



2017 NCAA® DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
CHAMPIONSHIP

Second-Round Louisville vs. Tennessee
KFC Yum Center! · Louisville, Ky. - Monday, March 20, 2017

POSTGAME Quotes

NCAA Women's 1st and 2nd Rounds: Louisville

Monday, March 20 2017

Louisville, Kentucky

Holly Warlick

Jaime Nared, Mercedes Russell

Tennessee Lady Volunteers

Louisville - 75, Tennessee - 64

THE MODERATOR: Coach, an opening statement and then questions for the players.

COACH WARLICK: Yeah, just disappointed for our kids. Great group, great bunch of young ladies to work with, be around. We'll never get this group back again, obviously, and I'm going to miss Jordan (Reynolds) and we'll miss Schaquilla (Nunn) .

Q. Mercedes (Russell), it looks like particularly in the first half Tennessee was really struggling to get the ball to you. What was Louisville doing that impacted that?

MERCEDES RUSSELL: Honestly, I think they were just kind of playing a poke and packed-in defense, which looks like five players are in the paint, but really they're just trying to make you shoot jump shots from the outside and get tough looks, which, really, they did a good job of that. It was tough to get me the ball early.

Q. Question for both of you. Both of you are juniors, and you'll be coming back next year. Knowing that you'll come back having another shot getting to the pinnacle of all of this, how bitter is this one to lose?

JAIME NARED: It's frustrating any game you lose. It's the end of our season, so I mean there's nothing we can do about it now. I think we're going to get in the gym and get ready for next season.

MERCEDES RUSSELL: Yeah, just off what she's saying. It's definitely something that we're going to need to learn from. So we'll just take this feeling that we have right now and use it for motivation next season.

Q. For both Mercedes and Jaime, I guess, I think at one point in the fourth quarter there were 15 straight missed field goals. How can you explain that, if you can?

MERCEDES RUSSELL: I mean, it's tough. You know, you never know coming into a game if you're going to hit shots or not. But when you're not hitting shots, you're usually supposed to fall back on your defense, and we weren't getting stops on the defensive end and then not making shots on the offensive end. It just wasn't adding up so. Just we're going to need to fall back on defense when we're not hitting shots and rely on that from the git-go.

Q. Question for Jaime (Nared), what made Asia Durr so difficult to guard?

JAIME NARED: She's a crafty point guard. She's a lefty. I mean, we knew that. We didn't do a good job forcing her right. But she can shoot, she can drive, and I think we didn't do a good job of stopping her. But when she wasn't hitting, then Moore started hitting. So I think just all around we didn't do a great job of stopping them on defense.

Q. Jaime (Nared), 28 points tonight, 9 of 18 shooting. Was there anything in particular that you were feeling early on, or was it basically just the defense presenting the opportunities to you instead of to (Diamond) DeShields and Mercedes (Russell)?

JAIME NARED: I think just being aggressive from the git-go. I think we got a few transition points. I think that was huge in this game because we knew that was an area we could attack and we've been good at the whole season. So I think just taking open shots. My team just did a great job of finding me, and I think that was, that's a credit to my teammates.

Q. This is for you Jaime (Nared), because Mercedes kind of alluded to this a little bit earlier. Was it anything in their defense that they did to you that caused you to shoot poorer than usual tonight, and especially in that fourth quarter? And it seemed that they kind of pretty much wanted to take the game away from Diamond (DeShields), didn't want to let her get the ball, but she struggled a little bit shooting?

JAIME NARED: I think we got open looks, I think we did. I think we got open looks. But what we've done in the season was offensive rebound. We had one person crashing for a lot of the game, so I think when you're missing shots and you're giving yourself at least a second opportunity by offensive rebounding, and we didn't do that. I think just when we're missing shots, falling back on our defense, we didn't get stops, we weren't crashing. It's a lot of things. I don't think -- I think it was a lot of what we could have controlled that could have helped ourselves better at.

But Louisville is a great team, great defensive team. We knew that. We knew they were going to help on Mercedes, and we didn't take advantage.

Q. When fouls started to slow down and the game started in the third and fourth quarter, is that what you guys think caused a lot of the scoring droughts, or was it something else?

MERCEDES RUSSELL: No, I don't think the fouls are what caused it. We just weren't getting good looks at basket, and we should have been driving and trying to draw fouls on them, and we just weren't doing that.

Q. Jaime (Nared), did you get tired in the fourth quarter? You didn't look like you were getting any lift on your jumpshot late.

JAIME NARED: No, I think I was just -- I wasn't making shots. I wasn't getting to the basket like I was before in the game. So I wasn't tired. I was just missing shots. And we weren't getting stops so.

Q. This is for both of you. A team like Louisville that has three really strong players that are All-ACC caliber, how difficult is that to defend knowing that while Hines-Allen and (Asia) Durr have been hot lately, Mariya (Moore) just was on fire tonight, especially from the outside?

MERCEDES RUSSELL: I honestly think it's definitely difficult just because if one time on an off night the other two can step up at any point, and in a lot of games they're all three on point. Defensively, it's just about locking in and trying your best to stop all three of them.

Q. Coach, there were a couple spans there, one in the first half and I think one in the second half also, where you had some long shooting droughts. What do you attribute that to? Was it more fatigue on your team's end or more Louisville's defense?

COACH WARLICK: Well, I thought we got good looks, we just missed shots. We missed a lot around the basket and just didn't make plays. I thought we got good position to get some looks and just didn't finish it.

Q. Holly (Warlick), Mercedes (Russell) commented on this inability maybe not to get her the ball enough. Did Louisville do anything different? I didn't realize they were dropping that many people back.

COACH WARLICK: I don't -- you know, it's a physical game, and there were times we couldn't get her the ball and times we could. You know, she made some and she missed some. We didn't make plays. You've got to make plays. You've got to make plays down the stretch, and we didn't do that. Jaime's right. We'd miss, and we didn't have a lot of people going to the boards as we usually do. So it just -- fourth quarter, obviously, we couldn't get it done.

Q. Can you talk about -- Mercedes (Russell) mentioned the failure to get some stops early in the fourth quarter, maybe that would have helped the offense on the other end. There was a 7-0 run they went on and then a 5-0 run quick?

COACH WARLICK: Sure. Yeah, if you get stops, it pretty much helps you win the basketball game, and we couldn't get stops. So, yeah, they made great plays, and we had no answer for them. We fouled -- a foul was called in the fourth quarter that we normally don't do. So it's just a combination of a lot of things.

Q. Coach, Mariya (Moore) was 31% from three coming in, today she's five for five. Did you want her taking those shots or were you just not happy with the way they were guarded?

COACH WARLICK: She was outstanding today. Five for five. I thought their three-point shooting separated them from us. She was outstanding. We knew how she could play, I mean, and we just let her get loose.

Q. Coach, throughout the game the score was fairly close, but in the fourth quarter, obviously, it got away. Do you feel like your girls were a little tight as Louisville started to pull away, trying to force the issue and why they made missed shots?

COACH WARLICK: No, I don't think we were tight. Again, I thought we got good looks, we just didn't make plays. You all know. You've got to make plays. We have kids that have made plays throughout the year, and we just couldn't get it done in the fourth quarter.

I thought we got them to turn it over. We got lay-ups, we cut it, and then, again, we didn't get stops. Then we'd come down and we missed a five-foot jumper. So just a little bit of a combination of a lot of things for us down in the fourth quarter.

Q. Holly (Warlick), Diamond (DeShields) was coming off a great game against Dayton the other day. She just never really got it going today. Anything you attribute that to?

COACH WARLICK: You know, she's just a great competitor, and sometimes I think in Diamond's (DeShields) mind she's got to do everything. She didn't have her best game. She's gotten us through some tight jams, she's played exceptionally well, and you look at her stats, and it just kind of wasn't her night tonight. So she's got to play and she doesn't have to be her best, she just needed to step up and do some things, and, you know, it wasn't a typical night for Diamond DeShields.

Q. At some point the page does turn. What is the message for the offseason with the incoming recruiting class that you have, which is ranked, I believe, No. 1?

COACH WARLICK: Well, we want these young ladies coming in to grasp ahold of our culture. When we had the opportunity to get four new kids in here, it's going to help us as far as our bench play. You know, these kids know what they're getting into. I mean, it is Tennessee, and you've got to be on your "A" game every game.

So I think for us is we go back, we teach these freshmen what it needs to -- to play hard, being disciplined, and we've got to have some people step up and be just solid on the leadership end of it and be consistent and give these freshmen an opportunity to grow. Because they're going to play. They're going to play, and they're going to play a lot.

So I welcome it. I love what our practices are going to be. They're going to be extremely competitive, and we're going to bring this -- we're going to make sure this Lady Vols program is intact, and we're going to be as competitive as we can, because we've got the kids now to be competitive.

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