



Hawks hang with 'Horns, then shooting sours

Steve Batterson | Posted: Tuesday, November 24, 2009 12:10 am

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - Texas players treated spectators at the CBE Classic on Monday night to a handful of spectacular dunks during pregame warm-ups.

Iowa wasn't impressed.

The Hawkeyes forced the third-ranked Longhorns to focus on fundamentals as they came from behind to rout Iowa 85-60 in a semifinal game at the Sprint Center.

Texas had no option after watching the Hawkeyes overcome a double-digit first-half deficit to tie the game at half on a buzzer-beating 70-foot shot by Cully Payne.

Matt Gatens drained a 3-pointer on the Hawkeyes' first possession of the second half - one of 10 by Iowa in the game - to leave Texas in a 41-38 hole.

It took the Hawkeyes 6 minutes to score again.

The Longhorns pounded the ball down low to Dexter Pittman for three straight baskets that began a string of 17 consecutive Texas points.

The surge coincided with 11 straight empty possessions that left Iowa trailing 55-41 before it managed its next basket on a lay-in by Gatens, who joined Brennan Cougill in leading Iowa with 11 points apiece.

"We threw the ball around a couple of times, let them get some lay-ups and we missed a couple of shots that let things get away from us," Payne said.

Texas coach Rick Barnes said his 3-0 team won the game with its second-half defense that held Iowa to 18.8-percent shooting after the break.

"We got back to playing our game," Barnes said. "We knew they would pack it in and make it difficult on Dexter. They dare you to take those 3-pointers and we cooperated early. We didn't in the second half."

The Longhorns had little choice.

Payne's shot from the left side just beyond the top of free-throw circle in the backcourt sent the teams into the locker room tied at 38-38 at the break, a dramatic conclusion to a first half that saw the Hawkeyes rally from a 14-point deficit midway through the half.

"I didn't really know where I was at. All I knew was that time was running out and that I needed to shoot," Payne said.

Three early 3-pointers by Jordan Hamilton helped leave Iowa (1-3) trailing by a 25-11 count following a thunderous slam by the Longhorns' 6-foot-10, 290-pound Pittman with 10:30 remaining in the half.

However, patience and a warming touch from 3-point range allowed the Hawkeyes to play their way back into the game. Cougill's second 3-point basket of the game cut into a 29-18 Texas lead with 5:19 left in the half.

It was followed by a pair of 3-pointers by Devan Bawinkel that positioned Iowa to move within a 36-35 score when Anthony Tucker fed Jarryd Cole down low for a basket with 32 seconds left in the half.

J'Covan Brown answered for the Longhorns (3-0) 6 seconds before Payne's buzzer-beating basket.