

**March 9, 2013**



WICHITA STATE – 66  
ILLINOIS STATE – 51

AN INTERVIEW WITH:

**COACH DAN MULLER  
TYLER BROWN  
JON EKEY  
JACKIE CARMICHAEL**

THE MODERATOR: And we welcome Illinois State to the podium with Head Coach Dan Muller, along with Tyler Brown, Jon Ekey and Jackie Carmichael. As we have in the past sessions, we'll begin with a statement from Coach Muller, and then move to questions for the student-athletes and wrap up with Coach. Coach?

COACH MULLER: Yeah, congratulations to Wichita State and their players. They played a great game with great toughness. Just wasn't our day. Wasn't our day. We missed some shots that we've been normally making and they're very good defensively. They did hurt us on the boards, but we just, we didn't play great today, and they took advantage of it.

Proud of my team. I have a great group, great group of guys and a great group of seniors, and I'm very proud of them.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Tyler Brown, Jon Ekey and Jackie Carmichael.

**Q. Tyler, could you just talk about Tekele Cotton, what he tried to do to you defensively and what was kind of going on out there?**

TYLER BROWN: He just didn't do anything that I haven't seen before. Just denied me the ball a little bit and pressured me. I mean, I just felt like I just wasn't hitting shots.

**Q. Jackie, you guys fall behind 17-1 but were able to get the lead for a short time at the end of the first half and even in the second half. Was coming back and using a lot of energy**

**there, did that take a lot out of you guys? Did you guys feel your legs a little heavy there?**

JACKIE CARMICHAEL: Not really. I mean, I feel like we've been in that position numerous times during the season. So, I actually think it kind of helped us a little bit, because obviously, we've come from behind a couple times and actually been successful.

So no, not at all, actually.

**Q. Jon, when you guys did make that comeback there at the end of the first half, could you just kind of talk about what was going on out on the court? Seemed like Zeisloft hit a couple of threes, you had a basket. What was the mood of the team right there and especially at halftime, going in at halftime just down two points after what you guys had been through?**

JON EKEY: I feel like we just found our flow. We kind of started off a little slow there, but I think after Nick hit those shots and we made stops on defense, we felt like we had our legs under it. Like Jackie said, I don't think that hurt us in any way later in the game. It was just that we just couldn't sustain it for the entire time.

**Q. Jackie, Carl Hall seemed like he really had you defensively. Was there anything that really got under your skin? What was he doing right that was kind of holding you back in the first half?**

PLAYER 2: Nothing, really. I mean, I think he was just playing solid defense. Obviously, I missed some close shots, but that was really about it.

**Q. For Jackie and Tyler, I know the wound is pretty fresh right now. Would you like to see your season continue in one of these other tournaments?**

PLAYER 2: Definitely, I would love to still be in a Redbird jersey in late March. I just want to continue playing with these guys. I'm hoping that it's not over. But at this point, we just have to wait

**ASAP** sports  
...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

**Illinois State – 03.09.13**

and see.

THE MODERATOR: Tyler, your thoughts?

TYLER BROWN: Like Jackie said, I'm not ready to be done playing with this group of guys, and I just want to continue this season.

THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, looks like your obligations are complete. Thank you for your time and attention.

Questions for Coach Muller.

**Q. Dan, did they do anything defensively different this time than they did in Normal three weeks ago?**

THE COACH: They did. They pressured us more. They started the game picking us full court man, which they played off the point guard in both matchups, actually. They jumped on us. They extended their defense more than they had at our place.

They did a great job. They came out ready to roll. We turned the ball over. We couldn't make shots, obviously. I thought we got some decent shots in the stretch that we didn't make. But they made some adjustments.

**Q. Dan, in the second half, you guys get the brief lead. I think you got the first basket. From that point on, seemed like Carl Hall just kind of put their team on his shoulders. What was he doing? I guess what weren't you guys doing defensively on him?**

THE COACH: Well, I don't know if it was him in particular. I thought Armstead had unbelievable game. They were taking turns getting offensive rebounds. They were successful at what they do well. They offensive rebounded it.

We got a lot of good shots around the rim that we missed. But when you're physical, when you have length and you have depth, that can happen.

Carl had a great game. Don't get me wrong. But I thought it was a team effort. Different guys hurt us in different areas at different times. And they kind of took control. Five minutes in the second half, and it didn't stretch too big, but we never really got back in it as far as cutting it below six or seven, I think.

Their physicality was great. They've got great depth at positions, and their depth is physical. So it's what they do well, and they don't make adjustments when they come from the Bench. They continue to play like they want to play and certainly did that today.

**Q. Jackie's foul problems in the second half, how much did that disrupt his rhythm?**

THE COACH: Unfortunately, I think it did quite a bit, to be honest. He got a little tentative on the defensive end. They started hurting us around the rim in our zone. They made a good adjustment. But we didn't -- I think he was afraid to foul. And Jackie played a great game. He competed the entire time. But I think it did affect him a little bit. He missed some chippies around the basket. I don't think it affected those. When you get out of rhythm, that can happen.

**Q. Dan, the players obviously would like to continue playing in a tournament. What are your thoughts on that? What are your opportunities going to be, do you think?**

COACH MULLER: Having a tournament a week before everything else, I have no idea what our opportunities are. All I know right now is I would love to coach these guys longer if I could.

**Q. Dan, could you talk about Zeisloft and the contribution he made in the first half, the two big shots he really hit for you guys?**

COACH MULLER: Clearly hit two big threes when we came back. He hit the three that took the lead in the first half toward the end. That's what Nick does well. He competed. He had no rust on him, which was nice. Nick can shoot the ball. But he got some rebounds. He did a very good job.

**The reason we came back is because we got stops and rebounded. We scored in transition quite a bit during that stretch, and Nick hit some. I don't know if it's fatigue or what second half. He looked a little sluggish. But it was nice to have him back, and with Tyler in foul trouble, without him early in that first half, I'm not sure if we could have come back like we did**

**Q. Dan, what's going through your mind when you're down 17-1? And can you talk perhaps about switching up defenses? Was there more than that to be able to get back into it?**

COACH MULLER: At that point, 17-1, what's going through is at some point, we'll start playing well. I thought we were. This game's in ebbs and flows. We got up big yesterday. We did switch to a zone, a new zone that we had put in

over the past week and it worked very well. I thought it confused them a little bit. I thought it did. They made adjustments in the second half.

That got us rebounding opportunities. We pushed the ball and scored. It started with our defense. They just hit us. We were not playing like we are capable of, obviously, down 17-1. I thought if we could get going, see the ball go in the basket a couple times, we could go on a run, and we did.

**Q. Was it a match-up zone? Had you done it before?**

COACH MULLER: Haven't done it before this year. I've done it in the past. It's kind of a match-up. It's a two-three match-up type thing.

**Q. Have you done it this year?**

COACH MULLER: No, no.

**Q. Dan, Tekele Cotton seemed to do a good job on Tyler Brown. How did that change your offense or take things away from your offense?**

COACH MULLER: Cotton did a great job. Tyler's been face guarded for the last four or five games and we found a way to get him the ball with opportunities to score. Obviously, got in foul trouble in the first half, which limited him. I thought Tyler looked a little tired today, unfortunately, and he's been carrying us for a while. So he certainly has that right.

But Tekele -- you know, Cotton's physicality, his length, we were having a hard time getting him the ball on plays that we usually run for him. And then also, just in our base offense, that obviously affected our offense. We did not shoot it very well today, to say the least. Tyler's been pretty good for us lately.

**Q. Coach, you talked about a post-season opportunity for you guys. If that doesn't come, this is your last game as your first season as a head coach. Can you talk about what this year's been like for you and how you've grown along with the team?**

COACH MULLER: Yeah, I mean, obviously, we hope we're still playing. It's hard at the end of any season when you're part of a group and obviously you become very close. I'm just very appreciative of these players and their character and their integrity. We had a bad day today. But that doesn't take away from the fight

that they had, the things they do off the court, the ways they've handled themselves, and it's been very fun. It's been very fun.

I've learned quite a bit, of course. I'll continue to learn. Hopefully, they feel like I've done a good job. But they represent Illinois State University in the right way and I'm very appreciative of my players, and this program's about our players. I'm disappointed I couldn't help them more this weekend to experience what it feels like to win a championship.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you so much. Congratulations on your year. Good luck down the road.

COACH MULLER: Thank you.

**FastScripts by ASAP Sports**