

March 3, 2011



An Interview With:

**COACH McDERMOTT
KYLE KORVER
ANTOINE YOUNG**

COACH McDERMOTT: It's great to be back. You know, we're excited to play Northern Iowa. It's different for me having just played them the previous week. It's the first time I've done it as a coach where you play that close together. So your preparation is really different, and I think you're able probably to spend more of your time in practice working on your own stuff because you just have prepared for them. There's not six or seven more tapes you can watch of their last four or five conference games because you've already been down that road.

So I think our guys have a good understanding of what we need to do to be successful against Northern Iowa. Having said that, Northern Iowa is not a team that beats themselves; you have to beat them. They're not going to make a lot of mistakes on an offensive end, they're very sound in their defensive approach, and we have to try to keep their point guard in check. We did not do a very good job of that in Cedar Falls and we lost. We did a better job of it in Omaha and we won, so I think that's really going to be a critical point to the outcome of the game.

Q. Coach, you touched on it with Kwadzo, only having the four-point Saturday. What kind of response do you expect a senior like him to have coming off of equal of a season low in points?

COACH McDERMOTT: Well, he's won six games in a row here, so he's not lacking for confidence in this building. And Kwadzo is a tremendous competitor and a great leader and an outstanding point guard. I know that he'll be ready

to play. I know that he'll have his team ready to play, and we're going to get his best shot. I don't think there's any doubt.

I don't think you can guard Kwadzo with one player. It's five players doing their job each and every possession to try to keep him in check, because if you don't, now you really have to commit a lot of help to him, and that's when he makes you pay with his ability to spread it across that floor to the many good shooters that they have on their team.

We have tremendous respect for him and the way he plays the game, and we know that he'll be ready tomorrow afternoon.

Q. Talk a little bit about the quick turnaround; you just played Northern Iowa on Saturday. From a strategy standpoint are you expecting a lot of changes and so forth, and talk a little about maybe overthinking things a little bit.

COACH McDERMOTT: We've really tried to guard as a coaching staff against overthinking and maybe outguessing yourself. I've known Coach Jacobson for over 20 years, so there's probably not much that he's going to do that I'm not aware of and probably not much that I could come up with that he and I haven't talked about at some point during our time together.

So it's going to be a matter of the teams going out, and the team that executes the best and makes the fewest mistakes is probably going to win. I don't anticipate a whole lot of changes on either side.

Q. You have coached in this tournament when this conference, you knew you could get multiple bids. You've coached in this tournament when you weren't really sure how many bids you were going to get. Can you describe what it's like, the nature of the mad scramble, because you know at this point it seems like there's just a finite amount of bids that may come out of the conference?

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COACH McDERMOTT: You know, going back to the two at-large teams I had my last two years at Northern Iowa, you come to St. Louis and you're fighting for your life. There's a sense of urgency to that and a sense of we have to be perfect in practice today because we need to take this on the game floor tomorrow, and we're going to extend our season and win the ultimate prize, and that's a trip to the NCAA Tournament.

You know, it's one of the neatest experiences professionally that I've ever had, and I really want my guys to be able to experience that. We don't have anybody on our team that's played in an NCAA Tournament, and I'd like to get back there myself.

You know, I'm not sure that our league is as far away as some people think. I mean, we had three years in a row where the conference champion also was the tournament champion. If that doesn't happen, we're a two-bid league the last three years and we're not talking about a lot of the things we've talked about. It's just there's been exceptional teams the last three years that kind of ran away from the league in a couple of the years and then dominated the tournament, as well.

I see it this year as there's been a lot of close games between the top two teams in our league and everybody else. Even if you look at some of the teams that are playing tonight have been in very competitive games against some of the upper teams in the league. So I think anything can happen this year, and I think that's what makes it exciting. I think there's a lot of teams here that feel like they could be the last one standing on Sunday.

Q. What's it like facing Coach Jake from a personal standpoint now that you're back in the Valley and you guys are both chasing the same thing here this week?

COACH McDERMOTT: You know, I don't enjoy it, and I'm pretty sure Ben doesn't enjoy it leading up to it because I want to see him do well because he's one of my best friends. If I had it my way, we'd finish first and he'd finish second, and if he had it his way, he'd finish first and we'd finish second.

But much like growing up with four brothers, when I competed against my brother, there's nobody I wanted to beat more than I wanted to beat my brothers, and the same thing goes for Coach Jake and I. When the ball goes up, we're both very competitive people. We both

expect that our team is going to do what they're capable of doing and come out on top.

But when the game is over, nothing will ever happen on an athletic court that will damage our friendship in any way. Our families are very close and always will be.

Q. This is your fourth go-around here as a player in St. Louis. Talk about your last trip here and the urgency to succeed here and also some of your experiences you can share with some of your teammates who haven't been here?

KALEB KORVER: Yeah, I've grown up watching this tournament. I've watched Kyle win a couple of these, Clay won one. I've been around it a lot, and we've had some disappointments the last couple years where we haven't even made it to the championships yet. So this is definitely a big year for me. I'd like to go to the NCAA Tournament, I'd like to win this tournament.

As far as experiences I can share with my teammates, we've had some close games here we've won, and we've had some close games lost. Then again this season we've kind of banded together and had a lot of close games go both ways. So I think for the most part just this season has been a big test for us, and it's going to prepare us well for this tournament.

Q. Now that UNI doesn't have Lucas, do you think they're as dangerous as they were before, and how does that change your preparation for this team?

COACH McDERMOTT: I think they're still very dangerous, they're just different. You know, Lucas was -- as many things as I thought he did well, he was one of the best doggone screeners that I ever seen, understood screening angles, and he would rattle you with his screens, and you're looking out of the corner of your eye to see where he's coming from. And he was such a good passer and such a good feel, he was almost a point center at times when they'd give him the basketball in the post and guys start cutting off him and he'd find shooters.

Obviously when you have a guy that's been in the program and has meant as much to that program as Lucas has, it's going to impact you. But Coach Jake has done a good job of changing what they're doing offensively. Often times there's five shooters on the floor, so you just

have to defend something a little bit different. They're going to stretch you out with their ability to shoot it, and when you do that, then they're going to try to take you off the dribble and get to the hole and get to the free-throw line where they're one of the best free throw shooting teams in the country.

It's had an impact, but they still are who they are. They compete, they take care of the basketball, and they're very sound defensively.

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