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AN INTERVIEW WITH:

**COACH DON MULLER
TYLER BROWN
JACKIE CARMICHAEL**

THE MODERATOR: As Illinois State gets to the podium with head coach Dan Muller and Jackie Carmichael and Tyler Brown, as has been the case, we will take a brief statement from Coach Muller, then ask for questions for the student-athletes.

Our microphone folks are on the flanks. Raise your hand and remember to identify yourself and your affiliation and then direct your question accordingly.

COACH MULLER: First of all, want to congratulate Ben and his staff and team on a great year. He's a heck of a coach and a huge asset to our league. Their guys play the right way and their seniors, they're really good and good kids.

But it came down to the end, the last three-minute stretch. There were some ebbs and flows to the game that were caused by very good offensive play and some guys stepping up and making good plays throughout the game. Fortunately, I have these two guys, along with other players, who made good plays down the stretch.

Jackie made some unbelievable blocks. Tyler made big-time clutch shots and we stretched it out. Glad to be moving on.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes Jackie Carmichael and Tyler Brown.

Q. Tyler, what's gotten into you offensively since the beginning of February? Something clicked there?

TYLER BROWN: I feel like I'm being more aggressive. I'm picking when I feel like I need to score. My teammates finding me, giving me the

ball and good spots that I like. So just a variety of me being aggressive and my teammates helping me out.

Q. Tyler, it looked like when you came out tonight, you even took that to another level, that aggressiveness. Did you just have that mindset going into this game that you were going to attack right from the very tip?

TYLER BROWN: Well, I go into every game feeling that way, I just want to be aggressive. Feel like it opens up a lot for my teammates and getting them the ball and getting them easy shots so I try to be aggressive every game.

Q. Jackie, you picked up your second foul with, I think, seven minutes in the first half. Were you thinking it was going to be maybe a repeat of last Saturday's game?

JACKIE CARMICHAEL: A little bit, but we went through that and I'm a senior so it was potentially our last game so I tried to help the other guys and I believe it was Frenchy (John Wilkins) stepped up and helped us a lot. So that's what the guys on the bench are for. They do a great job.

Q. Tyler, how much experience of last year going through this and having to make some big plays and big games like this, how much did that pay off in the last five minutes for you guys?

TYLER BROWN: Paid off a lot. Last year, I didn't know what I was getting myself into coming into this tournament so just having a year under my belt helped a lot, knowing what type of game it was going to be. So I feel like I was well prepared for that.

Q. Jackie, could you talk about playing Wichita State tomorrow?

JACKIE CARMICHAEL: They're a great team. Obviously, we've had some great games with them. So looking forward to going into tomorrow and competing with them at a high level.



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Q. Jackie, can you describe your mindset on those two blocks, what you're anticipating as far as the guys driving to the basket?

JACKIE CARMICHAEL: Don't let them score. That was pretty much it. I knew that I had my teammates covering me if I jumped up and he ditched it off. So I was thinking, don't let them get this bucket, because we needed those couple stops.

My teammates backed me up. So that was pretty much it.

Q. Tyler, especially in the second half, they were really starting to double-team you. What adjustments were you making in order to get away from that and make some of those clutch shots that you did late in the second?

TYLER BROWN: They did that a little bit the last game of the season we played them so I was more prepared for it this time. Still turned the ball over, I believe, on it. But I feel like giving the ball up a little bit quicker and expecting it, that helped a lot. Like I said, just knowing that they might do it again, that helped as well.

Q. Tyler, what exactly happened? It looked like maybe Tuttle landed on your leg a little bit. Was it a little scary right at the moment it happened?

TYLER BROWN: Yeah, at the moment it happened, I just felt it tweak a little bit. But I'm sure it's going to be a little sore, but nothing I can't play through.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions for the student-athletes? Gentlemen, congratulations on your win. Thank you for your time and attention. You can retire to your locker room.

Questions for Coach Muller.

Q. Hey, Dan, this has obviously been a roller coaster season and you have a 15-point lead in the first half that's gone. You have a ten-point lead in the second half that's almost gone. Is it almost appropriate that this game kind of played out like this?

COACH MULLER: It would have been appropriate if we hadn't given those leads up. We're playing a good team. Not only a good team, but a team with experienced guys, some seniors that don't want to play their last game in the Valley, just like our guys don't.

Certainly, I wish we could have locked down and played with some better discipline on those possessions, but there's a reason why they're as good as they are. They can come back.

It happened like that at their place. We got a big lead, Tyler made some crazy shots in that game also. We do have to do a better job of staying focused when we get a lead. Hopefully, we can do that tomorrow, if we're in that position.

Q. Dan, when Jackie picked up his second foul there, what was kind of going through your mind there at that point? I know you put him back in a little bit and then especially he got his third one right off the bat to start the second half.

COACH MULLER: The biggest thing for me was hoping that Jackie could play with the same aggressiveness and not worry about fouling, because that takes him out of the game. I've done it all year. I've played guys with fouls. Hopefully, they've learned how to play with fouls.

Last Saturday, I thought he got tentative because of his foul problems. It's a physical game, and we had a lot of charges tonight. But they were letting guys play for the most part and I felt pretty comfortable that Jackie would be okay. I left him in there, and he did a very good job with it.

I don't want to take the chance to take him out and dig ourselves a hole.

Q. Coach, could you just talk about the matchup tomorrow with Wichita, what you expect?

COACH MULLER: It's going to be a battle. Wichita State's obviously one of the best teams in our league. Everybody knows their strengths. They're unbelievable on the boards. They're terrific defensively. And they have a variety of guys that can score. Got another kid back tonight who looks like he gives them some presence from the outside.

It will be physical. It will be intense. And obviously, both teams are playing for a lot. So we'll have to get our guys some reps and also get the game plan in, in short turnaround, which, we'll be able to handle that. We'll start on it as soon as we get back.

Q. Coach, you lost to UNI twice earlier this season. What was the difference for you personally in this game that was able to make

you successful this time around, especially being in the tournament?

COACH MULLER: The first game we lost, that was during our stretch where a high school team would have beat us. You got to throw that one out the window. The last one was close, a one-point game with three and a half minutes left, similar to this. They made plays down the stretch; we didn't.

We did make adjustments to things they did, in particular the way they go to Jackie. I think that helped us. One-point game, two-point game last three or four minutes, kind of comes down to who makes plays at the end. Fortunately, I had some seniors step up and make some big ones.

THE MODERATOR: One last question for Coach Muller, and we'll call it a day. Perhaps not. We're done. Coach, congratulations. See you tomorrow.

COACH MULLER: Thanks.

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