

March 13, 2015



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An Interview With:

**COACH PATRICK CHAMBERS
D.J. NEWBILL
ROSS TRAVIS**

COACH CHAMBERS: Proud of my team. Really competed to the end. Three days, three games in the Big Ten is very difficult, and the way these guys competed today in the second half, they gave it everything they had, and I think this is a stepping-stone for our program, and I think they have everything to do with it, the legacy that this group has left for Penn State and Penn State basketball. I think you're going to see it for a long time because this was a critical step in the process of becoming an elite basketball team, and it's because of them.

Q. How much of a factor was fatigue in the final five minutes?

DJ NEWBILL: I don't think fatigue played a role in how we played in the final minutes.

ROSS TRAVIS: I don't think fatigue played a role at all. Minutes are winding down and adrenaline kicks in.

Q. D.J., you talked the last couple days about continuing to play in this uniform, and now that you guys are out of the tournament here, what can you look back on about how you career wrapped up?

DJ NEWBILL: I competed every game, every practice, every workout, from the summers to the fall to the winter, and that's why I look at my career and just know that I gave it my all. I think everyone around me knows that, too.

Q. D.J., how good of a defender is Ray Davis, and how did you feel about the way they played defense on you today in particular?

DJ NEWBILL: That team as a whole is a great defensive team. They're excellent defending. I think he played me great. They did limit my good looks. They made sure almost every shot was contested. I give them credit.

Q. You mentioned the stepping-stone for your program these last three days. What are the specific things that you guys learned and that you learned as a head coach?

COACH CHAMBERS: Oh, man, what an incredible year. You know, as far as our leaders and our staff, you know, it's never going to be 70 and sunny, and we're going to go through some difficult times, which we did. I learned that our program has got a lot of heart. It's got a lot of grit and work ethic. We have a terrific attitude, because you don't come into the Big Ten Tournament, win two games and give yourself a chance in the third game three days in a row in the Big Ten without all those characteristics, and we can build off that. It's an incredible foundation.

Those guys are hurting in there. There's not a dry eye. That means we're headed in the right direction because when you're invested, it hurts. There's tears. There's pain. There's suffering when you're invested. When you're not invested, it's easy. Those guys are invested. Very different.

Q. I know Ross and D.J. obviously said that fatigue wasn't a factor, but it seemed like a lot of loose balls went to Purdue and a lot of the shots were short. Did you notice any signs of fatigue in the last five minutes of your players?

COACH CHAMBERS: That's why I burned the quick time-out in the second half. I thought we were a little bit slow to start, and I knew it was a full time out, so I wanted to give them a

little bit more of a break. But during the game I'm not going to talk about fatigue or being tired. We're just going to -- positive reinforcement, keep fighting, keep battling, dig deeper, little things like that. We only gave up five in the first half, obviously seven in the second, it hurt. Octeus had huge rebounds down the stretch. Came back to get 20 for the first night, 19, did a much better job with 12, but they had three in a row, and that really hurt at that time at that point in the game.

Q. Talk about what the younger players learned from this tournament and battling like this, and what's it say for the future of the program?

COACH CHAMBERS: Well, they're going to learn they have to play hard every possession and mature and grow. We all want freshmen to be seniors and we want to speed up the process here. It's a process. Shep is going to learn a lot from the last two days, Geno Thorpe is going to learn a lot, how to compete every day and focus on what you can control. There's certain things you can't control, but you can control your effort and your attitude and continue to play hard, and I think that's what they'll learn the most.

I'm excited for the off-season already. I know that sounds crazy because I probably need some time off, but I know these kids want to get back to work because they're disappointed with our conference record and disappointed with losing today when you're right there, to take it and grab it and head into the weekend. It's what we wanted to do.

Q. How do you handle the frustration of being so close all year long? You look, there's not much difference between you and Maryland in terms of points scored, your games with them, the close losses, but how do you handle that frustration and can you channel it and build on it?

COACH CHAMBERS: First, I would say you need a great AD to support you. That's one. Second I would say you need a great wife at home who loves you up. And third, I would say a great attitude. And that's what Jay Wright has taught me. That's what my life has taught me. Keep a great attitude, make sure these kids have a great attitude. Keep it exciting and fun and be creative in your ways of teaching and getting better and driving them, understanding that we're close, and there's no turning back.

And I need to get better. There's a lot of situational things today I was disappointed with that I need to continue to coach and do a better job, and I'll reevaluate myself. You're always learning as a young coach, you're always trying to get better, and I'll do that, but it's definitely my attitude, I think, that gets me through these tough times.

Q. On Wednesday you talked about Philly toughness leading you into that win over Nebraska. Do you think the entire team embraced that mentality during this run?

COACH CHAMBERS: Yeah, I would say -- Ross is from Minnesota, so I can't quite coin that phrase. That's not fair to him, and Geno is from Pittsburgh, so I would say toughness is definitely something we're about, and everybody says you can't, you won't, you're not good enough, you name it. Throughout the Big Ten season, we've heard it. I've heard it. And we just kept plugging along, and that's called toughness.

Again, it's easy to do when you're 12-1 like we were in the non-conference, but we knew that there were some weaknesses. We knew. These kids are tough. They're resilient. Those two guys who just sat to my right, they're going to be super successful in life. They're going to be really successful because they know how to handle adversity and challenges.

Q. Will you guys accept a postseason bid if given one?

COACH CHAMBERS: I'll sit down with Sandy Barbour tonight or tomorrow and we'll discuss it and see what's best for the program, see what's best for these players and go from there. But that was the goal, and hopefully something comes our way.

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