

2019-20  
KANSAS MEN'S BASKETBALL  
**BILL SELF PRESS CONFERENCE  
QUOTES**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2019

**KANSAS HEAD COACH BILL SELF**

***On the best way to figuring out how many forwards and guards to play:***

***On what he thinks of the Maui (Invitational) field:***

"I think it's great again. We're focused on our side, obviously. We've got Chaminade and then possibly BYU, who lost a heartbreaker last night; they lost to Boise in overtime last night at Boise and Boise is good. They won at Houston, so they're more than capable. Then UCLA, Mick's (Cronin, head coach) got them off to a fast start. So it's good. Then, on the other side, there's really good teams on the other side. Most people point to Michigan State because they are rated so high, but it's a great field again."

***On his familiarity playing against a lot of the coaches in the Maui Invitational field:***

"Yeah, there's some familiarity, but I've never coached against Mick, never coached against Mark Pope. I actually coached against him when he played, but haven't coached against him when he's coached. On the other side, I don't know that I've ever played Anthony, never played Tom (Crean) – oh yes, we did play against Tom and Indiana in Honolulu and they beat us. See, I don't remember our losses (laughter). That's a sign of a good shooter; he doesn't remember his misses. So we owe him (Crean) one. Then, certainly, (Tom) Izzo, we've played against him a ton. I'm leaving out one, I can't remember ... I have coached against Mike Young, who is the coach of La (Louisiana) Tech. I have coached against Mike; we had a game last year against Wofford. They are off to a good start too, if I'm not mistaken. It's a good field and we're certainly looking forward to it."

***On freshman guard/forward Tristan Enaruna's defense so far this year:***

"Well, the other night was definitely a highlight; he had four steals and seven deflections, which is 11 times that he was able to get his hands on the ball. I was happy with him. I think he could become a terrific defender; I don't think he is there yet, but he could become a terrific defender and the last game, he did a really good job. The East Tennessee State guys are good, really good. They have guys who are hard to guard. We switched so much (on defense), and him (Enaruna) guarding a little 6-foot-1 guard isn't an easy assignment, so I thought he did really well."

***On the energy and competitive drive that David McCormack and Silvio De Sousa bring to the team:***

"They're both great. They both probably deserve to play more than they are, but that means Doke (Udoka Azubuike) isn't going to play as much. If we can get to where we can run a two-game well, we can play two bigs more offensively. When you look at it from a skillset and size standpoint, what we do well may not be exactly in line with what the other teams do well. So it'll be a game-to-game (playing time) situation, but both have great attitudes and they both want to play more, obviously. But the reality of it is that it does put an extra 'oomph' into when they get out there, knowing if it doesn't go great, somebody else could probably sub in. And if they play well, it may limit your future opportunities (to play), at least in that particular game. I'm hopeful that with nine guys, we should be able to keep everyone happy. It may not play out exactly that way with each and every game, depending on personnel."

***On the best thing a team can get out of a trip like this, outside of the obvious three wins:***

"I really think that when you get away – we'll have a few family members going, but not a lot – and you get away and it's just us, I think it's a great opportunity for us to move forward to becoming a team. We're not a team yet, but nobody in America is a team yet. There's going to be some things that happen throughout a season that will help you come together and be a team. Most of those things are usually done away from home, where there is really not that much else going on. You may think there will be a lot going on in Maui, but there won't be a lot going on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Really, Sunday. All that's going to be going on is preparing to play. I don't think the distraction bit will be nearly as big as what some people think."

***On how important experience is in a tournament like this:***

"Oh, I don't know. I hadn't thought about that. We won it the last time we went, but it doesn't mean anything because no one participated in it that's playing now. I think maybe from a logistical standpoint, a prep standpoint, is maximizing your time but still allowing your guys to have a little fun. Maybe the fact that we've been there – I think this is my fourth time with Kansas and we went with Illinois – we've been around and kind of have a feel of works from that standpoint, but that doesn't have anything to do with what happens during the game; we've done the same routine (as when we won the tournament) and we finished seventh. I don't know if it helps a lot, but it certainly won't hurt."

***On if having Mitch Lightfoot there will help the other players treat this as a business trip:***

"Was Mitch there last time? (He was in Honolulu) Dok (Udoka Azubuike) was in Honolulu too, but that was a totally different deal. We flew right over there, (played), and flew right back. What did we spend there, Greg (Gurley), two days? We flew in almost the day before and then we flew out. So that was a little bit of a different deal. But I guess that playing in the state of Hawaii, I guess with Dok and with Mitch, there could be some experiences we could draw from that, but probably not many." (Laughter)

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***On sophomore guard Ochai Agbaji's play as of late:***

"I would say his play of late has not been poor, but it has not been great either. He's just kind of been out there. He hasn't made shots the last two games and he's pressing a little bit to do that. I'm not worried about that, I want him to shoot it when he's open and I want him to be aggressive. I think he's going to be a terrific player. I think he's going through some things that everybody goes through, and the necessary steps you have to take, in order to become a real good player. It's a little bit unrealistic for everyone to look at him as a returning starter, but he's the least experienced returning starter out there, for the most part, because he only played 2/3 of the season (last year). He didn't have a lot of the experiences before he got to college that a lot of guys have had. He's just young and he's going to go through this and it's good he's going through this. It's a necessary step for him to become great and we all know he'll take that. He just needs to go out and just be Ochai, to play with a free mind and have fun; not worry about consequences or what happens. Just go out and play and enjoy it. He's the nicest, sweetest, conscientious, kid you could possibly coach. But he just needs to understand what others think and him trying to please others is totally irrelevant; (he just needs to) play for himself, for his teammates and see what happens. And good things will happen."

***On memories from these types of trips/tournaments, off the court:***

"I don't really remember very many fun things off the court, except maybe a celebration after a win, like we had last time we were there. For the most part, it is a business trip and I just think it's fun and cool because when you get eight teams together in a small venue, sharing locker rooms, you get the feel with ESPN that it's a big deal to be a part of something like that is pretty cool. Every time you look outside, you're looking into water and it's beautiful. So those are the things that I basically remember. There was a time we couldn't get the ball across half court, against Arizona, I remember that a little bit as well. It's been very favorable (for us) going over there and I'm sure this will be another favorable trip."

***On Silvio De Sousa's slow start to games and how Silvio is handling it:***

"But that's the thing about it – it's not true. It's kind of like Ochai. Silvio was playing high school basketball and then he came here, without any practice and we expected him to perform well collegiately and he didn't -- until we had to have him – and then he was great and just because he was great there for four or five games, everybody was thinking he was (great). Then he didn't get a chance to play last year. He's not behind where he should be. He's probably right about where he should be, because he's not a veteran. Even though I think he thinks of himself as a veteran, because he's been here long enough, he doesn't qualify in my eyes. He's still got a month ahead of him before he can really say he knows what to expect, the emotions he's going to feel, knows how to handle nervousness and those sorts of things. He's still going through that right now."

***On if he prefers knowing whether or not he prefers knowing whether De Sousa or McCormack will be in the starting lineup:***

"I've always thought (on) our best teams, we all knew who was starting and who was coming off (the bench). I would think that that would be the case but right now, you know, David has been better but the way the game ended the other day, Silvio really helped us win. What he did defensively maybe nobody else on our team could do quite as well as what he did. I really don't have a preference, we'll wait and see how practice goes. Coach speak: it doesn't matter who starts, it's who finishes. But I know the players don't necessarily buy into that 100%, nor should they, but I know it is important to some. I hope they both know that I see them as both being starters. As far as I know, we have six (starters) and I hope they view it that way as well."

***On why senior center Udoka Azubuike came out of the game against ETSU:***

"That's why I took him out, was fatigue. He was tired at about the six-minute mark, five-minute mark. I had every intention of putting him back in unless it became a free-throw contest; (because then) you want the best free-throw shooters in. I thought, 'Why take Silvio out after Dok was out?' Because Silvio performed so well. And Dok was very happy for Silvio also. So, there could be some situations where we do that, but I thought (our) last game was the first game in a while where our bigs played big. I mean, they were trying to block everything and play into their standing height. That was fun to see, but it wasn't like a form or anything. I just thought Silvio was giving us the best chance to win because of the way they were stretching the floor offensively."

***On if Enaruna reminds him of any previous players at Kansas:***

"I don't know that he does. The one person you could say would be Kelly (Oubre Jr.) just because physically they're so similar with their length. He'd probably be the closest one, but I still think Kelly was bigger and stronger at this stage."

***On Enaruna's defensive instincts:***

"I think he's pretty good for a young guy. I think he gets his hands on a lot of balls, I think when he figures out positioning and that kind of stuff, I think he'll get his hands on more balls because offenses will just throw it to you not anticipating that length. I think he's doing well. I think he could rebound better and he could obviously play tougher but defensively, I thought the other day he did pretty good. When you make a mistake, he's a guy who corrects his mistakes with his athletic ability and I think that'll be something we see moving forward."

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***On if freshman forward Jalen Wilson will make the trip to Maui:***

"No, Jalen's going to go home and spend time with his family. He could go, but his family was going and they had insurance for the trip so they were able to recoup most of that. And with Jalen spending Thanksgiving laid up where he can't really do anything, we thought it was best that he go home."

***On his reaction to the NCAA probation for Memphis and James Wiseman:***

"First of all, I'm happy James is able to play. We recruited James and his family and we really liked him a lot, so I'm very happy that they were able to come to a quick answer because we know, from experience, that that's not always the case. I'm happy for James and from what I understand -- I'm no expert on this at all -- is that they're appealing the suspension. I think he's got 10 more (games) left to sit, he's already sat two of them and hopefully they'll get a speedy answer on that. Hopefully a positive one for James' sake. I actually saw where Silvio tweeted something last night and, I think from his standpoint, it may be close but (it's) not totally apples-to-apples. But in a kid's mind that had no knowledge, you're saying, 'Two years and now this?' So, I can sense some frustration on his (Silvio's) behalf and I certainly understand that, but I don't know enough about that situation if we're totally comparing apples-to-apples."

***On if he's spoken with Devonte' Graham of the Charlotte Hornets lately:***

"I just texted with him this morning. Our social media people, I think Rachel (Pincus), comes out with something about him in the NBA which I think is pretty cool. I had no idea that he's one of four players ... EVER in the history of the game to have 100 assists and 50 3s in his first 15 games of the season: if I'm not mistaken, (it's) Baron Davis, Steph Curry, James Harden and, of course, Devonte' Graham. So, I am really happy for him. He's a perfect example of playing with a free mind. There have been games in the NBA (where) he's gone 1-for-9 or whatever but he's a perfect example of what it's like to play with a free mind. Now we have to get Ochai to start playing with a free mind similar to that."

