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# OKLAHOMA BASKETBALL

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## OKLAHOMA 75, TEXAS TECH 65 JANUARY 9, 2018 • OKLAHOMA POSTGAME QUOTES

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### OKLAHOMA HEAD COACH LON KRUGER

#### Opening statement:

"Another tough game. Obviously, they are all going to be that way but I thought both teams did a pretty good job of disrupting the other especially in the first half, neither of them had a great rhythm. Again, Texas Tech is so good defensively, Coach Beard is one of the best. Thought they came out with great confidence and great togetherness and they just have a very good defense. I thought they second half, we came out- had a little better spacing, little better movement, got down and got some shots down, created a little bit of margin and battled the rest of the way. Expect that and proud of our guys. It wasn't a free-flowing game, which we like and we went up against a team who are good at that. Good step."

#### On second half performance:

"I thought our guys did a good job, little better spacing and little better patience, little better rhythm and when you knock down shots, it always makes things look better. Nothing major adjustment wise, again, just picked a little better, made shots. Good opening there in the second half."

#### On focus defensively overall:

"Our guys had pretty good focus defensively. Both clubs had pretty good focus defensively, didn't give them many easy looks. A lot of them contested, we had six assists in the game, so we did a pretty good job of staying honed in on shooters and making them earn their points. We're getting better defensively, and we've got to keep focusing on that and hopefully get better in the next couple of days."

#### On the importance of Kristian Doolittle's three pointer at the buzzer:

"It's better to be down two than five, for sure, so that gave us a little bit of a lift going into halftime, especially when we hadn't been scoring very easily. It gave us a little bump- a little better and it's good for him going down, feeling good about it."

#### On defense being in a good place:

"We were much more comfortable, obviously, when there's flow, there's pace and there's tempo to a game. It can be that way in Big 12 play. When there's not, you can't say, 'got to get better tempo.' You've got to win those games too. The guys are understanding that more and more. Again, we've just got to get better... making progress every day in practice between games because we've got to be able to get stops. Tonight we did a much better job."

### JUNIOR GUARD CHRISTIAN JAMES

#### On their defense affecting his shot:

"I definitely did get better shots in the second (half). In the first half, they did a good job of contesting. I didn't have very much time so they made a difference on my shot. Once I saw one go down, they all felt good, it was just a matter of time."

#### On the shots not falling tonight:

"We definitely work on knocking down shots at practice. Most of the time we've been knocking down shots when we have good looks, it was just a rough night tonight. We'll be back at it tomorrow at practice and be able to knock down shots."

### SENIOR FORWARD KHADEEM LATTIN

#### On if he had a different mentality tonight with seven blocks:

"No, just trusting my teammates had my back when I would go for a block so just knowing they were there gave me a lot more confidence to go for them."

#### On the team's defensive ability:

"I feel like we can be one of the best stoppers in the Big 12. We have some tough, big guards and we're able to switch a lot and cause havoc. Especially with R.O. (Rashard Odomes) being at the front of that, it's exciting to know we have guys that take pride in their defense and want to run with it."

#### On reaching 200 career blocks:

"Isn't the record like 260-something? 230? Ask me when I get to 230."

### FRESHMAN GUARD TRAE YOUNG

#### On Khadeem's defensive effort:

"It makes the opponent think twice about going in the lane. They're a team who likes to drive the ball a lot and we trust Khadeem (Lattin) and Jamuni (McNeace) to have our backs when we get beat off the dribble. Khadeem did a good job tonight of blocking shots."

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### **On his mindset after the first half:**

"Just to settle down. This game had a lot of emotions for me. I played like a freshman the first half. I let that get to me the first half. I settled down the second half. Like Coach said, we got more spacing and I found my teammates, found my shot, and settled down."

### **On when the shots aren't falling how he can still be involved:**

"Just trying to do other things, get my teammates involved. I think I had three or four steals in the first half. I just have to contribute in different ways when my shots are not falling, I have to do other things to help my team win. I think I did a good job in the first half of doing that and then in the second half my shot started falling and I got into the flow better. I just needed to settle down after the first half."

### **On the nerves of this game:**

"I was thinking about this game all night. This is a game, obviously my dad went there, but it had a lot of emotions, it's hard to describe it. I just wanted to settle down and not think about that and just remember it's another game."

### **On team's game plan to stop him:**

"That's how it's going to be the rest of the way on out. I didn't shoot the ball well, again, tonight but that's going to happen. I don't expect to be perfect every night. There's going to be nights when I shoot really well and nights like tonight and against West Virginia. I just have to learn and get better. My teammates had my back tonight and we had a great defensive plan. They were a great defensive team, one of the best in the country so hats off to them for having a great game, too."

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### TEXAS TECH HEAD COACH CHRIS BEARD

#### Opening Statement:

"Congratulations to Oklahoma. I've said it all week, I feel like I could be Coach Kruger's agent one day if coaching doesn't work out for me. He's just one of the best coaches in college basketball, so again, tonight, just all sorts of adjustments out there, things that were challenging to us. I'd like to take responsibility for this game in terms of coaching. We've got to coach better and put our guys in a better position, but I think Oklahoma is a big reason. Congratulations to the players, obviously Trae (Young) gets a lot of attention these days which he deserves, but his supporting cast is really good. I'm not so sure there's not a couple NBA players in that group as well. Tonight was more about what Oklahoma did well than what we didn't do well. Consistent with how we run our program, we're going to show respect to the opponent. Congratulations, Oklahoma."

#### On guarding Trae Young in the first half:

"Well we had multiple ideas, I don't think you can have one game plan against him because he's so good. We had some different things, we thought about taking away his assists, we thought about trying to take away his scoring, so I thought we were locked in pretty good in the first half. I thought that was the best we could do. In the second half he just got away from us, but I think it was more what they did than what we did. Coach Kruger just spreads the floor, he made a lot of adjustments, and if he's not in the Hall of Fame he should be. When you're having a hard time on the offensive end it effects your defense. You get a couple lay-ups, maybe Khadeem Lattin doesn't block a couple shots, then you can get your defense set up and execute a game plan. When you're playing with the ball coming off the rim instead of through the net all night it's hard to do a game plan."

#### On what Trae Young did differently in the second half:

"Well I think his coach spread the floor for him where he could really see things. We had a couple of lapses, but that's basketball, there's never been a perfect game played. What Trae Young does is he just exposes your lapse every single time. There's mistakes all over in every game, but there's only certain players like Trae Young who can put the ball wherever he wants. Yes, I think we made some mistakes, but to say that, you almost disrespect the opponent. Let's talk about Oklahoma: Hall of Fame coach, NBA point guard, really good team, great home court. I coached at Seminole State College down the road, I understand the passion for basketball in this state. Let's give Oklahoma credit."

#### On what OU was doing defensively:

"Well, when you get the ball right at the rim and Khadeem Lattin blocks the shot I don't know if you can say the motion wasn't working for us. It's just a guy making a play. I would've liked to have seen us play a little more inside out, so I'll just have to coach better in that regard. When you're playing from behind, you kind of have a play-from-behind offense, you can't keep doing what you do. We spread the floor a little bit, got it to the shooters and it was good for us, but we just didn't make shots. We were 3-19 from three in the second half, if we go 7-19 we win the game. I thought our guys did a good job of executing on the fly, we tried to get a few more three-point shots, but we just didn't make shots. Give Oklahoma credit, they are the reason we didn't make shots. A lot were contested, they're just a really good team."

#### On Rashard Odomes:

"He's one of the best players in the Big 12 that doesn't get talked about. He gave us all we could handle last year. He plays multiple positions, he plays really hard too. Sometimes you watch so much film that you get to where you really like the other team's players. I kind of admire him, I actually took a couple of the clips from his personnel tape and showed some of the younger players and said this is the way you play this game."

### SENIOR GUARD KEENAN EVANS

#### On what was making the offense tough for them:

"They were switching everything. Nobody was making the right cuts they were supposed to which made it easy to defend us. Once we got a timeout I felt like that got us kind of going after we could talk it over."

#### On how big the OU three before half was:

"It was big, especially because we went over that play a million times, we talked about it, and then we let them get it."

#### On guarding Trae Young:

"We just tried to make it tough in any way possible. Not letting him catch the ball, make him uncomfortable, and make him take tough shots. In the second half we kind of lost focus, lost track of where he was, and we weren't disciplined. We put him on the free throw line and kind of let him get going, so we've got to do better staying locked in the whole game."

#### On if stopping Trae wasn't a priority in the second half"

"At halftime we knew he was going to try and take over the game, but like I said we lost focus, lost track of where he was, and got caught with our hand down. He made shots and he's a great player so we've got to be more locked in on him."

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**On how difficult Khadeem Lattin made the game:**

"He made it very tough. Certain plays I thought I had a lay-up and he would come out of nowhere. He had seven blocks and he is great at timing it."

**REDSHIRT JUNIOR CENTER NORENSE ODIASE**

**On the rebounding in the game:**

"We rebounded well throughout the game. Obviously, we didn't do a good job of limiting turnovers. Rebounding is our main thing, our main focus, and we did well with that today."

**On takeaways from this game:**

"We've got to come out playing harder from the jump. We can't take anything for granted, and I'm not saying we did, but we didn't come out with the same energy they did. We have to set the tone."