

Texas Tech Men's Basketball Postgame Quotes
Texas Tech vs. No. 1 Kansas- January 9, 2016

Texas Tech Head Coach Tubby Smith

Opening Statement...

"We had some opportunities during tonight's game, but we were going up against the number one team in the nation. They proved tonight why they deserve that title coming off the game they played on Monday (against Oklahoma), I think our guys were ready to play tonight. We played hard. Unfortunately, we just didn't defend very well especially in the second half."

On what Kansas executed well offensively ...

"Kansas executed back-door plays well, that's what Coach Self's team do. We were very lackadaisical in our response. We weren't even overplaying or denying, and we still got back-doored. It's really disappointing to see that happen. Additionally, Kansas executed some flare screens well. We knew they were coming. It seems like we just ran into them twice and didn't switch out. That was disappointing. It's situations like those where our guys need to communicate. I thought we didn't do a very good job of that. The same thing happened at Iowa State. We didn't do a good job of communicating when those flare-screens were being set and pressuring the passer. Communication is something we definitely need to work on."

On his team limiting their turnovers ...

"I think we've been pretty good so far when it comes to taking care of the basketball, and we continued that tonight. Although, there were some moments in the first half where we turned the ball over two or three times in a row. The way I look at it is we shot 52 percent in the second half, but we didn't rebound the ball. We didn't defend. If you don't rebound and you don't defend, you have no chance of winning. That's been our breakdown for the last two games."

On the things his team can build on from tonight's game ...

"I saw a lot in this game that we can build on as a team. I thought Norense Odiase was very coachable. He made the adjustments at halftime and did what we asked him to do. Additionally, I thought our guards did a better job of finding Odiase open and passing the ball rather than dribbling the air out of it. We made some adjustments at halftime, but we were going up against the best team in the country. If you don't execute to perfection, you're going to get exposed especially at both ends of the court."

On his team learning to play together ...

"In the second half, I thought we backed off a little bit. It really takes the wind out of a team when you have a little mental break down and the other team scores easily on a back-door or a wide open three that wasn't contested. Once someone has a breakdown, it takes a lot out of everyone. I saw the toughness our team needs on the backboard in one specific situation where Toddrick Gotcher was on the weak side. I think it might have been Landon Lucus, Toddrick just threw him out of the way. That's what we need to see more of. You've got to fight."

On the crowd's response to the basketball program ...

"We've had two excellent crowds recently: one against Texas and definitely one against Kansas tonight. Having a big crowd at our games is a big help. It's encouraging to the players. Having a large crowd of fans pushes the team to work harder, and it keeps the players in the game."

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Texas Tech Guard Toddrick Gotcher

On the team giving up easy baskets in the second half ...

"That's communication and a lot of breakdowns on defense. Not enough help side defense which we needed, but we'll get better at it."

On what the team needs to do late in games to win ...

"During that time, we just have to come together and get over that hump. On the road at Iowa State, we were down two. They kept scoring, and that just takes togetherness on the defensive end so we can get that one stop."

Texas Tech Guard Justin Gray

On the team's struggles from the free throw line ...

"It's all mental. We know we're a very good free throw shooting team. Unfortunately tonight, we didn't shoot it as well as we should have. Ultimately, that cost us. If we made the free throws, we would've been in the ballgame. Ten missed free throws, that's ten points. It's all mental. We'll get back at it tomorrow and start shooting them up again. We'll make them next game."

On the lessons the team learned about themselves this week ...

"Defensive breakdowns, we can't allow the other team to take advantage of our mistakes. We just have to buckle down and do what Coach Smith asks us to do and communicate. That was a big key in the second half. We miscommunicated, and they made a lot of three's which stretched their lead. Ultimately, we just have to buckle down on defense in the second halves of games. We played really good defense in the first half, but we let up in the second half which was a key to Kansas getting a victory. That's a good team, a very talented team. All praise to them, but I definitely think we could've got this win tonight."

On what went right and what lessons the team can take from tonight's game ...

"I think our overall aggressiveness. We were in their face with a lot of ball pressure. We were just very active on the defensive end in the first half. In the second half, we just had miscommunication on back screens and flare screens. We were overhelping and not closing out correctly. We'll go over that in film and correct that for the next game."