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AN INTERVIEW WITH:

**COACH MARTY SIMMONS
TROY TAYLOR
COLT RYAN**

THE MODERATOR: And we welcome Evansville to the podium with head coach Marty Simmons. Colt Ryan and Troy Taylor.

We'll begin the session with Coach Simmons making a statement about the contest, and we'll move on to questions for the student-athletes.

COACH SIMMONS: Just a tough, tough, grind it out, physical basketball game, where I'm sure it looked ugly at times. I thought both teams were giving tons and tons of effort out there. Congratulations to Indiana State. They did a lot of great things.

I'm very proud of our team and the way they hung in there and battled back, put ourselves in a position where we had a chance to win. Unfortunately, Indiana State made one more play than we were able to.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes, Colt Ryan and Troy Taylor.

Q. Colt, you didn't score in the second half of this game. What were they doing, maybe against you, or do you feel like maybe you kind of had an off game? Want to break down your second half today?

COLT RYAN: I think they did a good job on me, just sending extra defenders, even on tight cuts and stuff. I missed some shots that I would normally make and I should have made.

Yeah, they did a good job at sending extra attention.

Q. Troy, that final play was one that you guys have run at Missouri State. Can you kind of take me through what happened there.

TROY TAYLOR: On our offense or defense? I was just watching Colt and just going off of him, how he creates, how he drew in a couple of defenders, and I tried to slide my way around to the open spot. It's as simple as that.

Q. You guys were down ten with about ten minutes left. What was sort of the attitude, and what do you feel like got you guys back into it at that point?

TROY TAYLOR: Ten minutes is a lot of time in a basketball game. Our motto was, you each get five stops and see what happens from there. We got some stops, and people made big shots.

Then we were in striking distance, and then we really didn't want to look back from there.

Q. Troy, when you draw an assignment like Jake Odum, obviously, one of the better players in this league, what did you do to frustrate him?

TROY TAYLOR: I don't know. I guess I just try to do the same thing every game. Just be a gnat on defense or crash the glass on offense because I know he's a real good player. Just anybody in general, when they're guarding somebody and they're always -- somebody get a couple of offensive rebounds on them, that kind of throws their offense off a little bit because they're focused on me the whole time.

He's a real good player. Like I said, he's crafty, and I just try to do my best just to keep him in front.

Q. Colt, I know you had kind of big expectations coming into this. To fans or whatever, what do you want to say as you go out here? I know you guys will probably play another game, but what do you want to remember, anything like that?

COLT RYAN: Just that we played hard. We came over here with the mindset to stay for a while, but Indiana State is a great team, and they were able to get the win today.



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THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, thank you so much for your time and attention. You can return to your locker room.

Additional questions for Coach Simmons.

Q. Marty, you had a couple of tough calls at the end of the game. Were you maybe looking for a block on the one end and a foul near the end of the game? The last play, you saw it in front of your bench. Can you sort of go over those plays?

COACH SIMMONS: I'm not going to touch that with a ten-foot pole, Steve. Those guys are great officials. We've got some of the best in the country. Everybody's emotions are out there, and both teams were playing as hard as they possibly could.

I'd really rather not comment.

Q. Coach, kind of the same question I asked Troy. When there were ten minutes left, where did you see the game kind of change for you guys? D.J. obviously did most of the scoring, but was there anything that made that run for you all?

COACH SIMMONS: We just challenged them in the time-out. We'd had several breakdowns in succession there to give up the eight-point lead. And just challenged them to slow down and to execute better, things that we had set up in our game plan, and to give a little more effort.

Nothing mind-boggling. We just got away and got a little sloppy defensively. In a game like that, you can't do that when buckets are hard to come up with. Give the players the credit. They really rallied around that. Like Troy said, they really challenged each other to get five stops in a row.

I thought they fought and competed the entire 40 minutes.

Q. Coach, with what Troy's done for you his whole career, in terms of his rebounding, his defense, can you kind of reflect on that? Not just today, but really his whole career.

COACH SIMMONS: Yeah, for one, he's a terrific young man. He's been so much fun to be around the last four years, it's incredible. He's a self-motivator. He really takes a lot of pride in doing things the right way.

And then you look at him as a basketball player, he's a little unorthodox in that he's got huge

hands for a guard, point guard, and he's tremendously athletic, and he's a warrior at tracking balls down. It's certainly nothing that we've taught him at Evansville. He brought that to our program.

He's a very competitive young man. He was asked earlier -- I mean, Jake Odum is one of the more difficult guys in the league to guard, and trying to keep him in front of you is very, very difficult. He's got as big a heart as any player that I've ever coached. He just brings a tremendous amount of energy and positive enthusiasm to our basketball team.

Q. Coach, kind of the Colt Ryan question. What did you see them do the second half? Was it more Colt having an off day or maybe what Indiana State did or a combination of those things?

COACH SIMMONS: I'd say probably a combination of both. I'd say, as a team, we shot the ball too quick. We're not against quick shots if they're great shots. And we let their pressure, I think -- I watched the video -- force us into taking quicker shots instead of holding on to it, pivoting, and being strong with it, and executing cuts and screens, getting the ball into the core of the defense, driving the basketball, and making the extra pass.

We shot the ball. I mean, it's a lot different than the game at Evansville, where we had 26 assists versus that. I think you've got to give Indiana State a lot of credit, but I think our basketball team got a little frustrated with that, and our decision making wasn't as good as it needed to be.

But saying that, we continued to fight, scrap, and claw and really put ourself in a position to have a chance to win the game.

Q. Where are you guys going to go from here? You obviously have the record. You'll probably get an invite to one of the postseason tournaments. How will you handle that?

COACH SIMMONS: I don't think anybody's thinking about that right now, Jonathan. The amount of disappointment in that locker room following this game is probably as much as any I've ever seen in all my years of being a player, being a basketball coach. You're talking about four seniors. They gave their heart and soul to this

basketball program, and their number one goal was to have a chance to advance and play in the NCAA Tournament. Now that that's gone by the wayside, there's just -- I don't think right now they're thinking about it right now, and I'm not either.

I think, as the week moves on, we'll see whatever opportunities come up. My hope is that we will have some opportunities to play. I certainly would like to continue coaching this team and having another chance to compete for another championship.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you so much. Congratulations on your year.

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