered him.

Then in terms, I guess I wish Seth Davis would have kind of kept quiet. I think he didn't help us at all. And those things are great. Yes, it's still good for our program that those guys have seen us or know about us or believe in us. It certainly isn't going to hurt that we took Baylor to the wire, because again, you can come into a game and get beaten by 30. We're not going to beat Baylor by 30, but they could beat us by 30.

So the fact that things didn't go well and we hung around and certainly competed, that says something about our kids, and that's not going to hurt recruiting.

Q. Coach, you said before the game Pierre was one of your chief concerns or biggest concerns on Baylor's team. Did that play out? Was he everything you thought?

COACH NAGY: He's tremendous. We've not faced a quicker guard than him. I mean, he's a tremendous, tremendous player. Not only -- the thing about him is he can score. He can score off the dribble. He can get a shot any time he wants it, even as small as he is. But he still involves the other guys. He's a tremendous passer. He's as good a point guard as we've seen this year.

Q. You kind of touched upon what this means to South Dakota State and trying to get back here next year and all that. But is there anyway to sort of generally summarize what
getting to the NCAA Tournament, getting South Dakota State on the lips and in the minds of so many people? Is there any way to summarize what that means to your program?

COACH NAGY: In one word, it's overwhelming, to start with. It's something that most of us aren't used to. At the same point, it's satisfying. Satisfying for our kids. As I think back on it, and I said overwhelming, satisfying would be the number one word. Because when I look back and I think about how hard our kids have worked, and how hard they worked in the weight room and how much they've been in the gym, for that to pay off, as a coach, to see that hard work pays off -- because when you preach it all the time and for it to happen is a very satisfying thing for a coach.

I know the players are satisfied. I know that obviously walking out of here today not winning is no consolation today, but I told them. I said South Dakota State's going to get back here, and they're going to get back here. When they put me in the grave and you're an old man, you're going to be able to say I was on the first team from South Dakota State that went there. Nobody will ever be able to take that from them. It's been very satisfying.

Q. Your thoughts on Chad. Early in the season he was tentative in big games. Tonight he was not at all. Talk about his progression and what you expect from him going forward?

COACH NAGY: Number one, I expected Chad to be our second leading scorer this year and I think some injuries slowed him. But that would be what I expect of him next year. Really what we need right now is for Brayden and Chad to make big jumps on the wing and become better players, become better players off the dribble so that we can really put pressure on people offensively. Because I think that we can do that. I definitely think that we can do that.

Chad is a tremendous player. At 6'6" the way he shoots the basketball, he's a great asset, and he takes pressure off people when he's playing like that. I've always had a great confidence in Chad. When I saw Chad as a sophomore in high school, even then I thought he was the best player in the state, and I've always had a lot of confidence in him. I think if we can get his confidence higher, he can play the point for us. He can pass well. He does so many things very well. He's very versatile.

Q. I know your guys lost, but how much fun has this been for you and your team?

COACH NAGY: Well, losing is not fun for me. I'm not going to lie to you. It's hard for me to think through that right now just because I'm a little frustrated with how we played, even though I'm very proud of our kids.

But it's been, you know, you can't explain the experience. The best thing is to have your kids be able to go through it one time. If you ever get back here with those same kids, it will be a lot easier. It will be less overwhelming.

But for me, the most satisfying thing is to go through it -- not to go through it as a coach, but to go through it with that group of kids who we love very much and who have given us everything that we've asked them to give us.

I just continue to tell them, play like you're loved. Your performance does not -- you do not have to perform well for us to love you. We already love you. So we want you to play freely and play like you're loved.

We shot the ball tonight. We weren't afraid to shoot it. It just didn't go in the basket and things didn't go well for us. But I feel honored to go through it with those kids because they've done so much for me. I don't feel like I've done anything for them. I feel like they've done everything for me.
South Dakota State Student-Athlete Locker Room Quotes

Junior forward Tony Fiegen

*Thoughts on the game.*

“You know we started off really hot and went cold for a while kind of let them get into it. Let them go on a big run at halftime. We ended up down 8 at halftime. Baylor is obviously a good team. They didn’t get a three seed for walking through the whole season. They are a good team, they will probably, I don’t think they are done yet they will probably get a couple more wins.”

*Thoughts on the season as a whole...*

“The season was good we would obviously would have liked to have kept it going a little longer but the NCAA tournament and a conference championship for a mid-major school like us. It was a good season, but obviously we would have liked to have kept playing for a couple more days.”

Sophomore forward Jordan Dykstra

*Thoughts on the game...*

“It was a fun experience while it lasted, obviously we would have liked to have kept it going for a little longer, but we played tough, kept it going when we got down and just couldn’t come away with a victory. We played well.”

*Thoughts on the season as a whole...*

“We made a step we are moving in the right direction. Coach always talks about six win season, 8 win season, now we are at 27 wins. That is a big step for us in the right direction.”
they just kind of denying, denying?

PIERRE JACKSON: Yeah, every team does a scouting report no matter how much time they've got. They knew how we forced the ball in. So our bigs, they collapsed really and had great help-side on the bigs so they couldn't really work and do their best. They did a good defensive job at the start with that.

Q. Quincy, when they started coming back, what kind of held you guys together and allowed you to hold them off there at the end?

QUINCY MILLER: We've been in a lot of games where teams came back. We just kept our composure and that's a sign of us maturing.

Q. Pierre, for some of us that haven't seen them before, wanted to get the inside scoop on the glow-in-the-dark uniforms. I know it's not the first time you've worn them, but what is the story with those?

PIERRE JACKSON: I don't know. I don't know where it came from. I happened to see it in this book in my coach's office, and I got a sneak peak and I liked it. We've got a pretty good record with them, so I really could care less.


Q. Anthony Jones really gave you a big lift in the first half. He hadn't been playing a whole lot, but he really came through.

COACH DREW: I think that's one of our biggest strengths to our team all year long, we said our leadership and our depth. You look at it, if people said coming into the game Quincy Acy's going to have four points. Perry Jones is going to have two points. Are you going to win? Most people would say no. But the great thing is that's where we have other people that can step up.

Anthony Jones, I think every coach would dream of coaching a player like him. When he started, he was a great teammate. When he hasn't played, he's been a great teammate, and he's always put the team first. Those guys are hard to find nowadays. I'm very proud of him and happy for his success tonight. And we have confidence in him, no question about it.

Q. They don't have the size to match up with you inside. What specifically did they do to try to take away that interior?

COACH DREW: If you look at their help-side, they did a tremendous job fronting the post and having a lot of people in the back so you couldn't lob over. When we have outside shots that are open, we like to take them. We wanted to get inside, play inside out. I thought for the first half we were getting to the paint quite a bit. But for some reason we didn't finish as much as we normally do inside. I thought we missed some of those.

Again, how can you tell your team's nervous? Perry has a wide open lay-up to start the game. He hadn't missed a wide open lay-up since, I don't know, non-conference? I think that kind of showed in the beginning of the game just where we were at. I think we had four or five quick turnovers. Then in the second half, we only had four turnovers.

Again, South Dakota State did a tremendous job not being nervous, and coming out and making shots, getting us down. But that's why we've played a tough schedule in the non-conference. That's why we have the Big 12 season to get us ready.

If we were up 8-0, we knew it was going to be a big game. If we were down 8-0, we knew it was going to be a great game. That's what we get in March Madness.

Q. Same thing that I was asking Brady. You guys were kind of the sexy upset pick here this week?

COACH DREW: It wasn't for me (laughing). But go ahead.

Q. From the pundits, so to speak. How do you keep your team away from that and keep them focused on the task?

COACH DREW: Well, I think you'd see why people would say this. South Dakota State's an outstanding team. They're the last team to beat Washington. They beat them by 19 points at their place, and had 32 straight non-conference wins at home, dating back to '08 when Valpo beat them. I'll give Valpo a plug.

But I was going to say, we knew it was going to be a hard-fought game. If you look at it, with our having four of the five starters never playing in the NCAA Tournament, experience tends to tell you what you're going to get from people. Inexperience, you don't know. Again, very pleased that we came back, kept our composure. Any time you win in the NCAA Tournament, Coach is happy.
Q. Coach, you talked about your time at Valpo, that is the last program that made any kind of tournament run and most of them lost in the first round. But even losing in the first round, giving a team like Baylor a run, what does that do for a mid-major like Valpo or South Dakota State?

COACH DREW: I think it will really help their recruiting because nationally a lot of student-athletes will know about them and like their style of play. Coach does a great job. They're fun to watch. Recruits want to play in that kind of style.

They have good kids, it seems like. So I'm sure other people want to be a part of that program. Glad we don't have to play them next year.

Q. How big was Pierre's defense as a catalyst for you guys? You got 23 points off turnovers.

COACH DREW: I think A.J. really did a very good job first and foremost on Wolters. He's a great player, as we all know. Pierre, I thought was active in help side and helped out. But A.J. was tonight one of his better defensive performances.

Then I thought Deuce learned a couple things tonight because he wasn't too effective early on. I think hopefully that will help him prepare for the later opponents we play.