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Illinois-Chicago vs. Oklahoma Postgame Quotes

March 15, 2002

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Head Coach [Jimmy Collins](#)

On the game:

"I'm extremely proud of my kids. I'm extremely proud of their hustle and the way they played and the way they hung in there. We were down by eight at halftime and played them even in the second. I don't think they quit one iota. They worked hard, but we had some bad breaks, and we missed easy shots. When you lose to a team the caliber of Oklahoma, you can't do anything but be proud of the way you played."

On the physicality of the game:

"We play in a physical conference. You don't hear a lot about it, but the conference is very physical. The difference at times was that we didn't hold our block outs like we should, and it looked like it was physical because our guys were getting knocked around. I think the refs did a good job of not making those calls. It was physical and we knew it would be. Unfortunately, their athletes were bigger and faster than what we put out there. But again, I'm proud of my players."

On Oklahoma's Aaron McGhee:

"Aaron wasn't highly recruited in high school, he was a little overweight. He didn't put forth the effort that it requires to be

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an outstanding player. Since that time, he's gotten into Oklahoma's program and decided that he wanted to be a pro. Make no mistake about it - he is that, he is a pro. He's not just an inside player. He plays outside. He makes passes, plays sound defense. He is a professional basketball player, and that's come through hard work."

Senior Center [Thor Solverson](#)

On Oklahoma's defense:

"We've played physical teams all year, and I thought we were just as physical today by hanging in the game with them. We played tough defense against them today."

On the close margin of the game:

"I thought we stayed in the whole game, and we never fell out of it. It's tough to lose by a closer margin than a bigger one because you worry about all the 'what ifs.' We did not play scared today, but it will not be the last time the Flames will be here."

Sophomore Guard [Martell Bailey](#)

On his NCAA Tournament experience:

"It's definitely hard work because you play better teams. The refs let you play the game. We just have to go back and work harder to return to the tourney next year."

Senior Guard/Forward [Cory Little](#)

On the game:

"The difference was they fought harder and hit the boards and we didn't. As a group we fought hard, but they wanted it more."

Senior Guard [Jordan Kardos](#)

On the game:

"We were expecting a tough game, but we just couldn't get over the hump. We just couldn't knock down the shots we normally do. Our defense kept us in the game. We played hard, but their defense was just a little better."

On Oklahoma's defense:

"They played like they were all over the court on defense. They were the quickest and toughest defense we've seen all year long."

Sophomore Forward [Cedrick Banks](#)

On his performance:

"I wasn't working hard enough, and they played great defense on me, but down the stretch, we just didn't execute. They are a nice team, and (Oklahoma guard Hollis) Price is tough to guard. They stayed in there, hit the boards, and they came out with the win."

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