

Big Ten Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 8, 2024

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Target Center

Penn State Nittany Lions

Carolyn Kieger

Ashley Owusu

Postgame Press Conference



Iowa - 95, Penn State - 62

CAROLYN KIEGER: Just wanted to give Iowa a lot of credit. Obviously a phenomenal team. They were clicking on all cylinders.

Awesome crowd. Great atmosphere. Great job by the Big Ten putting on this tournament. So lots of thanks to the conference.

We're excited to regroup here and get ready for postseason play coming up.

Q. Ashley, first of all, congratulations on a great career. It's been fun following you through it all. How do you summarize your emotions tonight after a long season like this? Obviously still got some postseason play to go, but what do you think in the big picture of how things have evolved for you as a basketball player?

ASHLEY OWUSU: I'd just say grateful, just excited to be in a space with people that support me and want the best for me.

Q. You talked about now it's postseason play. This is the first time in five years you've been able to say that, whether it's March Madness or the NIT. Obviously you're hoping that March Madness is the result. But to go back and know that Makenna has another game to play and Ashley and all those seniors, Chanaya, it's got to feel really good heading back to State College. Now you've got to wait a week. It's the in-between period before you find out your fate. It still feels good to know there's one more game to be played.

CAROLYN KIEGER: Absolutely. This is a great group. Phenomenal women in that locker room. They love each

other. They care about Penn State. They care about each other. They want to end on a better note than tonight.

Like I said, we'll regroup. We'll get back together. We'll get back to sharing the basketball, fixing some things, get back to being tough. It's going to be fun to play with this group one more time and to see Kenna and the other seniors go out on a better note than tonight.

Q. I thought you guys did a very good job of guarding Caitlin tonight. Leilani in particular, I haven't seen anybody do it better. What does it say about the depth of that Iowa team that on a night you were able to do that, that they were still able to win like this?

CAROLYN KIEGER: We were just talking about that in the locker room. Obviously I said this yesterday, but I think Leilani Kapinus is the best defender in the country. She proved it tonight, I thought, doing a really good job, making her work for her shots.

Give Iowa the credit, they're a very deep program. Obviously they were able to shoot 15 threes even in an off shooting night for Caitlin. So what our game plan was is going to be take Caitlin out of her rhythm and hope the role players stayed in check, and tonight they stepped up, and they stepped up in a big way. So kudos to them.

I'm really proud of our team's effort with Caitlin and finding her and picking her up in the full court. I'm glad you recognized that as well, and it's something for us to build upon.

Q. Kind of building off that, we just talked to Lisa, and that was the first time she said she's ever seen Caitlin miss 11 threes in a row. Also, Hannah scored 39 less points tonight. Basically, what was defending Caitlin, and we just talked about with Leilani, but also doubling -- it was a consistent double-team down low, Kylie and Grace and Allie. I think they did a really good job.

CAROLYN KIEGER: The frustrating part is I think our offense didn't show up tonight. The defense, for the most part, besides the 14 second-chance points and the 22 points off of turnovers, for the most part we were locked in,



paying attention to personnel. Obviously we had to make a couple of adjustments when's Taylor went hot there in the second half.

Our offense wasn't there. It wasn't clicking. We weren't sharing the basketball enough. We were playing on our toes -- on our heels, I should say, versus playing with pace and playing fearless, like we did the first round against them.

I thought our defense was much better tonight, offense not so much. Obviously, the result was 62 points and a negative assist-to-turnover ratio and shooting 34 percent, which is unlike us. We shoot around 50 percent better from the three-point line than we were tonight.

A lot of credit to what Iowa did there too zoning us up and junking us up a couple times.

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