

March 27, 2012



UMASS MINUTEMEN

COACH KELLOGG: First of all, I'm proud of our team. I think these guys took us on a ride, as a coaching staff, as a program, and as a community that was special. These guys played their hearts out all season long, did a great job of competing every game; never quit, never gave up. I'm proud to say that I'm the head coach of these guys at UMASS on every occasion.

I don't think we made as many good basketball plays as we did in the past, but Stanford did a nice job under pressure and on the boards. They offensive rebounded and had too many second-chance opportunities, and we didn't make some of the shots that we have been accustomed to making; 5-for-22 from three, when they have done that this season, we have not fared so well.

Again, I was proud of this team and kind of happy to be the coach of these guys. They put forth a great effort. We go home at 25-12, and I think that's not bad for a team picked 12th in the preseason. I think these guys played with something to prove all season long.

Q. Do you feel like you were a part of something special as far as where UMASS is going?

SEAN CARTER: Yeah, definitely was. I came in here, it was a new program, and you know, I knew it would be a learning process. So I stuck through it because Coach had faith in me and I had faith in him. We just battled every year together, and I'm happy to see the program going in the right direction now as I'm on my way out.

Q. Chaz, can you talk about being from Brooklyn and playing at home here, just what it means to you?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: Honestly at this moment, it don't mean nothing. Came back home

just to go back to school; that wasn't part of our plans, and that wasn't part of my homecoming trip. It's just taking it a day at a time and just learning from this experience.

Q. Chaz, what was the difference --

CHAZ WILLIAMS: Like Coach said, 5-for-22 from the three, that's not like us. They handled our pressure perfectly, and they didn't get rattled and just played their game. We didn't stick to our game plan, and eventually we lost.

Q. So many teams have worn down against you guys. Did the fact that they have the depth that they had kind of make a difference, especially down the stretch?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: It did make a difference. It kept bringing them bodies and bodies. When you are a basketball player, you can't, you know, put it on that. We just had to get over that little hump and we couldn't, so it's just living and learning.

Q. Chaz, it seemed like in the first half, you were kind of struggling to get it going, trying to find the seams in their defense; was their length a problem for you getting to the basket? Was it a hamstring that bothered you?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: No, it was my calf. I was cramping. I don't think it bothered me. Just all of us wasn't here today, including myself. I came out and made some unforced errors early that I don't usually make, and you know, so I wouldn't put it on their length because that's the type of length I play against every day, we play against.

Q. You said you weren't yourself? What accounted for that?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: Looking at the stats, I had four turnovers and I think I let my team down

today. I only had three assists and that's not like me also. Just learning from this experience.

Q. Talk about learning from the season as a whole; just looking back on the year.

CHAZ WILLIAMS: It was a great year. You know, it was a great journey, playing for Coach was great. Playing with these guys was great. A lot of people counted us out early and didn't expect us to be here. We just wanted to play and to win and we just wanted to prove everybody wrong. The motto we live by at our school is "shock the world." That was something we were trying to do this trip, and we didn't, so hopefully this year we make a good run at it.

Q. Any nerves playing so close to Brooklyn?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: No, it's never nerves when you're playing basketball.

Q. Sean, you were climbing the whole first half; what was the feeling?

SEAN CARTER: You know, it was a pretty good feeling, just to be down feeling, and it was clear that we were not playing our regular style UMASS basketball. We were trying to get back locked in and focussed. A few mistakes, the rebounds we gave up, that changes the game. Those charges are big, big game-changers. We did a lot of small errors to ourselves that we could have taken care of that could have changed the whole swing of the game.

Q. With three fouls to start the second half, did you have to change your style of play at all?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: Yeah, I couldn't be as aggressive as I wanted to on the defensive end and that took away from my team. It allowed Anthony to get a lot of open shots.

Q. Sean, during this NIT run, you've made a living closing out games; seemed like Stanford got the best of you in the late run. What were you noticing out there?

SEAN CARTER: You know, just making the right plays, we made the wrong ones. Pretty simple.

Q. Chaz, so as a rising star, I mean what can you take from this game and this season to help increase your level of game in your future basketball career?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: Just watching film and learning from this experience all together. It was a great run. We have a young group of guys -- so you know, we basically are bringing back everybody and losing Sean and Matt Hill. Those two guys brung it every damn practice and helped us get to where we are today. Matt Hill don't play as much but he's one of the most vocal-est persons on our team; that's behind doors, and not everybody sees that. It's just great sometimes to go out this, for them guys to go out there like this. It's just something we are going to learn, a young group of guys and just work hard next year.

Q. Losing the senior captains, are you going to have to come up, step up, as a leader next year?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think so. Whatever Coach wants me to do. Being a basketball player, you just do whatever the Coach wants you to do. So whatever he asks me to do next year, that's what I'll have to do.

Q. What did it mean seeing the fans down here?

CHAZ WILLIAMS: The whole brotherhood and nation, we want to thank the fans for coming out and supporting us. They did a great job all year. They didn't listen to the media and stuff like that, they came out and supported the team. We had a good run because of them so thank them guys.

Q. What did you say to Sean when you had that little embrace at the end?

COACH KELLOGG: Well, you know, Sean, he kind of came to UMASS with some blind faith. Obviously I told him I love him like I do all the guys on our team, and that I appreciate all that he's done for my family, the program, and I think the UMASS fans in general.

He's a kid that has come here, brought energy, unquestionable character and a great kid who has been an ambassador for our team and program. I think because of this run, hopefully he'll get an opportunity to get into camps and have a chance to make a roster or make some money playing overseas.

I'm happy for Sean it played out this way for him, because it has not been great positive feedback every game, every year. He's improved a bunch and is a great person and young man.

Q. Both teams struggled in the second half --

COACH KELLOGG: There was a few times I thought we had an opportunity. We were playing really well. I thought the week off was maybe a little too long for us because we never got it back clicking. I thought the play of the game was when Maxie got the offensive rebound on the free throw. Kind of turned-- I don't know what happened, there was a scrum in the paint and they ended up getting a layup down in the other end. We had great momentum; the crowd was into it. That took a little wind out of our sails, I guess, that particular up-and-down.

Q. That seemed to be the case all night, getting real close, just couldn't get over that --

COACH KELLOGG: The thing that happened is we got them to play on a few different occasions a little faster than they are accustomed to. We got them to take some tough shots and they did a great job of offensive rebounding. We didn't have that next level of, get the rebounds tonight.

Could have been because of their size, their length, their toughness, whatever it might have been. But I thought we gave up too many second-chance points; 19 offensive rebounds is just way, way too many, because we thrive when teams take tough shots. We rebound and come right back at you. We didn't get as many transition baskets as we would have liked, and when we did have opportunity, we didn't make the shot. So that was a double-edged sword.

Q. You are a young team filled with potential; how are you going to make this team reach its full potential in years to come and use this season to help?

COACH KELLOGG: I spoke to the guys about that briefly in the locker room, that kind of the taste, how you feel right now, don't let it happen again. Use that as how hard you're going to work in the off-season.

I think the greatest thing is we have some guys on our team who haven't quite reached their potential yet. If we get some guys back from injury, we get some guys into the program and everybody improves, we had some good things happen this year, though, and 25 wins, you know, we have had some good breaks. I think we won some games that people didn't expect. We pulled some games out at the end.

The biggest thing is we'll have to fight through some adversity, and I think people are now going to look at UMASS a little differently, which honestly I like. I didn't like the way they looked at UMASS for three years, I really didn't.

Q. Can you talk about Stanford's shooting down the stretch?

COACH KELLOGG: That's a killer. Obviously you need some good breaks and bounces at the end and they seemed to make two just about every time. We got a few that were one-on-ones that they missed at the end but they did a nice job of closing the game out.

Coach Dawkins is a very good coach and they played to win. Both teams played to win, but they just ended up winning.

Q. How excited would you be as far as having the tournament coming to Brooklyn next year, and how would that actually benefit a program, like a local program --

COACH KELLOGG: I think for UMASS it's a good move. One with the success Chaz is having, hopefully there's some allure for the next point guard from New York City that says, okay, he's done it, look at the way they play, it would be an unbelievable situation.

For our fans, I think Atlantic City for UMASS is maybe a little too far to make a day trip and during the week it's a tough one. But as you saw tonight, I'm not sure how many there were, but that was a great UMASS contingent and crowd out there. If the excitement of the program continues to grow this year, those fans will want to come to Brooklyn and support their team. We have an opportunity for Chaz to be playing in his backyard, which is unbelievable for a kid.

Q. Can you talk about him this season; did he measure up to your expectations of him this year?

COACH KELLOGG: Yeah, you know, my expectations were tempered. I didn't know that he would be my starting point guard as soon as he was eligible, because he was really the only point guard that was in the program.

He's reached and exceeded expectations; his competitiveness, toughness, his will to win, I think what our team thrived on and what I loved almost as much as anything, he has a little following now, not just in the community, but

nationally. He represents UMASS basketball and he's fun to watch and I think he's elevated our program which has been fantastic.

Q. When he said he wasn't actually nervous playing here --

COACH KELLOGG: I don't think I would be nervous but I think he wanted to do a lot tonight and put on a New York City style performance. He was trying to do a little too much but that goes back to his competitive nature and he wanted to win so bad. He would go for a loss ball he had no chance of getting in the second half and just cracked heads with the guy, and that's a testament to how he has played all year.

Q. What were your expectations coming into the season?

COACH KELLOGG: I thought we were going to be very good. When I watched their team in individual work, I saw how hard they were working in the summer and the feedback I was getting from our strength coach. I actually was happy where we were picked in the preseason. I was happy with what people are writing because I knew it wasn't happening.

Then I saw how our team came together and when Dr. Carr came in and brought into the brotherhood -- I didn't know we would be 25-12. I couldn't quantify wins, but I knew we were better than where people picked us and where people thought we were as a team and program. This has actually been a great ride for me, though. We have done some things I didn't know were possible.

Q. Is the next step to get your guys to buy into having the same level of off-season dedication to build off of this?

COACH KELLOGG: Yeah, I don't think that's a question with this group honestly. These guys are really basketball guys. They love to play and train. When you make them go hard, they want to go harder. This has been a pretty good group and I think if we can get some guys in the weight room and have them grow emotionally and also basketball-wise, we'll be fun to watch, I know that, and hopefully the wins follow. You can't quantify how many but we would like to put ourselves in a position to play postseason once again.

Q. Chaz has been more efficient --

COACH KELLOGG: The last month he was as good as I've seen him and he was phenomenal. Tonight he pressed a little bit and was getting deep on his drives. They had some size and length and were also packing it in defensively.

So they had a good game plan I think for Chaz, and where he normally gets going is in transition and I don't think we defensive rebounded well enough tonight to get him in transition.

Q. Anthony Brown, how impressed were you with him?

COACH KELLOGG: I watched him play on tape and television, and I thought he hit five quick points that really separated the game there.

He actually got Chaz to foul a couple times, and with his foul trouble, I thought they did a good job of recognizing that and taking advantage of that. They tried to get Mann in the post to get his fourth and ran him off some ball screens and Chaz could not play D the way we needed him to play because of his foul trouble.

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