

March 3, 2011



An Interview with:

**COACH MARSHALL
J.T. DURLEY
GRAHAM HATCH**

THE MODERATOR: Our final session today is with the Wichita State Shockers. They'll play the winner of Drake and Bradley. Head Coach Gregg Marshall, Graham Hatch, and J.T. Durley, our student-athletes. Gregg, can you start with a statement about being in St. Louis, and then we'll go to questions.

COACH MARSHALL: We're excited to be here. Second season is upon us. And obviously there is the big prize that awaits with the opportunity to get the automatic bid, so we know if we make it that far, it's three challenging days, and we're ready for the challenge, I think. And we've got plenty of depth and talent, we've just got to go play well.

Q. Everything that happened last week, I know it was a disappoint on your end. But do you feel that this team still has a lot to prove here at the tournament? I guess it's a question for everyone, but I'll start with J.T..

J.T. DURLEY: Yeah, we had a disappointing week last week ending our regular season. We just want to go prove to the world that we're one of the best teams coming out of this conference, and we belong in the NCAA Tournament.

THE MODERATOR: Graham, next, and then Gregg you can finish up.

GRAHAM HATCH: Yeah, we came so close last year to reaching our goal. I think this year's just a perfect opportunity for us to achieve that. I think we're definitely ready as a team to do that.

COACH MARSHALL: Well, I just echo what these guys said. We got close last year and we didn't make it. Last week, close to a regular season championship, and if we're going to continue to make strides with our program which has been the theme the last couple of years, that is the next logical step is to win a championship.

Q. In a situation like this, is it tough to prepare for an opponent that you don't know who you're playing yet? Or would you rather have a scenario where throughout the regular season you know exactly who is on your schedule when you're playing them to prep for them?

COACH MARSHALL: To be honest with you, the biggest thing we need to do right now is get us better. We've been trying to do that this past week. Working on our offensive execution, our sharpness, our moving the basketball, cutting, screening, getting post touches. And I think we got better. I think we got better and we did not play well offensively in the first half against Missouri State. They get a lot of credit for that. But I think our guys saw when you don't move the ball and you're not crisp offensively and you're not thinking team, and you're not thinking I've got to do this and I've got to do it now is not a good recipe for us and the way we try to play.

So they worked pretty hard and they listened. We had a couple of good days of practice, and I'm looking forward to tonight's practice right after this so that we can keep pounding that in their heads that we're going to score. We've got enough talent. If we just have some type of semblance of organization and fluidity, if you will, on the offensive end.

Q. What did you learn about yourself as Gregg Marshall head coach of Wichita State? What did you learn about yourself in the regular season? Any regrets or personal accomplishments? Will that have any influence on tweaking or changing your

coaching philosophy to start the postseason?

COACH MARSHALL: I haven't reflected on it that deeply. I'm sure I will once we're done, which I hope is in several weeks. But that's a deal that I really haven't had time. I've been coaching this team, been recruiting the last couple of days, and just trying to figure out a way to get better and win some games this weekend.

I'm certainly not in the reflection mode yet of what I need to learn from this season and what I need to give. What I need to do really is give my fullest attention to these gentlemen beside me and the other seniors, because this is their last shot.

We've been talking all year about what it's like to participate in the big dance, and we have every opportunity to make it happen. But talking about it and doing it and fulfilling that are two different deals. We're working hard. I watched film today on Bradley and Drake from Saturday. Watched some of the Missouri State game again to try to figure out what was stymieing our offense, and we'll work on it this afternoon.

Q. Graham and J.T., do you feel like this tournament setting back-to-back days plays to this team's strength with the depth?

GRAHAM HATCH: Yeah, Coach mentioned our depth as a strength. I think these three games in a row, it's going to really help us out; and hopefully we can use that as a team and trusting each other, and when we do get tired to let Coach know so we can get other guys in there to keep it going. So, yeah, it will be a good stretch for us.

J.T. DURLEY: Yeah, it plays a big factor. Playing each team for a third time, they've got you pretty well scattered in how you play the game and our offense and stuff. It's just great to throw so many different bodies at opponents.

For us, it's a great tool that we have, the depth that we have. We can throw many different looks out there on the court and many different matchups.

Q. With the way you guys played on the road this year, what does that do to your confidence coming into the tournament knowing you're not playing at Koch Arena the rest of the way.

J.T. DURLEY: Being here is my fourth year playing in St. Louis. It's not so much as a different place for me. I've been here and I'm comfortable with the arena and my surroundings. We're just looking forward to the tournament we're

playing games. We're not thinking of it as a road game or home games. We're just focusing on the task at hand and just try to win three.

GRAHAM HATCH: Winning on the road rather than winning at home. For us, to win most of our games on the road is a huge confidence boost for us coming here. Knowing this atmosphere's not going to bother us because we've been doing it all year, winning in other places, so I think it's going to be a big advantage for us.

Q. Your team is in that bubble situation, do you personally feel you've done enough? What would you say to state your case? Also, is there another team that deserves to be in the tournament regardless of what happens this weekend?

COACH MARSHALL: I'm afraid we might be left on the outside looking in if we don't win the tournament. That is just my gut feeling. I think and I know that we can play with any team in the country.

But unfortunately, we can also play poorly enough and lose at home to Southern Illinois and they really played well that night. And they didn't play that great against anyone else during that stretch, so we obviously helped them get that victory that night by just not being inspired.

I've told the guys this is the one opportunity you have to take everything else out of play. You determine whether you get in or not. Three games in three days, you win. And no one asks questions. I just like to control what I can control.

I can't control how other teams play, but I think we can certainly control how we come out and how ready we are to go to battle and go to war. You can't control the shots, and I'm not talking about whether the shots go in, I'm just talking about our effort, our passion, our energy, our toughness, and the things that we can control.

I'm not going to get into Missouri State's deal. That is their business. That has nothing to do with me. Certainly I hope if the two of us meet again, that they have to worry about that.

Q. I know you guys would rather be the No. 1 seed. But do you look at being the No. 2 seed as more of an advantage maybe an easier road to championship Sunday especially sweeping all the teams on your side of the bracket?

COACH MARSHALL: The advantage they have is the times that they get to play. Their recovery time is a little better from noon to 6:00 on Friday. It's about six hours difference that they'll get to recover for Saturday, assuming they win. Like I said, there are good basketball teams throughout this league.

Southern Illinois beat us, we have a heck of a time with Evansville. If anyone saw that Indiana State game at our place, I mean, that's a triple overtime game. They could have won it several times and we finally ended up winning it.

I don't really get up too much. I know that the seeds rarely hold true anyway. So there's going to be an upset or two, and you've just got to play whoever is on that other bench when that ball is tossed up. We're getting ready for Drake or Bradley, and I don't even -- I'm not even thinking about the next round.

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