

NOTES & QUOTES

TEXAS 79 BYU 71

MARCH 19, 2026

MODA CENTER

PORTLAND, OREGON

TEAM NOTES

THE STARS ARE BIG AND BRIGHT...

BYU is now 5-3 all-time against the Longhorns.

DIDN'T SURVIVE

BYU dropped to 17-36 all-time in the NCAA Tournament including 5-5 as a six-seed.

NOT IDEAL

The Cougars trailed by nine at halftime, 46-37, after allowing the Longhorns shoot 51.4 percent from the field, 45.5 percent from three and 71.4 percent from the free throw line.

STUCK IN NEUTRAL

After winning seven straight neutral site games, BYU dropped two straight to schools from The Lone Star State.

PLAYER NOTES

THE STARTERS

AJ Dybantsa and Robert Wright III made their 35th start of the season on Thursday which is tied for the eighth-most starts in a single season in program history.

THE FINAL CHAPTER

Dybantsa's 35 points are the second-most by a Cougar in a NCAA Tournament game in program history. He also had the second-most free throws made (12), the third-most field goals made (11), field goal attempts (25) and fourth-most free throws attempted (12).

DYNAMIC DUO

Dybantsa and Wright III became the second duo in program history to combine in scoring 1,500 points joining Jimmer Fredette and Jackson Emery.

Their 1,526 combined points are also the 10th most by a duo in NCAA Division I men's basketball since 1996-97.

JUST THE THREE OF US

Kennard Davis Jr., Dybantsa and Wright III combined to score all 37 of BYU's first half points.

THE PRICE IS (W)RIGHT

With 14 points, Wright III moved into a tie for 20th on the single season scoring list with 632 points this season. The sophomore also moved into a 10th for in assists with 162 and 19th in field goal attempts.

IF IT'S FREE, COUNT ME IN

Dybantsa went a career-best 12-of-12 from the free throw line in the defeat to the Longhorns.

GOOD LUCK STOPPING HIM

AJ Dybantsa finished with 35 points marking the eighth time this season with 30 points tying him with Jimmer Fredette for the fourth-most in program history.

BLOCKED

Keba Keita had three blocks on Thursday giving him 99 for his career which is tied with former teammate Fousseyni Traore for the 11th most all-time. His 58 blocks this season are the seventh-most in a single season in program history.

SEASON HIGHS

Free Throws: Aleksej Kostic (2)

Steals: Khadim Mboup (2)

CAREER HIGHS

Free Throws: Aleksej Kostic (2)

Steals: Khadim Mboup (2)

NOTES & QUOTES

HEAD COACH KEVIN YOUNG

Opening Statement

"Yeah, congrats to Texas. They played a hard-fought game. Credit to Coach Miller. For them to play in the First Four, travel out here and do all the things that they did, that's impressive. They deserve all the credit. They made all the plays and did a great job."

"I thought for our guys, I was disappointed in our first half defensive effort and intensity and rebounding. I thought that's where the game -- we knew the game was going to get won there. That's all we talked about, was the rebounding kind of coming into the game. That was a little disappointing. Not a little, a lot disappointing."

"Then I thought our guys fought their tails off in the second half. In a lot of ways it was a microcosm of our season. We faced a lot of challenges this year, just like we did in this game. We battled back. That's the mantra of this group. They never quit. I'm really proud of the group."

Rebounding in the first half

"It hurts obviously seeing Richie over there in his street clothes. He's been the heart and soul of our program since I took this job. I love him. It's awesome he's up here with these two guys."

"Absolutely. Our guys heard about it at halftime. Like I say, it was just super disappointing. We've been a really good rebounding team for most of the year, and in particular in our sort of resurgence at the end of the season."

"We knew how good he was. You watch the tape, it's pretty obvious to see it. We challenged our bigs at halftime, not just the bigs, but the guards, too. I thought we did a much better job in the second half."

"But yes, extremely disappointing that he basically manhandled our whole team in the first half."

I mean, disappointing, no question about it. I mean, we wanted to advance in this tournament. But so does everybody else. That's why you play the game. Like I said, that's why you got to give Texas credit.

Summary of season

"In terms of AJ, I think I'll probably look back in 20 years and just have a lot of joy that I was able to be a part of his story, and to do it with guys like Rob Wright who's been tremendous all year. It's been fun watching these two guys, really, all three of threes guys come together."

"It is what it is. At one point, this was the highest-scoring trio in college basketball. It's fun for me as a coach to sit back and watch three really good individual talents all come together and figure out how to play off of each other."

"Obviously AJ gets a lot of the headlines, rightfully so. I thought there were moments in tonight's game where he looked like that Portland Trailblazer floor should have been down there. He looked like an NBA player because of the stuff he was able to do on the court. Him playing off of Rob, I thought their togetherness really grew throughout the season."

"But in terms of AJ coming to BYU, man, it's been tremendous. Egor came in and set the foundation. AJ kind of took the torch. It's cool to hear him say how much he's enjoyed being here. He's going to be a Cougar for life. That's what is awesome."

"That's what I told the guys in the locker room. That's probably my favorite thing about coaching, is you get a chance to make relationships for life. They go far beyond the court. Just glad that AJ is part of that, and so are these two other guys."

AJ DYBANTSA

Time at BYU

"I love this place. I'm happy I chose here. I definitely made the right decision. I knew coming in I made the right decision. Ever since my visit with the coaching staff, how just a family atmosphere, talking to the academic adviser, everything about this place, I'm just happy."

"As far as the season, it's tough dealing with that type of adversity, but I'd rather do it with nobody else."

Plan for the next few weeks

"Just talk to my family. My mom ultimately. She kind of is the big boss. She kind of makes the decisions in life (smiling). My family, I mean, just talk to her, see what she says. Y'all will get an answer in the next couple weeks."

RICHIE SAUNDERS

Memories of BYU

"It's been a dream come true. I mean, winning here has been one of my just... Looking back, I know for a very long time I'll remember winning here, just the joy that that brought me to be able to put on this uniform."

"I think last year, that run was one of my core memories along with the Iowa State game. Don't know if you remember that. That was a really fun one."

"Still trying to look back on this year and work through those emotions and stuff. But this has been a dream come true. I've loved it."