

**March 16, 2012**



Cincinnati – 65  
Texas – 59

An interview with:



THE MODERATOR: We'll begin with an opening comment from Coach Barnes, and then we'll take questions for the student athletes.

COACH BARNES: We're disappointed that -- this team worked hard all year, and we were just inept at the start of the game. They came out very aggressive, and we turned the ball over and then we started pressing a little bit and missed a lot of shots at the rim when we were able to get the ball up there and shoot it and -- but we fought back, and as a coaching staff, we kept telling our guys we've been here before and we knew we would come back in the game and we did that.

Defensively I thought we played hard throughout, but we tied the game and actually had two chances to take the lead and sort of kind of where our season has been, turnover, not a very good shot.

But I'm really proud of the fact that these guys fought. Cincinnati played hard, did a good job. We put ourselves back in position to win the game and we didn't. But I'm proud of this group because where we started a year ago, they've come a long way. They earned the right to be here, and we know that we have to play better, we didn't, but again, congratulations to Cincinnati.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student athletes.

**Q. J'Covan, that three-pointer you put up when it was 49, 46 would have given you**

**guys a lot of momentum, but do you feel like you rushed it a little bit on that shot?**

J'COVAN BROWN: Yeah, I thought I did. You know, instead of just catching and shooting the first, you know, I passed open good look, the shot they gave me, and just made it hard on myself, you know. My legs had something to do with that, too. I rushed the shot. Just a bad shot.

**Q. J'Covan, you guys were pretty aggressive coming back, moving the ball, making shots. It seemed like you slowed down again once you caught up and got into some of the same bad habits. Why was that?**

J'COVAN BROWN: You know, we just started -- they got into us. We were a little frustrated. We just hadn't adjusted coming out in the second half. Move the ball like coach said and just make the extra pass. When we did that, you know, it just -- got us back in the game. It just started going their way.

**Q. This is a question for Clint. Two things: One, Yancy Gates is a large human being and obviously difficult to play against. Can you just talk about the challenges his physicality presents; and the second question about Yancy is, when he took that 17-foot fade-away that put them up 6 with about two minutes to go, is that a shot you want him to take?**

CLINT CHAPMAN: You know, our game plan was we got to keep him off the boards, because he's a great offensive rebounder. Early in the game he was working on backing me down, playing real physical, so the spin move he made in the second half was something I just wasn't ready for. You know, obviously he's got a lot to his game. He's a great player, and then he took that 15-footer a couple times, but we wanted him -- we wanted to force that shot, and I tried to contest it but, you know, credit goes to him. He knocked the shot down.

**Q. Clint, you sat out last year to come back this year, fifth-year senior, bit of an up-and-down year. You guys get in the tournament, young team. Just talk about your senior year, I mean everything you guys went through and now that your career is over, looking back on your four, five years, how did everything go?**

CLINT CHAPMAN: I'm just proud to be able to -- I was just -- I'm proud to be able to say that I played for this program because, you know, it's just special thing to be a part of this team and this program and I think this year a lot people thought, you know -- they really didn't think that much of us. They didn't have us in the tournament, stuff like that. We fought all year and grew as a team, and we kept doing the things that, you know, Texas does, and we played defense and we fought every game, and I think I'm just proud to be part of a group of guys that said they weren't going to give up even, though a lot of people gave up on us.

**Q. J'Covan, you carried much of the offensive burden for your team all season long. When a game is coming down to the wire and the season is on the line, do you feel extra pressure that the scoring has to come from you in that situation?**

J'COVAN BROWN: I don't think so. Chapman, Sheldon done, all those guys did help us score the basketball, but some nights they're not hitting shots and I am, you know, but which you could tell tonight and they finally came through, you know, big time when I wasn't hitting shots.

I just told them keep being aggressive. You could see those guys put up some numbers for UT. The game didn't turn out how we wanted to, but I'm just going the play basketball. Whatever coach wanted me to do, I was going to do it.

**Q. This is for J'Covan and for Clint. Offensive shooters all go cold, but for it to be that much of a drought that long collectively, have either of you ever experienced that sort of thing on any level?**

J'COVAN BROWN: No. We just have to fight through adversity. We've been doing it all year. We wasn't making shots. Some of the shots were good looks and coach just said keeping shooting it. I guess, you know, I don't remember who it was shot the free throws and hit both of them, that kind got us going to see the ball going in the net. But, we've been fighting through adversity

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all year. We didn't let that get to us. We just kept fighting.

CLINT CHAPMAN: I have to agree with what J'Covan said. We've been through this situation plenty of times. I think, you know, coach said it best in the huddle. We've been down 10 points with four minutes left and came back and won. It's something we've been used to. Obviously in the first half, that drought isn't something that we've experienced as a team, but, you know, fighting back is -- coming back and getting the game close was something that we've done multiple times this year.

**Q. J'Covan, do you think this was your last game in a Longhorn uniform?**

J'COVAN BROWN: I'm not going to answer that question. I got a season to worry about next year. I'll make the decision, talk to the coach and talk to my parents and see what the best thing is for me. I'm not worrying about moving on right now. I'm just worrying about these six freshman that we have in the locker room and the two seniors that gave their all. I'm going to cherish this moment right now.

THE MODERATOR: We have time for about two more questions for the student athletes. Any more questions? All right. Thank you, guys.

**Q. Rick, what happened from your view with the offense in the last few minutes after you caught up being aggressively? Did you want them to milk clock, did they just go back into the usual?**

COACH BARNES: No. Actually when we got back in the game, I called time out just to make sure they understood we're right where we need to be right now; now it's a matter of execution, that we've got to take care of the basketball. The game was going -- definitely they were back on their heels. They were probably looking at like -- they were worried about the score more than we were, but we came down and, you know, threw it out of bounds, got it stripped, took a bad shot and -- no, we weren't. They went zone, but they did that early.

We really tried to stay with the same thing, because we ran it and we wanted J'Covan with the ball, not so much maybe to score but make the extra pass. We were really playing well, that's exactly what it got down to; we were making the extra pass, whether inside out, perimeter,

perimeter pass, and when -- but you don't give yourself a chance.

Now, if you throw it out of bounds or get stripped, there's just not an opportunity there, but no, we were wanting to continue to attack.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions?

**Q. Rick, with all the players you lost to the NBA last year and all the freshmen you had, do you think this is one of the best coaching jobs you've had over your career?**

COACH BARNES: Well, anything that we do at Texas from a coaching standpoint is a we, team thing. I think I've got the best coaching staff in the country, and I do know that our staff has worked hard, we always work hard and always try to get better. We knew coming into this year that this would not be a one-year proposition with this team simply because we had six freshmen, total of nine recruited student athletes, and we knew we had to try to establish a mentality, and one thing defensively we've gotten to where I think the guys coming back understand that, we have to get better, sure. They worked hard. They've been resilient, maybe as resilient as any team we've had and in a long time simply because we worked long and hard for a long time because we're trying to build something.

And I told them after the game, we'll never take for granted being in this tournament. It's a good year to get here, but to make a great year, you got to win it. And I told them if we will go back and work as hard in the spring as Clint Chapman and Alexis Wangmene and J'Covan Brown worked last spring, we'll be okay.

But as a staff, again, I think as a staff we worked hard at it and put a lot of time into it as we do, but we're all disappointed right now because I really felt we should win this game.

**Q. Coach, Sheldon and Julien really seemed to spark your guys come back in the second half once they started hitting jump shots. How much did you need that from those guys and how high of a ceiling does a player like Sheldon have?**

COACH BARNES: That's what we wanted all year. That's been the most difficult thing with this team is finding a consistent second and third scorer, and those two guys are extremely talented and -- but they're just learning how to play. I mean, Sheldon, you look at his physical ability, it's off the charts. And they've improved so much, both of them, and I think both of those guys have a

great future and -- because they work at it. They want to be good. Again, that's what we wanted all year.

We've never wanted to be a one-man offensive team. We wanted to move the ball, but what happened early in the first half is kind of what the season has been about, we'd get down, one guy would try to do it by himself as opposed to continuing to move the ball.

I told people before, if you watch us in practice play offense, you'd never think that we would play offense like we did the first half. But that's kind of what we've gone through all year and during the game when coaches were talking there and we were way down, and as a coach I said we know this is how we win. We come back and we knew we would come back. I mean that with my whole heart. We knew we would come back in that game and we did and, you know, it was a matter of finishing it and we didn't.

THE MODERATOR: Other questions? All right. Thank you coach.

COACH BARNES: Thank you.

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THE MODERATOR: We'll begin with Coach Cronin.

COACH CRONIN: First of all, I want to congratulate Texas on their season. I've got great admiration for Coach Barnes. What they accomplished this year with the multitude of freshmen that they play is impressive. They made a great comeback today.

Fortunately, the guys to my left just refused to lose. We've been in so many battles in the Big East over the last three and four years with these guys that I think it served us well. We probably are more comfortable playing if it's a close game. We're not really -- we don't know how to play with those big leads. They don't really happen in Big East basketball. So give Texas credit. Great win for our team.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student athletes.

**Q. Parker, I want to ask you about, was it an ankle injury or something during the game. Is it okay going forward?**

JAUQUON PARKER: I'm fine. Like a minor injury. I just slipped or something. I'm fine.

**Q. Any one of you three. Just a tidal wave of emotion as always happens in March here and the game all of a sudden is tied at 52. What gave you guys the confidence to kind of play through that as if what happened just**

**didn't happen, a 19-point lead squandered to 52-52?**

YANCY GATES: Kind of like Coach Cronin said, in the Big East, all the games end that way, close, one, two points. So you know, once the lead went away, we knew we had to pick our defense back up, which we thrive with is our defense. So we was able to get some big stops down the stretch and convert those into baskets.

You know, once we picked up and got that four-point lead back, we got pretty much back comfortable.

**Q. Cashmere, early in the years you guys had a tendency at times to let your offense impact your defense, but through this late season run, even when you guys have been cold from three, you still kind of pushed forward. Just talk about that confidence now, even when the shots aren't falling, you guys the play well.**

CASHMERE WRIGHT: Coach Cronin just emphasized every day the reason why we win. We don't win because of offense, we win because of our defense. Whether we make shots or not really don't matter as long as we play the defense hard and play with our heart, we're all right.

**Q. This is for Yancy. With the game tied, you went down inside, made that basket. Later, shortly after that, you had that jumper from just inside the three-point arc. What was going through your head on those plays? You guys, like you said, got some defensive stops, but you guys seemed to kind of rise to the occasion when you had to.**

YANCY GATES: You know, we was missing, you know, a lot of open jump shots, you know, down that stretch when Texas was making the run. We ran the plays to roll me into the front of the rim, and I was able to get open on the hook shot I made, and I was able to be right in front rim, which made it an easier shot for me, and really on the jump shot, it was just confidence, you know,

from even my teammates telling me to shoot it earlier in the game, where early in the season I wouldn't have shot that.

So, you know, confidence was built up off of that, and I had just scored and even Cashmere's layup kind of gave up separation. You know, that kind of gave me the confidence to build and rise up and make that shot.

**Q. Cashmere, talk about that layup. You just drove straight in. Were you surprised to see that at that the moment?**

CASHMERE WRIGHT: I think like the big man was face-guarding Yancy so it makes it a lot easier when the big man worries so much about him. He's one-on-one with me and my man. Coach Cronin always tells me believe in yourself and go do what you can do.

**Q. JaQuon, you and Dion and Ge'Lawn all split time on J'Covan Brown. Talk about keeping him in check, even though he got going a little bit at times, but just talk about that effort to keep him in check.**

JAQUON PARKER: We know he's a tough player, so we know we just weren't going to completely shut him down. In practice and stuff, coach always told us that it got to be more than one of us just to try to shut him down. Just going to try to play hard against him. We knew he was going to get his. We just have to shut down all the rest of the other players.

THE MODERATOR: Other questions?

**Q. For Yancy, you touched on earlier hitting a couple shots towards the end of the game. How much of a sense of urgency was there for you to get something done to keep Texas from winning this game?**

YANCY GATES: It was a big sense of urgency. I was able to get, you know, a good position, you know, and my teammates was able to deliver the ball right on time to do that, but, like I say, basically fed off our defense. We got those stops, and we knew we had to turn those stops into some points, you know, in order to win the game, and I was able to help contribute to do that.

THE MODERATOR: Anyone else? Any other questions?

**Q. This is just a general one for all you guys, if you don't mind. Pulling out a close game like this in the first round, how much does that help you guys prepare you for the**

**next game? You guys know you'll see some tests in this tournament. Already getting in the mindset of having to battle, does that help?**

YANCY GATES: I think it helps a lot, because in order to advance at this time, you're going to be playing the best teams, so you have to be able to, you know, win the games in the last two, three minutes.

So, you know, by us being able to do that tonight -- today, I think gives us the confidence, you know, as we move on, you know, to be able when the games get close and tight be able to, you know, focus and step up and make plays that are at the end of the stretch of the game.

THE MODERATOR: JaQuon, talk about winning a close game.

JAQUON PARKER: It definitely helps us, because it gives us experience throughout the rest of the games. Winning close games I think is real good than blowing people out. So, I think I prefer a close game anyway. It's good for us.

CASHMERE WRIGHT: Close games just like gets you ready for the next game. Every game is not going to be easy or be a blowout. So, you know, you just get ready. You got to be ready to finish the game.

THE MODERATOR: Time for one or two more if there's anyone else. That's it. All right. Thank you guys. Questions for Coach Cronin anyone.

**Q. Coach, with the man defense the way it was the entire game, talk about switching it up on them and going to the 2-3 zone late in the second half.**

COACH CRONIN: We went to it earlier. They had two 3's, and in retrospect I wish I would have stayed in it, because I was concerned with our pick-and-roll defense against their four-guard offense. They made the right pass. You got to give them all the credit. It's not like we weren't trying.

They did a great job adjusting. We saw them do that when they had the injury. I can't say is it -- is it -- I can't say his name. They went to the four-guard thing against Missouri when they were behind and did it against Iowa State. It's tough to deal with when you have four guys spreading you out making shots.

So, you know, we're a team that's comfortable changing defenses. So, I really think I should have probably just stayed in the zone and



covered the 3-point line out of the zone in retrospect and gotten Yancy out of the game a little bit earlier. I let him get too tired.

**Q. Mick, Yancy sat up there and said he would not have had the comfort to take that shot earlier this year. We've seen him take shots like that a lot over his career. Why do you think he said that for one, and, two, what did it say about him at this stage of his career that he did take that shot?**

COACH CRONIN: You know, he's come a long ways. I would say -- he's taken that shot but maybe not at that time, you know, with the time and scoring and game on the line to have the confidence to make the 17-footer. The most important one was that he got fouled, didn't get a call but finished on the jump hook in the paint to give us the lead.

He's matured so much as a player. I just got the make sure I get him rest. That's the biggest issue at times. In the second half, I should have got him out earlier and I didn't get him early rest. I let him get too tired. That was a big problem.

**Q. You guys did a great job on J'Covan Brown, Dion, and JaQuon in particular, what specifically were you able to do just to prevent him from getting shots up a little bit?**

COACH CRONIN: We tried to limit his touches as much as possible and make sure that he always saw that there was help very close, that if he put it on the ground and tried to attack the basket, he wasn't going to get there, that we had help waiting on him.

We wanted to turn him into a jump shooter. We lost him in the 2-3 zone one time when one of our freshman gave him a 3. When a guy is as good as him on offense, all you can hope is to make it tough on him and try to get him to take tough jump shots. Got to limit his free throws. He's a guy that does a great job getting to the foul line. Four free throws is low for him on attempts. But the kids did a great job, especially in the first half with the game plan. They made a great adjustment with their pick and roll and their four-guard offense.

**Q. Coach, you got some good minutes off the bench in the first half. Just talk about guys like Sanders and Ge'Lawn and Shaq and what they were able to give you through the first 20 minutes.**

COACH CRONIN: It was big. Our game plan was very evident that we were trying to come out. It was evident we were trying to come out and pressure the ball. They got a lot of the freshmen first time in the tournament. I thought we came out sleepwalking against Louisville, so with the early start I wanted to come out pressuring the ball, denying, trying to get our deflections, get some easy baskets, and really take the game to them early on with our physicality and our intensity.

The kids did a great job with that. They were -- they were excellent. If you're going to do that, you got to be committed to playing your bench. Jermaine Sanders had a great week of practice. Shaq has been rebounding, Shaq rebounds for us. That's one thing he does. I thought Ge'Lawn was too timid, wasn't looking at the rim at all. As I told him and Jeremiah, I said, "You guys get in the game Sunday, you got to look to play offense." We can't be out there playing four on five. I try to make sure I give my players confidence. They got to believe in what they're capable of on the offensive end.

**Q. Coach, you talked about this just a few seconds ago, but how much do you think the physicality really did play a difference when they were going through that cold spell, especially on the boards when none of those tip-ins were easy for them?**

COACH CRONIN: That's a big pet peeve of mine. I'm glad they were tipping it. When we try tipping it, we miss it as well. Those were all big plays. In the first half, they missed 21 shots and they only had -- they had zero second-chance points. That was a big key to why we had the lead.

You know, I thought our intensity was tremendous to start the game, and then I thought Texas did a great job of not giving up, which doesn't surprise me because I know Coach Barnes is one of the best coaches in the country.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions?

**Q. Coach, you guy's mid season seems like you're playing, you said several times earlier in the year that you're playing not just for the good ole college try, you got big ambitions. Do you feel your players have entirely bought in on going further than just what last year was a nice run?**

COACH CRONIN: You know, there's no celebrating in the locker room, you know. It's a

great win. We knew Texas was very, very dangerous because of the competition. You know they just beat Iowa State and dominated UConn last night.

So it was a good win, but you got to have a workmanlike approach and whatever happens in the Florida State, St. Bonaventure game, Sunday we're going to have to come out ready to play. We're not looking to celebrate and relax and be in spring break mode.

You're trying to build a program, there's steps you need to take. And we've taken a lot of steps, really every step, because we started from scratch. Advancing in the NCAA Tournament is what it's all about. Trying to keep my guys focused and let them know I believe in their talent. I believe in what they're capable of, especially Cashmere Wright. He's got tremendous talent. He got his third foul, a big blow. I probably left him out a little too long. He's the key for us.

THE MODERATOR: Anyone else? All right. Thank you, Coach.

COACH CRONIN: Thanks.

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