

**March 12, 2014**



Boise State – 83  
San Jose State – 52

An Interview With:



THE MODERATOR: We're joined by San Jose State. Coach, if you could make a few opening remarks about tonight's game.

COACH WOJCIK: How about, Wow, as the first one. I've never been associated with a game or seen a game that we started 25-0. Spotted them 25.

I've got to give those kids credit and Leon and his staff. They came out and guarded us. They really defended tonight and really got after us.

You know, I think we shot 14% in the first half, 0-10 from three. We really dug ourself a hole to start the game. That was the difference, the first 10 minutes of the game. That's where it was lost.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. Chris, your thoughts on that start. What did you not do well and what did they do well?**

CHRIS CUNNINGHAM: I credit Boise State. They just came out really well-prepared. They just got after us. It was a learning experience for us as a team.

Going into a conference tournament, we now know the intensity that we're going to have to play with going into it, so...

**Q. Rashad, seemed like a blitz there at the start. What were your thoughts?**

RASHAD MUHAMMAD: Yeah, well, I don't think in my whole career I ever started off a game down that many points from the get-go.

We just tried to stay positive as a unit and just keep fighting, just keep attacking. We're never going to give up.

**Q. How far do you think this Boise State team can go in this tournament? Will you be shocked to see them in the championship?**

RASHAD MUHAMMAD: Around this time, March, you really can't sleep on any of these teams. You never know what can happen at this time.

I wouldn't be surprised to see them go all the way or lose next round.

**Q. Rashad, your thoughts on where the program is at. How do you keep moving forward?**

RASHAD MUHAMMAD: I mean, we've gotten so much better from the first time that we all stepped on the floor together.

We're going this way (indicating up). I'm happy with the guys. We just got to keep sticking together and we'll work things out real soon.

**Q. Chris, how difficult is it to stay engaged when you're down that much so soon?**

CHRIS CUNNINGHAM: Well, I wouldn't say it's difficult to stay engaged. Rather it is frustrating when we are down that much. But, you know, my teammates and I, and our coaching staff, we're very, very determined never to give up. I'm very proud of my team.

**Q. Chris, I noticed throughout the game, no matter what the score was, your bench was really positive. All the coaches kept coaching. What does that say about possibly where this program is headed?**

CHRIS CUNNINGHAM: I'm very excited for the program. I wish I had a few more years to be a part of it. I really think next year, two years from now, this program's going to be top three in this conference.

COACH WOJCIK: He's putting pressure on me there (smiling). Top three?

CHRIS CUNNINGHAM: I believe.

THE MODERATOR: We'll continue with questions for coach.

**Q. This Boise State team was one that kind of struggled to end the regular season. What was your thought as you took your team to the floor tonight?**

COACH WOJCIK: Honestly, I told Leon that he screwed me because there was a 5% chance we would play them going into the last game of the season. I knew they'd come out, those kids (tearing up), I knew they'd play hard. I have a special place in my heart for those kids. I don't mean to get emotional. I hope they win it all, I really do.

Those kids have worked so hard. Ryan Watkins, Jeff. When they came in as freshmen, they were like these kids. They didn't know what was going on. They were getting hit from all angles. You guys remember when we were the first year in the league. We had the 'Bad News Bears' games. We would fall down, they would shoot a layup.

I'm really proud of those guys. It was funny. My wife, we drew Boise State, my wife, she said, I don't want to play Boise State. She made a heck of a point. She said, The man upstairs wants you to see them play their last game and you'll be a part of it. I thought that was pretty good.

I'm really having a hard time talking about those guys because I spent a lot of time with them. But I'm really proud of my guys. We played hard. We could have folded, really folded. I told them after halftime, One thing as a human being, you have the power to choose. You can choose to eat right now. You can choose to sleep. You can choose to fold the tent or choose to fight. They chose to fight in the second half. I'm proud of my guys for that.

Sorry it took me long and winded to get through that. I apologize.

**Q. After you go down 25-0, Leon has always said about your team that they were going to fight. Even though you lost by a fair**

**amount, what can you take from that sort of thing?**

COACH WOJCIK: My guys aren't going to quit. I don't care who we're playing. I don't care where we're playing. I don't care how many points we're down. We're not going to quit. That's just who I am. I've always been that way. I hope they're taking on my personality. We will continue to fight like that.

I know good things are on the horizon. It's just hard when you're going through it. I told those guys, When you get hit with the adversity, that's when you find out the true measure of a man. I told them to keep their heads up and get ready for next year.

**Q. Some of the challenges you have at San Jose State, we talked about you possibly being a sleeping giant in the conference, what are some of the things on the top of your head getting San Jose State exactly where you want it to be?**

COACH WOJCIK: I think the number one thing is recruiting. You've got to get players, bottom line. Where we're located is important. We're involved with kids right now that we wouldn't be involved with at a lot of schools in our league just because the kids like California where we are.

Now being in the league that we're in, those kids that we might not get and have gone away to maybe an Arizona State or a PAC-12 school, now they want to come back because now we are in a good league, the Mountain West, as compared to maybe when we were in the WAC, they didn't want to come back to the WAC.

Bottom line is you got to get players. Could be the greatest coach in the world, you ain't got players, doesn't matter.

**Q. Down memory lane one more time.**

COACH WOJCIK: You want to see me cry (smiling).

**Q. Talking with Leon, he mentioned it's tough to play you, you know each other so well. He said your family stayed at his house when you visited earlier this year. By coincidence you end up at the same team hotel. Your thoughts on Boise State, the impact it's going to have on you trying to improve your program.**

COACH WOJCIK: There's a coincidence,

same hotel and all that. I try to stay away from Leon. He goes, Hey, you want to go walk around? I said, I got tape to watch, I got Nevada tape. He got a chuckle out of that.

One thing I take away is the work ethic. One thing I take away from Leon, he's a very positive person. I learned that from him. A little bit more so than anybody else I've ever worked for, to be honest with you. All the other guys I worked for it was this, this, this. Leon was more, you know him, laid back and be positive. We have our health. We have our families. It's not the end of the world.

That's the one thing I learned taking the new job at San Jose State is that I had to be positive this year. It wasn't very easy for me to be positive because I'm so competitive.

But I think our kids played off of that, fed off of that positive input that we tried to give them. I told him after the game, there wasn't a day, honest to God, even after practice, when we were 0-14 in the league, and those kids came to practice with their heads down. That's when I know I've got good kids and we're going in the right direction.

Bottom line tonight, it was men against boys. Derrick Marks posts up. We got nobody to guard Derrick in there. We have to get stronger, we have to get bigger. That will happen not just in the weight room but with maturation process. It's going to happen. We've just got to continue to work hard. There's no other way about it.

I told the kids, it's not like I'm going to sprinkle pixie dust on you and all of a sudden you're going to be a heck of a player. You have to work on it. That's what we'll do in the off-season here.

Appreciate you not letting me go down memory lane too much there. I really do. Appreciate it, guys.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach.

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