

March 4, 2011



Wichita State – 70
Bradley – 56

An Interview with:

COACH LES ANDREW WARREN DODIE DUNSON

THE MODERATOR: Bradley Braves have arrived. Coach Les, if you'll give a statement on the game.

COACH LES: Well, I just left one of the probably most emotional last game of the season locker rooms that I've been a part of. I've been playing and coaching for a while now, and I think it was a release of a lot of pent up emotion. These guys have dealt with unbelievable adversity. They showed me in that locker room what they showed me all year. It's a group with tremendous heart and passion for each other.

The game probably is a little microcosm of what we endured all year in terms of just continuing to battle and never giving up, and facing some adverse odds.

I couldn't be more proud to be associated with this group, and have had the opportunity to coach them and be around them like I have this season.

Q. Can you discuss what the coach described in the locker room and from a player's standpoint what it was like?

ANDREW WARREN: Everybody was just sharing their thoughts. Coach and myself, and just reflecting and thanking everybody for everything that everybody had to endure and go through. Despite all that staying together as a team and getting better as the season went on. It was really emotional. Knowing this was my last game, and Dodie's last game. Coach just thanked us for everything we've done. I got up and thanked my

teammates and thanked the coaches and everybody and knowing that was the last time I was going to address them as a Bradley Brave, as a captain, it was pretty emotional.

Q. Dodie and Andrew, what were the primary factors of you guys being able to stay together as a team with all the struggles that you've been through? Because a lot of teams in that situation they do fall apart and they have to mail it in the end. What was it that kept you guys together?

ANDREW WARREN: Well, at first it was us staying together as a team, as players. Off the floor, more importantly, that's where it first began. Then in practice, just going through things on the floor, encouraging guys, being positive when guys were messing up in practice.

Then from there, the coaches did an excellent job in staying positive with us. They could have easily as well going through the tough times that we were enduring, I think they really did a great job of being in our ear as a team, telling us to stay together, and us hearing that daily going through what we were going through just made us want to work that much harder and stay together even more as a unit, and that's what happened.

DODIE DUNSON: That pretty much sums up what Drew said. All you can do is get stronger when you're around everybody all the time.

Q. You guys arrived about three minutes left in the first half and they went on that run. Can you describe what happened to you guys?

DODIE DUNSON: Well, it was going back and forth. They made some shots, we came down, missed some shots. You know, they just took advantage of the situation. It was a tough fought game for us including the circumstances that we had for tonight. We didn't expect that to happen for last night, and you just play through everything.

Q. Andrew, you and Graham Hatch had some good match-ups over the years. What was it like being guarded by him?

ANDREW WARREN: He's a pretty nice guy is what I learned from him. Before each game before we first played him at home, he was like don't kill me tonight, man. Don't kill me tonight. He's done a good job. He's one of the more physical guys that has guarded me and he's done a pretty good job. I hate saying that because I'm such a competitor. He's done a good job. I'm just trying to take advantage of him being physical of me and using my quickness and speed to get around him and use my athleticism to my advantage.

There have been times I've done that, but I'd say overall he's done one of the better jobs of the guys in the league that have had to guard me throughout the entire game.

Q. Andrew, what happened on the technical foul?

ANDREW WARREN: Good question. I was trying to be a good player and go get the ball because of the offensive style. He made eye contact the way he rode in the ball. It wasn't right on, wasn't direct to him on purpose, but it was an accident. Just kind of slipped out of my hand, and he blew the whistle. It was like I'd never seen anything like that before, so that was kind of odd.

Q. Can you guys describe not only this season but your careers at Bradley coming to an end and what it's meant to you to play here?

DODIE DUNSON: It's been a great experience here. My three years I was here, from meeting new players, to players now. It will be a lifetime relationship when I leave with these guys. The coaching staff, the coaches have been great. They push me every day in practice. They gave me new challenges. I played a new role this year. It's been great.

ANDREW WARREN: I don't think I have enough time to speak on that, and I don't think it would be fair to everybody that's been a part of my career here at Bradley. Come and find me in the next couple of days or something. We'll do a little spread with me thanking everybody in the community and Bradley. That's if you don't mind. Okay, there we go.

Q. Jim, they really took away Dyricus's drives tonight. What different did they do than what happened last night?

COACH LES: I think their size, and they packed in the paint. It hurt us on both ends. I thought down the stretch when they got away from us in the first half, they really pounded the ball inside. If they weren't scoring, they were kicking it back out for easy, open opportunities.

Then the second chance opportunities were big and using their size, which was their advantage. I think that size played a part on the other end in materials of being able to close driving lanes and bring some size to that penetration.

Dyricus got there, but he's got to get a lot tougher to finish plays.

Q. What was the most impressive thing to you about this team given everything that they've faced?

COACH LES: Well, I told them after the game in life sometimes when you face adversity, the easy road is to give in. You know, this group continued to fight and battle and they stuck together and just continued to improve.

I think that the leadership from the seniors was paramount in terms of them being patient with the young guys and helping them along versus being critical, because they knew we needed those young guys to step up. As the year progressed, that was the difference in our team is the young guys really started to step up and play well.

They both talked about it. It's a tight-knit group in terms of you'd go over to their apartments and they'd all be hanging out together, playing video games, watching NBA games or college games together. I'd like to think it goes back to the character we look for when we recruit young men.

I told them you find out who you are, be not when things are going well, but when they're not going so well. I found out there's a lot of character in that locker room. Like I said, that was a pleasure to be a part of in lieu of some of the things I was hearing from coaching friends.

When we had to deal with the news at the beginning of the year, and saying here's all the traps and things you're going to have to deal with. I'm proud to say a lot of those things never materialized with this group.

Q. Without Jordan, what was your game plan, so to speak, against a team had this size?

COACH LES: We wanted to try to match up with Durley, with Will, and then Jake playing Ellis. We tried to go size on size, and play motion, and play Sticks and Will together. And we wanted to get help from the perimeter. We wanted to force the team to shoot the ball from the perimeter and get help. We know those guys are going to need had he. We couldn't afford to get them in foul trouble.

We talked about last night against VanDeest, we didn't give them low post touches. They did a good job being physical, and catching the ball low. When you catch it that low, it's a long way for those perimeter guys to come and help it takes a little bit longer.

I thought their ability to establish low positioning about it, now you're coming from a longer recovery. When they kicked it back out it's a longer way. Give them credit for being physical. They're really good at moving the ball. Now they get. They're so big, and we got over the top passes. They're really good, give them credit that that was our weakness tonight, and they attacked us inside. It wasn't necessarily as much as what we didn't do, as much as they're good at what they do.

Then they're running guys in left and right, and coming in with fresh bodies that are energetic and continue to be physical. Takes a lot out of you with fresh guys pounding you all the time. You know our big guys were huffing and puffing.

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