

March 16, 2012



Purdue – 72
Saint Mary's – 69

An interview with:



THE MODERATOR: Purdue Boilermakers are with us. We will ask for an opening statement, then we will have questions.

COACH PAINTER: Well first of all we're very grateful to get this victory. Anytime you play a great team like St. Mary's and have a 13-point lead you've got to put 'em away and we weren't able to do that.

When you get a big lead like that and you let somebody take the lead back from you it's normally difficult to win the game. I don't know why that is, maybe it's just a feeling you have as a coach. But give our guys credit for stepping up and making plays and making free-throws. These three guys were huge tonight. Obviously it was a team effort and we had some things go against us and for us in that last two, three minutes, but we stepped up and made plays and especially knocked down our free-throws. It's been an Achilles for us this year making free-throws so it was great to see our guys step up and knock them down when they counted. St. Mary's is great. Randy Bennett is a heck of a coach and they do an unbelievable job and I thought Terone did a great job -- I thought the best thing he did was guard Matthew Dellavedova and make it difficult for him. He's a great, great player, probably the toughest point guard we have faced all season in terms of passing the basketball. Like I said, we're happy to advance and beat a very good team in St. Mary's.

Q. Terone, last month you have expanded your role offensively, talk about how you feel about your play over the last month and your development.

TERONE JOHNSON: I feel like lately I had an unbelievable confidence in my game and also the team has that confidence, too, just for me to stay aggressive.

I feel like every play, every time you come to the bench, Coach Painter says stay aggressive whether I'm making or missing shots.

Q. Lew, and Rob, would each of you talk about your two free-throws, yourself with 22.8 seconds and Rob with 8.7 seconds? Talk about your mind set approaching those free-throws.

LEWIS JACKSON: As a senior, you think about how as a little kid you live in the moment. You count down you are at the free-throw line you need both free-throws and knowing my career lies in my hands. Having that confidence and Rob said in the huddle, "Lewis is going to knock these down, we're going to get this win," probably gave me the most confidence going up to the line.

ROBBIE HUMMEL: I don't know if it was a time-out or what it was but I know we came out to get ready to throw it in and Lewis said "we've got to get the ball." With that being said, D.J. threw it in, made a good pass and I was fortunate to make the shots.

Q. Terone and Lew, Coach Painter said they were so concerned about when you guys went "small" they were concerned about your shooters and you gotta pick your poison against Purdue. Talk about how you were able to penetrate and get the ball to the rim tonight and how important that was.

LEWIS JACKSON: I think you got to credit our shooters, Rob, D.J., Ron, they do a great job of spacing the floor. Now teams are so worried about that and even if you sag me and Terone, we can shoot the jump shot. We understand how to get by

players and once we get a couple of layups, they're worrying about that. So most teams don't want to give up the three because you can go up so much quicker but it allows us to get our confidence going and keep attacking.

TERONE JOHNSON: Basically the same thing Lew said. You have to give credit to the shooters, guys standing in the perimeter. It opens up the lane and then if we make some, it opens up things for the shooters, because they have to pick their poison, and at the end of the day, it's whoever they choose.

Q. Rob, Coach Bennett talked about how you guys with the way you play defense you give up three-point looks and they got some looks down the stretch there. Talk about your defensive philosophy and what is it about you do allow the three-point looks.

ROBBIE HUMMEL: That's a scouting report thing. We thought with a guy like Terone Johnson who is so good driving the basketball we would be better off playing off them and defending against the drive. He still scored a bunch of points tonight. He's a very good player but I thought the coaches did a good job, so we had a good idea of what St. Mary's was going to do. I thought we executed that game plan but we gave up some three-point shots and they missed them tonight.

Q. You guys built the lead and they kept coming. How did you manage to maintain your composure, what kinds of things were you saying to each other in the huddle?

ROBBIE HUMMEL: I thought everybody that was on the court did a good job of huddling up, keeping our composure. You knew they were going to make a run, all good teams do, but everyone on the floor didn't panic. The coaching staff never panicked, because when we got down by one it was dire straits. I thought everyone did a good job of keeping their composure.

TERONE JOHNSON: For me it's been the story of our season. We have played good teams and lost the lead couple of times early in the year. We battled in the Big Ten and showed we can handle the situation so it was easy for us to feel comfortable. We can go to the bench and our coaching staff is positive and not stressing out. Coach Shrewsberry, I remember him saying "It's winning time," and everybody understands that we've been here before and everyone just executes in that last stretch.

Q. Terone, talk about what you were looking for matching up with Matthew Dellavedova, their point guard. What went into the scouting report against him and how did you feel you did?

TERONE JOHNSON: Just watching him on tape, we've never seen them play, so it was watching them on tape. Coach said he was a great passer, as soon as a guy sinks in he's hitting them and he's a good scorer, an all-around point guard. He's not as quick maybe as some as we have played, but he's the most crafty and I just had to stay in on him and try to get those passes before they end up counting for a bucket.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys. Questions for Coach Matt Painter.

Q. Coach talk about how critical it was to get penetration to fuel everything you wanted to get offensively.

COACH PAINTER: I think there's a couple of ways to guard people. If you're going to stay at home on shooters you've got to pound into the post guy or drive the basketball. We have played inside/outside basketball for the past five or six years and we don't now because of personnel and our strength lies in our quickness and our skill. Terone Johnson does a great job of driving it, Lew does a great job of driving it and the other three are shooters, so we find a balance in regards to how someone is going to defend us. Sometimes you don't know until you get into a tournament how someone will defend you, but you make decisions then.

I thought our guys did a good job of driving the basketball, making decisions. In the last four minutes we had three plays where we had breakdowns, and didn't do a good job of making a decision to shoot and it about cost us.

But we did make our free-throws and the plays that count.

Q. Matt, it may be lost a little bit in this game, he didn't give you a ton of minutes but Sandi got that "and one" talk about how he may be pushed you across the finish line.

COACH PAINTER: I thought Sandi did a good job. He got a chance to play against Ohio State and he did a good job tonight. He was productive, got his hands up, got a steal, made a couple of blocks and made his free-throws. He was great around the rim and out on the perimeter. I

thought he did a good job so great to see him play well.

Q. Coach, you may be oblivious to this but there were two No. 15 seeds that won today over No. 2 seeds. I know you haven't been there for all 14 victories for Purdue in the opening round but from a Purdue standpoint how are you able to win every single first-round game in the last 14 times that you have been to the tournament?

COACH PAINTER: We're fortunate because this game could have went either way. It was a coin flip in the last minute and we made our free-throws and they missed an open shot so we advance. I just think it's trying to prepare, trying to get your team ready, feeling good about yourself whether you've lost a couple of games in a row or not.

You have to continue to prepare like you have all season but that's no different than anybody else and that's the reason I say we're fortunate because it can flip on you real quick in this profession. With the teams that we have had in the past five, six years, we have had some mature guys that care about Purdue. They check their egos at the door especially as the year goes on and as the year goes on you realize how important the team really is.

Q. Coach, when you're down one with 45 seconds left, what goes through your mind? Are you as confident as the guys were talking about being at that moment? You have a lot of veterans on the floor, what were you thinking?

COACH PAINTER: It can go either way for you. You want to get them in a position that's been successful for you during the game. We had come off a couple of nice plays, Rob had a good look at a three that didn't go down. We had a drive that didn't go down but they were productive, good plays.

We had to show poise and when we did, we were either getting a good shot or getting to the free-throw line. We were talking to them about keeping their composure, continuing to play, make the right read and trust your teammates in that position.

Q. In maybe the first 10 minutes you gave up some offensive boards, I know you like to play small did you think about going bigger?

COACH PAINTER: Sure, no doubt about it. That's kind of the give and take. The one thing

that helped us was the last couple of games people have started their center on Terone Johnson when we went small. We didn't start our last game that way but as we subbed in the previous game, they played Sullinger on Terone and we were wondering what St. Mary's was going to do. We were giving up offensive rebounds and I understand that but we got an advantage on the offensive end with that layup.

If they're going to put their center on Terone then we're going to clear out and let him drive. At the beginning of the game we got opportunities because of that match-up, but no matter what lineup we played we were giving up offensive rebounds. I think we've proven that.

Q. I asked Terone Johnson about his confidence, seemed when Kelsey left the program he elevated his game. Talk about him.

COACH PAINTER: You get more of an opportunity and I think guys don't make ultimate strides in their game unless they can play through their mistakes. When you get more minutes and you can play through your mistakes, you're going to feel better about yourself. He has simply gotten more opportunities offensively, and now he's getting more opportunities defensively to guard the other team's best perimeter player. We don't always do that but it's ended up in the last five or six games where he has been on that guy and he's doing a great job. He's taking shots he's comfortable with and we want him to take as many good shots for him and I thought tonight did he that.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach, congratulations.

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