

March 3, 2011



Bradley – 63  
Drake – 48

An Interview with:

## COACH LES DYRICUS SIMMS-EDWARDS ANDREW WARREN

THE MODERATOR: The victorious Bradley Braves are with us. Coach Les.

COACH LES: I thought the defensive effort tonight was superior. We've been talking about it for a number of days, and I thought everybody, the starters, the guy that came off the bench were locked in defensively. We took for the most part for the whole game took their offensive rhythm away from them. They got it going a little bit in the second half, and as I told them in the locker room, I was really pleased that they made their run to open the second half and we stepped back up our defense. Really didn't hold them to 48, I think it was 22 at the half. That was the difference.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Andrew, could you speak to early in the second half after Drake made its run, and Jordan got hurt and you guys seemed to kick it into a different gear that we haven't seen, can you kind of take us through. Obviously that was a big emotional moment for you guys and you responded.

ANDREW WARREN: Yeah, we just wanted to take over when we saw him go down. It didn't look good. But we knew the game wasn't over. We were just trying to curb us from coming out flat. We came out kind of flat in the second half, and they got some good looks and some easy baskets because we just didn't come out with any intensity in the beginning of the second half.

I think we were starting to just turn things around and we saw Jordan go down, and we just wanted to rally the team together for him. Any time somebody goes down, we're always taught that everybody has to step up and pick that guy up whoever went down. That's all we tried to do.

Once we got into a rhythm and our intensity picked up, we were able to get stops on the defensive end. That led to us scoring the basketball as well, and we just took it from there.

Q. Simms-Edwards, you were probably the most consistent Bradley player throughout the night. Does it help having a guy like Andrew that you know he can score at any moment, but tonight he didn't need 33 points to win?

DYRICUS SIMMS-EDWARDS: With Drew out on the floor, it makes it a lot easier for me to get in the driving lanes because the defense is less reluctant to help off him. So I get a lot of penetration, and I'm able to get into the defense and score. Drew didn't shoot it that well tonight, but I just wanted to stay aggressive and not settle for too many jump shots and try to get in the lane, because that's basically what I do best. I didn't want to get away from that.

Q. Seems like over the last little while here, the last few weeks, you guys are maybe starting to put some things together, maybe play your best that you have this year. Would you agree with that? It obviously is a pretty good time to do that.

DYRICUS SIMMS-EDWARDS: Definitely ever since we with got our first win after we lost 11 straight, we've been playing our best basketball. That's all we needed. We were in a little funk. We stayed together, just couldn't figure things out. We were right there in a lot of our games when we were on that losing streak.

But once we got that monkey off our back, everybody got the confidence. Wasn't just a couple guys on the team, everybody, the whole team just started playing with great confidence. We know that we're better than what our record

indicates. We just want to to come out and play hard. We know if we do that, we'll play like we did tonight. And we're just going to try to establish that throughout the rest of this tournament.

Q. Dyricus, can you elaborate?

DYRICUS SIMMS-EDWARDS: Yeah, we pay attention to the small things. When we were on that losing streak, we were right there. They were paying attention to the small details. It's actually magnified to the bigger picture. Once we put those things together, we've been playing great basketball and giving ourselves the opportunity to come out with victories.

Q. Can you talk about Wichita State tomorrow, and what you take from the two experiences and what you apply to it going forward?

ANDREW WARREN: They play us pretty well, and during the season they're a deep team. We're just going to have to give it our best shot and play hard of the we know we're playing better basketball now than when we previously played them, so we're just going to worry about what we need to do as a team to be successful. We're going to go out and play hard and let the chips fall as they may.

Q. When Rayvonte Rice comes out, the first two possessions he gets six points. What did you do to keep Drake out of rhythm?

DYRICUS SIMMS-EDWARDS: After he came out and got out to a hot start, he was getting into the lane and guys weren't -- it wasn't the guy guarding him, it was actually the guys off the ball. We weren't getting into our gaps and keeping him from getting into the lane. The big part with him is once he gets going, he's going to get in the rhythm and keep attacking.

So we knew that. In order to stop him, we made sure we got into his driving lane to stop him and make him settle for jumpers. Once he did that, it slowed him down and got us to where we wanted to be on the defensive end.

Q. You seem to be offensively in a little bit of a funk in the first half from the field, missing four free throws in a row is very uncharacteristic. Can you talk us through that?

ANDREW WARREN: I don't know what it was. I hit my first couple shots, and then a couple were down in and out. You know, those new balls make it difficult, and those rims are tight. So lot of in and out balls. But it was just a mental thing once I missed my first free throw and on top of that nerves. But I pushed through that.

At halftime everybody did a great job encouraging me and staying with me. I know as a scorer and shooter I just have to keep continuing to shoot and trying to find my rhythm offensively. That's what happened in the second half. Made some pretty big shots to get the run going in the middle of the run. I just know I can't hang my head and I have to continue to play. I promise you those four missed free throws won't happen again.

COACH LES: I know the Valley office must have a basketball team at the YMCA. They can feel free to break in those balls before we get to town. Take them to practice or do something.

Q. Can you elaborate more on the defensive effort and what changed things in the second half after Drake made an early run?

COACH LES: I think Dyricus touched on it. It was attention to the detail. You know, we played well in the last game on Saturday. But I thought we had a number of things that we could do better. Guard and some of the things that they like to do and take away some of their strengths. I thought the guys really locked in. We had really good ball pressure. I thought we kept the ball on one side of the floor which kind of hinders a lot of things that they want to do.

You know, I really other like the response in the second half when they did start out and make their run. It had nothing to do with what we were doing offensively, it was all about getting stops. And Dyricus said it, it's not one person. And Dodie was guarding Rice at the time, it's team defense.

So we had a couple of breakdowns. The train goes off the track for a few possessions, to be able to right that train and get it back on track, I thought they were locked in for the rest of the half. They got six or eight quick ones and then we held them at bay the rest of the way.

Q. As a follow-up, why do you think you've been able to maybe string together some wins and some better results over the last few weeks?

COACH LES: I think it's the maturity of our young players. Our seniors have been pretty consistent all year. Not only have done a good job producing for us, but they've been awfully good leaders. I think they've been awfully patient with the young guys and understand we need some of those young players to step up and fulfill roles and take responsibility that they're going to be productive night in and night out. Those guys just

continued to grow and get better.

So now we can get by when Drew goes through a drought or doesn't have his best offensive game, Dyracus is stepping up and making plays.

I thought Jake Eastman's play tonight was excellent. Walt Lemon's defense on the ball in the second half was on awfully good, and part of why we turned them over 13 times.

Those are all guys that we need. And Prosser, it's really unfortunate about his injury, but he's been playing at a high level and anchoring our defense in the paint.

So it's those young guys that have been the difference. As they develop and they continue to work throughout the year to get better.

Q. Is there an early prognosis on Jordan's injury?

COACH LES: I don't know. I came right over here. I didn't get a chance to talk to the doctors to see how he's doing, so I don't want to comment just yet. I asked him if he was available for tomorrow, and it didn't look like it.

Q. Can you talk about tomorrow a little bit, and Wichita State? Do you like the match-up? Is it more of a question that your team's in such a good rhythm right now it doesn't make a difference who you are rolling out again?

COACH LES: We don't have much of a choice. We are excited. I've got a lot of respect for Gregg and his team and how talented they are. And we have to understand that we have to play good and sound. That is a team that can attack you in different ways in terms of our defense and their balance that they get offensively.

So we'll go back and watch the tape and break it down and come up with a plan for our guys. They're excited, they're confident. The way I look at it, we don't have much to lose, but to come out swinging and play and have fun. I think that's what the guys did tonight.

**FastScripts by ASAP Sports**