



ROCK CHALK JAYHAWK  
**POSTGAME QUOTES**

// 2018-19 KANSAS MEN'S BASKETBALL

**#5/5 Kansas 87, Eastern Michigan 63**

Saturday, December 29, 2018  
Allen Fieldhouse // Lawrence, Kan.

**KANSAS HEAD COACH BILL SELF**

*Opening statement:*

"A little less energy, no energy in the second half, but we did some good things in the first half and played everybody and actually attacked their zone pretty well. Of course, it helps when you have a big guy (junior F Udoka Azubuike) you can just throw it up to and he can dunk it. I don't know that we've made shots. Obviously, we were 7-of-21 (from the 3-point line) and we probably made three of our last four, so that's not very good. It's nice to see Q (Quentin Grimes) see the ball go into the basket. I thought Devon (Dotson) was terrific and it's also good to have the big fella (Azubuike) back – what a difference he makes."

*On Udoka Azubuike's performance:*

"He was good. We decided to start Duke instead of David (McCormack). David has actually earned the right to start, but Duke is going to be our starter once we start league play and we didn't want him to get cold after warming up, so they shared minutes. I thought Duke got us off to a good start. He shot a high percentage, which he should with so many close shots, but it was nice to see him step up to the line and make some free throws too."

*On KU's 25 assists and Lagerald Vick's performance:*

"That's so misleading though because when it's a zone every possession, you get more shots off of the catch than when you're playing against a man. We shared it okay and I thought Lagerald (Vick) did some good things, but I thought he did some poor things too. I think people are guarding him a little bit differently, so he's kind of rushing his shot, which he just needs to make sure he takes good ones. We need him to play to his athletic ability. If I'm not mistaken, Lagerald scored two baskets in the first two minutes and then didn't score the rest of the game. We can't have him and Dedric (Lawson) having too many (off) nights like they had today."

*On Oklahoma:*

"I do think they're a pleasant surprise. I think they, Iowa State and Texas Tech have had terrific nonconference seasons so far; probably as good as anybody in our league. Other teams have had good nonconference play, but those three kind of stand out. They (Oklahoma) are going to play four around one and their four-man can really shoot. Tonight, Eastern Michigan's four-man isn't a perimeter threat, so it's easier for us to guard since statistically that proved out. When you're playing four around one and you can't trap the post, and certainly (Brady) Manek is going to set a ton of ball screens, that makes it a hard matchup. They guard probably better than they have in recent years. Last year, the year before they went to the Final Four, so I guess they had a great year, but certainly we're going to have to be better than we were today."

**KANSAS JUNIOR CENTER UDOKA AZUBUIKE**

*On if he expected to start and be as effective as he was today:*

"I kind of knew, (because) right before Christmas break Coach (Self) and I had a conversation about everything and he kind of asked me where am I (was) at right now. So I told him like, 'Yeah, I'll probably be ready to go after the break.'"

*On how his ankle feels:*

"It is getting better. I mean, I'm not 100 percent yet, but it's getting better."

*On the hardest thing about getting back out there to play; if he had to just put the injury just completely out of his mind:*

"That was part of it. Like I said, my coaches, my teammates -- they all told me to trust my feet, my legs and go out there and play. I spoke to Coach Rob (assistant coach Norm Roberts) and my trainer, (Billy Cowgill) the athletic trainer. That's all I had to (do was) go out there and trust my feet and my legs and take it one play at a time."

*On if he feels like he's fully healthy:*

"Like I said, it's a process. I'm getting there, I've been working hard every time I go to practice. I still do rehab and go every time. So it's still going to take me a little bit (of time), but hopefully by the end of this week or next I'll be 100 percent."



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### **KANSAS FRESHMAN GUARD DEVON DOTSON**

On what the difference is when Doke (Udoka Azubuike) is in the game:

"He opens up different opportunities for the offense. You know, when you get the angles and you can just throw it over to him and get the easy two (points). He'll clear up a lane and you know on the defensive side he is a rim protector, (he) gets his body in there and gets the rebounds."

On attacking the zone today:

"We knew that this is a zone-playing team and we had to get in the gaps, get it to the high post and at different opportunities; where we could pick apart their defense, whether from the outside or the inside or a lob. You know, (it's) just different ways of playing."

On how he thought the high-post players did today:

"I thought they did pretty good when they got in there and made a decision, made the right plays, but we can always improve. I think that was our first zone-playing team (so far this season). But yeah, we can definitely improve."

### **KANSAS RS-SOPHOMORE GUARD K.J. LAWSON**

On what he expected from Azubuike after watching him in practice headed into today's game:

"I expected him to be himself, even though he was fighting the injury. He is a very tough person against the adversity and you know, it's going to take time coming off an injury. Like he said, (he had to) trust your feet but once he got acclimated he did a great job of protecting the rim and rebounding the ball with his (ankle) condition."

On what he thought about Dedric Lawson's comfort level playing against the zone:

"Big guys who can pass (at a) comfortable level would be very high in the zone because really, you're just picking apart the zone. But they kind of made him pass with the zone, because you've got limited options and (have to) take the shot(s) that the defense gives you. (I think overall) He was pretty comfortable."

On who's the better 3-point shooter between brother Dedric Lawson and himself:

"I guess me, statistically (smiling). But I guess I need to take more shots and he's got to knock them down when he's open."

### **EASTERN MICHIGAN HEAD COACH ROB MURPHY**

*Opening statement:*

"I thought we competed today, brought a lot of energy and effort to the floor. A lot of credit to the home team. Capitalized off some mistakes, some turnovers. I thought we got off to a really good start to start the game but a couple bad shots and turnovers put them in transition. Azubuike, obviously his first game back, had a huge effect on the game. He's got size, athleticism, can catch, can finish and ultimately he can protect the paint. Credit to them for playing hard. I told my team before this, beating Kansas isn't going to win us a championship. Great venue and well-coached team."

*On the atmosphere:*

"We try not to put too much into preparing for a specific atmosphere because sometimes a name and an atmosphere can beat you if you get caught up in it. We have been to different venues like Syracuse and Kentucky, so these guys have experience in venues like this. I don't think they got caught up in it. Obviously, it's exciting for a chance to play in such a historic place and play against one of the greater programs in this country."

*On his game plan for Azubuike:*

"We did (think he would play). We planned on it. We figured since we are getting close to conference play. You never want to send guys into conference in their injury without some type of minutes on the floor. We didn't realize he would play as much, but he was super effective out there tonight the game could have been different and that's how much of an impact he really has."

*On the takeaway from today's game:*

"I talked to my team about energy and effort. We don't play against the score, we know it can be tough to beat Kansas on their home floor. So just continue to execute our offense and play well defensively. Just some takeaways, getting back in transition, no easy lay ups or quick threes early in the shot clock, being patient on offense. I thought we did a really good job pressuring our guards and making them think and change directions. We will learn a lot from this game, but more importantly the last 13 games for us in nonconference."



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## EASTERN MICHIGAN SENIOR CENTER JAMES THOMPSON IV

*On the Kansas' defense:*

"I didn't expect them to double team like they did. When they doubled the first time it kind of caught me by surprise. I thought they were just trying to get me off my game, like double me once and stop. But they kept sending them, so it was surprising they did it the whole game. It didn't really throw me off, but I was shocked."

## EASTERN MICHIGAN SENIOR GUARD PAUL JACKSON

*On Azubuike's effect on the rim:*

"It was somewhat effective of course because he has a big body and quick on his feet. Pretty much the way they played coming off screens, it was almost like they were trapping, which made it a little more difficult for us to get to the rim. We missed a few lay-ups here and there. He definitely is effective."

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