

March 4, 2011



Creighton – 60
UNI – 57

An Interview with:

**COACH JACOBSON
KWADZO AHELEGBE
JAKE KOCH**

THE MODERATOR: Northern Iowa Panthers are with us. Coach Jacobson, a statement on the game and then questions for the student-athletes.

COACH JACOBSON: I thought our guys competed extremely hard and prepared very well this week. Didn't play well enough at the offensive end of the floor in the first half, and put ourselves in a little bit of a hole. But made it a very competitive basketball game. And because of that, we had a chance to get the thing tied there at the end.

Q. On that last shot, did you feel you were hit hard enough that a foul should have been called?

KWADZO AHELEGBE: No, just needed to get a better shot. That's all that was. No, no foul or anything like that.

Q. Could you fill us in a little bit on what this meant to you losing this game? I know you might play one more game, but this being your final conference game. How hard does it sit with you?

KWADZO AHELEGBE: It's so tough. Man, just have some great teammates. I had one of the best coaches in the country coaching me. It's just so tough to know that there's just a couple things that you left on the floor that you can't get back. That is the toughest thing. It hurts. Man, it hurts.

Q. Do you feel like this team deserves post-season play? What would another game mean to you?

KWADZO AHELEGBE: It would mean a lot, man. Just to have an opportunity to play with my brothers, man, it would mean a whole bunch to me.

Unfortunately, we let one go here. But if we had the opportunity to play anywhere, it would be just a great experience to play with my teammates one more time.

Q. Obviously you're not always the guy guarding him. But when a guy like Kenny Lawson comes out and hits four out of five three pointers, is it a little bit of a helpless feeling almost?

JAKE KOCH: There are things we could have done as players, rotated and switched. He's a good shooter, but there were things we could have done to get out there with high hands. He made them when he had open looks.

Q. Jake, just talk about at mid game you guys went eight minutes without scoring. What was not working for you guys at that point?

JAKE KOCH: Shots weren't falling. That's pretty much it. Everyone's going to have those moments in games. When those times occur, you've got to lock up on the defensive end. We were able to keep it close within striking distance, and it's a tough loss.

Q. Coach, in the first half you said had you some trouble offensively. Do you think it was the way they came out? Were they too amped up or was it just a matter of the ball not going through?

COACH JACOBSON: Probably a combination of a couple of things. I didn't think that our pace was good enough for most of that first half. Creighton defended some of the things. They did a nice job defensively on some things in

the first half. And we did have some good opportunities. Kerwin had a pretty good look on an out-of-bounds play. A.J. had one on transition inside of 10 feet. A couple of those that didn't go in.

So I think a combination of them playing pretty well defensively. Our pace wasn't good enough and we missed a couple of open ones.

Q. Did you have a play set, or was that a place where you give your senior, Kwadzo a little freelance and say, do what you feel is right?

COACH JACOBSON: We've got with that much time on the clock, we've got a handful of plays that we've got I felt like our best option, and knew we would get a good shot. With having Kwadzo bring it and drive it at him and shoot that top of the key three. I didn't -- I put him in a tough spot. I didn't do a good enough job of getting us a great possession right there. But when you've got a guy that's done everything he's done for our program, he's had a lot of responsibility for a long time. So I should have gotten him a better shot.

Any time he's got the ball in his hands it's a pretty good option for our basketball team. I should have just gotten him a better shot.

Q. It seemed like McDermott's play inside was a good spark for him in the first half. How do you think he responded here in his first Valley game?

COACH JACOBSON: I thought he played good. Obviously he had a terrific season. He played today like he's played in a lot of games this year. He had a good game.

Q. Do you think your team is worthy of postseason play and deserves a chance?

COACH JACOBSON: Yeah, I do. We've already been contacted by some people with the tournaments that are out there. Obviously, and can you see it in Kwadzo's face and when he talked, he's extremely disappointed that we won't be playing in the NCAA Tournament, as am I for him, and for Kerwin, and for Luke. Three guys that have put a lot of change in our program in so many different ways.

But there are some other options. Kwadzo said it very well. He really enjoys being a leader. He really enjoys being with his teammates, and he wants to be able to play some more basketball, so we're going to do that.

Q. When Kenny Lawson's hitting threes like that, what kind of pressure does that put on a defense? It's one thing when they repeatedly go on, but he hits four out of five threes. Is there anything you can do at that point?

COACH JACOBSON: I think Jake said it pretty well. Lawson obviously had a very good game. That was one of the key aspects to the basketball game. Being able to look back on it already, is his play off the bench. Knocking in some threes.

But it's his share of responsibility, the way in which we defend at certain times of the game or with certain lineups are the decisions that I make. Then there are some decisions that get made on the floor while the possession is going on. We need to do a better job of getting to him and not allowing him quite as much room to shoot some of those threes.

Q. If it comes down to it, what factors will you weigh in to determine whether you guys play in the CBI or CIT?

COACH JACOBSON: You know, I don't know that I'm fully ready to answer that, I guess. I think with all those things coming after Selection Sunday, we've got some time this week. Like I said, I've had some discussions already, but I don't know that I'm ready to answer that yet.

Q. Can you just talk about what these three seniors have meant to your program over the past three years.

COACH JACOBSON: Yeah, one of the harder things to do is trying to figure out what to say to your seniors after that last game is played. At least for me because we've been extremely fortunate, we've had some senior classes in a row now that have been terrific and done everything that you would ask of them. These three guys are no different.

Obviously, Kwadzo has played the last three seasons. His play has been pretty remarkable. We've won a lot of basketball games and won a lot of championships and been on some pretty big stages because of his play and his leadership.

And Kerwin, not talked about nearly as much, but very willing to accept whatever role was asked of him. That had a very similar impact on our program as Kwadzo did, it was just that

Kwadzo was in the paper more often. And I think everybody's well aware of what Lucas has meant to our program and brought to our program. His personality and his toughness is something that our fans and our university, that isn't going to be forgotten.

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