

THE MODERATOR: We're ready to begin with LSU.

COACH JONES: I thought the guys came out ready to play. I thought we did a great job of getting out of the gate and getting steals, rebounds, and playing good on the defensive end of the floor and holding them. Got up, I think, 9-4, 9-6. Unfortunately for us, we got stuck on 9 and defensively couldn't get things to click.

I thought A&M got going. They started making some shots, and they started feeding off of it. Unfortunately for us, we sit there in the first half and got a couple fouls, got a couple guys in foul trouble, and I thought we lost a little bit of our edge, a little bit of our flow. Unfortunately, going in at halftime with only 13 points, which is a low for us, and coming back out in the second half, more of the same.

Very disappointing for us to find and pick the day to have a bad shooting day and not get anything to go. But thought the guys at least tried to finish the game the right way.

Q. Ben, when Craig got that foul, did you feel the game kind of start slipping away once he got off the floor?

BEN SIMMONS: He's a big part of our team. So losing him and then me getting that second foul and then the third foul, it was tough on us. But, no, it was a bunch of different things coming into it. They were shooting well. We weren't rebounding and just consistent on the defensive end.

Q. Ben, you all have beaten some good teams this year. Did you ever see, with the players you have, getting that far behind in a game like this?

BEN SIMMONS: I didn't expect that to happen, but it got out of hand a little bit. But we were just trying to fight back. When the foul trouble happened, free throws, box out. A lot of things went into that game, and I definitely didn't expect that.

Q. What made it so tough to score against them? Was it more them or more of you guys?

BEN SIMMONS: A bit of both. For us, when I was catching down low, they were sending two guys over to block the shot. We're playing pretty good defense with the zone they jumped into when Jones got that second foul. But they played hard and looked like they wanted it more.

Q. Do you want to continue playing, whether it be in the NIT? Do you want your school to accept that bid? Do you want your school to accept an NIT bid? Do you want to keep the season rolling?

BEN SIMMONS: Whatever the future holds. I want to play with this team as long as I can. I love my teammates and my coach and stuff, and I'm having a great time playing with these guys. These are like my brothers to me. I don't want to leave.

Q. Ben, when you came here, did you ever consider that it might be NIT instead of NCAA Tournament? Did you see this number of losses coming?

BEN SIMMONS: For me, I just wanted to play and do whatever I can to win for my team. I didn't tell myself where I was going to be, where the team was going to be. All I knew was we were going to go out and work hard and try to get better every day.

Q. Johnny, same question about the fouls earlier. Did you feel like the game, that's where it separated once they got maybe a little more athleticism on the court than you had?

COACH JONES: I thought it changed momentum for us. I thought Craig and Ben were doing a good job of certainly putting themselves as a force in the paint, and I thought they did a great job of allowing us to have a flow there and rebounding and defending.

When Craig went out, I thought the quick fouls, I thought the game changed. And it got to the point to after Ben's second foul, taking him out, I thought they did a much better job. And we wound up, unfortunately, having to put Ben back in, and he picked up his third foul.

That's not something we're used to doing, playing without both of those guys. They've been a very integral part of our

team all year long. And to play without those two guys in the first half was tough.

Q. At what point do you stop coaching the Xs and Os and just try to keep the wheels on the thing in a game like that?

COACH JONES: I just think that mostly you have to make sure the guys try and stay attached. One of the things we needed to do probably was try to attack and stay in attack mode and trying to get the ball to the basket because we just couldn't get shots to fall. Obviously, you know guys are going to get frustrated, but you want get your shooters to keep shooting, and hopefully they'll be confident in the shot as something to go down. And we just couldn't get it going that way today.

But you're absolutely right. I think it becomes more of an emotional thing and psychological, and you have to make sure that you keep them up.

Q. How will you view this season in its entirety?

COACH JONES: I think we've had a long season because of the fact we played without two guys up and about Christmastime that were starters for us, in Keith Hornsby and Craig Victor. When we got those guys, I thought we did a great job of playing through a lot of stretches and was very competitive in a very tough conference.

But to get here to a conference tournament and putting ourselves in the situation to have with the double bye and playing on yesterday against a very game team that had put two really good games back to back, winning that basketball game and coming into the game in the right mindset today.

But today is very a disappointing loss, and nothing to the kids or anything else outside of us missing shots and couldn't get shots to go down and couldn't get enough consecutive stops on the other end to make things happen.

So as a season, we've had some great ups, but I think any time you end the way we did today, you're very disappointed.