

**March 4, 2011**



Missouri State – 58  
Southern Illinois – 56

An interview with:

**COACH LOWERY  
MAMADOU SECK  
JUSTIN BOCOT**

THE MODERATOR: We have the Salukis with us. Coach, your thoughts on on the game?

COACH LOWERY: Firstly, you've got to give credit to those guys. I think in the last two minutes they held us scoreless. I don't even know if it was toughness more than we tensed up a little bit more. We had some opportunities up nine. Missed the front end of a 1 and 1. Up three, missed the front end of a 1-1. Those are things we can't defend.

We have to make those plays to stretch the game and tighten them up to make sure had a they're not thinking it's a two-possession game instead of a one-possession, one-shot game.

**Q. Justin, can you talk about how hard you played today, and how badly you wanted this win today?**

JUSTIN BOCOT: We wanted it really bad. I thought everybody contributed. But down the stretch we can't allow those things to happen. We can't miss free throws and block outs, and allowing the offense to get to where they want to get on the court. That cost us the game in the long run.

**Q. Todd mentioned the effort, can you talk about, was it adrenaline, emotion? Was it just a little bit of running out of gas at the end too maybe?**

JUSTIN BOCOT: I don't really know. It seems like everybody was giving it their all, but at the end we kind of missed free throws and that kind of cost us the game. We kept letting them get

their heads up. They're a good basketball team. You can't let them do that.

MAMADOU SECK: I think they did good in the last minute, making the shots and making their plays. I think in the end, that's why they won.

**Q. Mamadou, can you talk about how you made them play from behind the entire game. How much was that to your advantage today?**

MAMADOU SECK: I mean, as a player you have to come and play every day. That's what you do is come and compete. But as I said, today we didn't really end the game very well. As I said, the last two minutes they played very good and they made big shots.

**Q. Coach Martin said you were a tough match-up problem for Will Creekmore. Did you feel that was something you could exploit coming into the game was your match-up with Creekmore?**

MAMADOU SECK: In the last few games we played, usually like they cover me so they can bring the double from the guard. So I think I used a little bit of what they do. I think in the end they doubled, so I had to go take the ball out again. I just played my game, as I say.

**Q. Justin, can you talk about the consistency of effort today? It seemed from the opening tip you were going 100 miles an hour, and it pretty much stayed that way. Can you talk about that?**

JUSTIN BOCOT: Yeah, we knew if we lost, we were done. Everybody that came in we tried to give it their all. We kept pushing the issue. Turn our defense into offense, and we did that until the end, the last two minutes, really.

**Q. Mamadou, can you talk about the season and what you'll take from your first year here?**

MAMADOU SECK: When I come here, I

was thinking I was coming to win it and help the team go back to the Sweet 16. That was the main reason I came here.

So that wasn't the case, but I think we have good players and good coaches. We didn't really play the way we were supposed to the whole year. I think if it were we are a better team than that.

**Q. Can you talk about the emotion like after the game for the seniors. What was it like? What do you tell a guy like Carlton who's played his last game?**

JUSTIN BOCOT: There's nothing you can tell him. Everybody that has played basketball has those kind of days. Coming in from high school, you have to lose at one point. But I love my seniors, man. Seeing their face at the game kind of brings everybody down because you know that's the last time you're going to play with them.

I came in with Carlton, so it just hurts that we couldn't go out with a win here.

**Q. What were your thoughts whenever Missouri State had tied the ballgame?**

JUSTIN BOCOT: I felt we needed to get a basket. It just didn't go that way. We had to go down, try to get the best shot we could possible, and tighten down on defense to win the game, but it didn't go that way down the stretch.

**Q. You had Seck on Weems most of the game. What was the thinking there?**

COACH LOWERY: They misdirected and we switched. It didn't start out that way, and that was a hard shot. That wasn't a shot he practiced. That's a shot that a good player makes. So we'll take a run and jump hook going right over him, over a guy as opposed to the face-up three pointers that he had been getting down the stretch.

You know, mono-a-mono, you have to step up and make that play defensively, and we didn't.

**Q. Can you talk about the effort your team gave you and how hard they played?**

COACH LOWERY: That's got to be the effort all the time. But we had no distractions here. We got a chance to work on things offensively that we hadn't in the past. Now for us we didn't have Troy today either. We think if we'd had him we'd have another offensive weapon that we could use.

Down the stretch, Kendal and those guys got a little tired after the early game yesterday. You know, Justin banging his elbow up. But we

can't make excuses. They took the game from us in the end. Like I said we make those free throws, and it changes how he they have to manage the game too.

**Q. You mentioned Kendal. Can you talk about the quick start that he got off to and just the way your defense played throughout the entire game?**

COACH LOWERY: We held them at 33%. Everything that we've tried to teach them all year came into play at the end when it mattered the most. As a coach that's disappointing. Like Seck said, why couldn't we do that from the beginning? That's why he's been locked in all year and why he plays that hard. Our guards were on them to get to that level of cutting and playing our motion and defending. Now they've seen the benefits of it, and now it's time for those guys to step up and move forward.

**Q. Can you talk a little about coming back like after 12 or 18 hours? In a way, can that be helpful in that you don't have time to worry about anything? You just go out and play?**

COACH LOWERY: Yeah, they're the No. 1 team, so they have a longer rest. They got to watch us. But it was good for us to play a game. Us playing at noon, I don't think it hurt us. I just think we missed two front ends ask one and ones, that's it. I don't want those guys to think because you have a disadvantage, you can never win.

We played at noon, and we played them 59 minutes, and we won for that 59 minutes. They just got us in that last minute when it really counted. That is the way we have to look at it with them. You know, we played really, really well today. To see how hard we cut, and the things we did, and the poise we shows when it came time to really step up and really defend and win the game.

**Q. Mamadou had 14 points this afternoon. I thought that was key for the 59 minutes.**

COACH LOWERY: We can't rely on him to get every single one of them. First of all, he's frail, and he gets them by out toughing people and chasing and using his athleticism. We needed Carlton to be a factor as a senior. You want him to go out way better than that. You don't want him having so much doubt in his head, and that's what

he's going to remember the last time he played. I told him I apologize. I don't want you to go out like this where you feel you didn't help us win this game.

The other guys played well. They picked them up. Just like yesterday, they picked them up today, and that's where we're learning. When your best guy doesn't play well, you still have a chance to win because everybody else does their job.

**Q. That last inbounds play is obviously not the look you wanted to go. What did you have drawing up there?**

COACH LOWERY: Home run. That was Seck's first time being in that. Obviously we're going to throw the home run pass, and he panicked and ran the wrong way. As soon as the ball got thrown he looked back while the play is going on. That's him. We set up a pick on the guy on the ball so we could actually throw the long pass because they put the big guy on him.

And Kendal set the screen and picked Carlton up to throw the long ball. But we weren't in the right place and he had to shoot a long three.

**Q. I thought Kendal got a decent look on that basket there. He didn't make it, but are you thinking maybe in the future him and Seck will be the guys you go to?**

COACH LOWERY: Well, we had Kendal, and Carlton came around off the pick, and Carlton was open behind him off the top of the key. That's a bang-bang play. With Seck's screen, we did two-man action with him; and Carlton came around and said, go. It's got to go to one of those guys.

But you look how our motion ran today, it was Kendal, Justin and Mamadou. It was those three guys running and sprinting. Now you add Troy who finally figured out what to do, and he can really shoot the ball. He's shown us that.

**Q. You've mentioned effort a couple times. Can you talk about everybody that came in. Crowder didn't play many minutes, but he had big defensive plays. Taylor, everybody, it's as hard as they've played all year.**

COACH LOWERY: Right, but like I said, there's no distractions leading up to it. We got a chance to prepare the right way really for the first time all year. And it showed in how we executed and the things we've got. The one thing that helped the most, Justin finally got healthy in the last three weeks.

You know, his numbers were great in his last five or six games. He's in at the end of the game, and that's what it's about.

He's an older guy. He came back. He played hard. He played like a good teammate, and his athleticism shone. When he can't use his athleticism, that takes away from who he is.

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