

March 4, 2010



**COACH TIM JANKOVICH
LLOYD PHILLIPS
DINMA ODIAKOSA
OSIRIS ELDRIDGE**

THE MODERATOR: The Redbirds are with us. They'll play the Sycamores in the 8:30 game. Three student-athletes and Coach Tim Jankovich. We're going to ask Coach Jankovich to start with a statement, and we'll go to questions for all the participants.

COACH JANKOVICH: I'm excited to be here, and I'll answer any questions you have.

Q. This is for the players -- coach said earlier in the week that there's some kind of scuttlebutt going around that when you guys get to the finals on Sunday, have you heard anything like that? Is that kind of hard to guard against that type of thinking?

OSIRIS ELDRIDGE: I guess just being here the last past three years in a row people kind of assume that we're going to get there automatically. But as players, we know how hard it is to, you know keep, you know, repeating that and to get back to that same spot.

We can't listen to that type of stuff. We've just got to go out and do what we do each day and that's play basketball. And to make it to the championship, but nothing is written in stone that we'll be there on Sunday.

DINMA ODIASOKA: According to Coach most important part of the game is tomorrow night, so we're not thinking about Sunday. We're just putting all the energy we have into our next game. And that's what we're going to do.

LLOYD PHILLIPS: I didn't know the game was on Saturday and Sunday. There's a game Friday. Saturday and Sunday will take care of itself. We have a lot of basketball to play.

Q. You and Marshall have had an entertaining mono-a-mono over your four years. Talk about the match-up with him over the course of your career, and obviously it's going to be an important one tomorrow night.

OSIRIS ELDRIDGE: It's been great. We came in as freshmen. He's a great player. He's tough to play against, tough to guard one-on-one. We're going to need a lot of help tomorrow. They do very well. And again, we're just going to try to go out and play the best defense I can against him and hope everybody else can help me out with him.

Q. I'd like you to comment on it also. Could you talk a little about the progress you've made from day one in this program to where you are now? And the things you developed as a player? And then, Tim, kind of basically the same question?

DINMA ODIASOKA: I'm really, really excited about what I completed. I wouldn't be anywhere if coach didn't have me come here. Before my sophomore year, I red-shirted that year. I didn't really know what my basketball career was going to be like until Coach came in.

I was thinking different things. Leaving school or I don't know. But Coach came in and really that turned my life around. And he told me things I needed to work on. I just listened to him, and I give him most of the credit whatever happened to me. I really think he was the one who put me in the place that I am today.

COACH JANKOVICH: I've said so many times before, Dinma is the mold. He's the model for what a college athlete should be in my opinion in every single category in school and in practice and as a teammate. Work ethic, I don't know if I've ever had anyone that I can remember more interested in learning and taking learning more serious than Dinma has.

I also don't know if I can ever remember in all the years I've done this if a guy who was nearly the player of the year in a conference also was the most improved player in the conference according to the voting. I don't know if you'll ever find that or see that. But I think that speaks volumes to his commitment for everything he does. It's been fantastic.

Q. Previously I've heard your coach go on for ten minutes about Dinma. You having him as a teammate having seen his development, I'd just be interested in what your perspective is and your appreciation for what he's accomplished and what he's done?

OSIRIS ELDRIDGE: I'm happy for Dinma. As a first guy, Dinma was already here. He was just back then just, you know, just raw. Just a raw talent. You knew back then that he had everything to be the player that he is now. But he just needed, like he said, someone to guide him and help him become that player.

I think for me, too, I feel like when Coach got here he came and he helped this program, you know, and me and Dinma. Everybody that was there helped him out tremendously.

Dinma just like Coach said, worked every day like countless hours in between class. Saturday, Sundays after practice he's in there shooting free throws. He just worked, worked, worked. You can't ask from him nothing more. Everything he got this year he deserved. It's been not another player like that on our team.

Q. You played Indiana State last week. Did that make it easier this week to prepare for them? Was it just basically kind of the same?

COACH JANKOVICH: No, it always is easier when you've played some. Easier in the sense that it's fresh in your memory. But not easier in the sense that you're working any less hard or whatever.

But definitely a lot of it comes back to you. You remember what they run and some of the thoughts that you've had and all those kind of things, probably they'd say the same thing. I don't want to speak for them.

It's good because it's fresher and you don't have to dig quite as deep as you did before. I don't think it affects the outcome, really in anyway because it's even for both teams. But I kind of prefer it that way.

Q. You've got the Defensive Player of the Year, league leader in steals. What does Coach Jankovich instilled in you guys that you play such passionate defense?

THE MODERATOR: Lloyd, Dinma, and Osiris.

LLOYD PHILLIPS: If you don't defend, you won't play. That's what we have to do to win in this league. A lot of teams in this league can score, but it's the teams at the top that are the best defensive. Coach brings it up all the time. Northern Iowa played their games, the defensive games in the 30%. So they're number one. That's what we have to do.

DINMA ODIASOKA: Coach, the first year he came here we really were a great defensive team. And last year we were so close to that, too. And this year coach would be trying to like get everybody to play the defense that we want.

And I think we as seniors, we already know what we need to do defensively. And so we just need to show that so the young guys can join in and do the same thing and that's what we try to do.

OSIRIS ELDRIDGE: What those guys said. No, anyway, but just, you know, I guess since coach being here, you know, his key -- his main key was just defense. That's given him the success, and all the winning, and everything back to ISU.

Like Dinma said, as seniors and as a team, we tried our best to try to bring that every game. Without defense you really can't win. You can't win. You can score all you want, but you're just playing fool's gold with yourself.

Q. I'm curious who you would have voted for for Defensive Player of the Year. Someone who really gave you a hard time on defense.

THE MODERATOR: Lloyd first, then Dinma, then back to Osiris.

LLOYD PHILLIPS: I would have voted for Dinma.

OSIRIS ELDRIDGE: Our team, I'm voting for Dinma.

DINMA ODIASOKA: I'd probably say I'd probably say on our team, I would probably say Lawson from Creighton.

OSIRIS ELDRIDGE: I would probably say -- just one person or a team? As a team they did a great job on me, I would say Evansville. I think they did a good job guarding me and stuff like that.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports