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Texas' talent shows in Classic win

By Dick Vitale
ESPN.com

Last season, Texas surprised many by making it to the Big Dance.

This season, it is not a surprise that the Longhorns are highly ranked. They are expected to be in the hunt for the Big 12 title and a nice run in the NCAA tournament.

I was very impressed by Texas in its wins over Iowa and California to win the 2K Sports Classic. Fans in Austin have a good reason for anticipating big things.

The Longhorns have great size, length and athleticism up front. [Jonathan Holmes](#) is so underrated: He is multi-dimensional and can defend. [Cameron Ridley](#) is a wide body in the low post, capable of scoring and crashing the glass.

Texas also has a star in the making in diaper dandy [Myles Turner](#). Right now, he is trying to impress and is learning the college game. Turner is the true definition of potential. I would have loved to coach a player with his ability. People expected him to dominate right away, but it will take a little time adjusting from high school to college. He has tremendous upside.

Even without injured guard [Isaiah Taylor](#) (wrist), the Longhorns were super against Cal Friday night. Texas played tenacious defense, performing as a unit. [Javan Felix](#) stepped in and gave the Longhorns a solid, experienced player.

I loved watching [Demarcus Holland](#) move his feet and get in strong defensive position. He was so tenacious against California's talented perimeter players. As a team, the Longhorns defended as a cohesive unit, playing aggressive man-to-man with good pressure on the ball. Texas did not allow the Golden Bears many quality shots.

There were some fans that criticized Texas coach Rick Barnes before last season. I did not think that was fair. Just think about the turnover of talent in Texas, with so many players leaving early. Guys like Kevin Durant, LaMarcus Aldridge, Cory Joseph, Tristan Thompson and others went to the pros, creating instability in the Longhorn program.

Texas went into a drought. Now they have so much experienced talent back in the fold, which leads to greater expectations.

Barnes has a team that is going to be tough to deal with as the season progresses.
