

Big Ten Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gainbridge Fieldhouse

USC Trojans

Coach Lindsay Gottlieb

Londynn Jones

Laura Williams

Postgame Press Conference



Washington 76, USC 64

LINDSAY GOTTLIEB: I try never to say anything crazy and I'm definitely not going to say anything crazy today because you would lead with she tripped up the way.

All credit goes to UW. This is a tough 8-9 game with two NCAA Tournament teams and they came out ready. They were excellent. I credit them for that.

With our team, I think it's disappointing that it took us a while to really, really be in the fight. And by that I mean the possessions and plays that are outside the X's and O's, the rebounding, the 50/50 balls. I do think we responded and tried to show up a little better in the second half, but against a really good team, it's a little too late.

I'm excited that we've done enough this year to continue playing in the NCAA Tournament and have another chance to be at our best. And I think what this conference teaches you is that every team, two-thirds of the teams are NCAA Tournament teams. You've got to be ready all the time.

I know our players will respond. We are going to take some rest time and then some practice time to get better. And going into the last opportunity in the NCAA Tournament, I know that that's what we'll do. But today you take it on the chin. You credit UW. We look at ourselves and get better.

Q. For both players, offensively seemed a little bit disjointed out there today. Obviously Jazzy went down early and never came back, never got in a rhythm. As a team why do you think it was hard to find that offensive rhythm today?

LONDYNN JONES: As a team we obviously didn't shoot the way we wanted to shoot, but I think we needed to depend more on our defense instead. I feel like your defense normally can get your offense going. So we had a couple lapses with rebounding and stuff like that that we normally know how to do. I think that hurt us in the beginning. And we tend to figure it out afterwards. We just needed to rebound and get it first on defense.

Q. Londynn, you scored most of your points in the fourth quarter there in the comeback bid. What changed for you in the fourth quarter that got you heated up and going?

LONDYNN JONES: I mean, you have to kind of just leave it all out on the court, whatever you have, no matter the score. So I think that was kind of just -- fourth quarter, whatever I can do to help my team, keep my team going, finishing it off as strong as we could.

Q. You were down by 20 at the end of the third quarter, but you came back, almost got the deficit to single digits. Can you speak of the team's adversity in these moments when you know that you have no quit?

LAURA WILLIAMS: We kind of just have a knack for coming together, facing adversity together. And obviously it took a little bit too long to figure that out, but once we did figure it out, we were able to cut that lead back.

Q. You guys have lost four in a row now, obviously, to some pretty good teams here. But any concerning trends or themes that have emerged over these last couple weeks that you need to fix going into your next game?

LONDYNN JONES: Yeah, for sure we need to fix a lot. This game we need to build off of it. Nothing to be concerned about. We've been here before and we have an amazing staff that prepares us every day for games, practices, makes it hard for a reason. And I think for things like this, you face adversity obviously during the season and obviously we didn't want to lose our first game.

Just growing from it, we have so much to look forward to



as well. March Madness is coming up. So I think you can only build from what we need to learn from and like I said, rebounding, those were a couple things we needed to fix.

So I think just moving forward, really emphasizing those things.

Q. Londynn, you kind of mentioned no concerns right now. I'm curious coming off of four losses and kind of going into this situation where you don't know where you're going to be seeded in the NCAA, how do you use that confidence to get through adverse times like that?

LONDYNN JONES: Yeah, I think we're confident in who we are. We know the people that we have, the staff that we have. I think when you lean on that and when you go back to what you know you can do, that always helps.

Like you said, we lost four in a row, but that's adversity that you face down the road. And it happens. It happens to every team. Like I said, building from that, seeing where we can grow from that. And not really worried about whoever we play in March Madness. We have to step out and show what we're capable of doing.

Q. Lindsay, first time you played Washington, it was in LA and you won 59-50 or something like that. How much more physical was Washington this time when they approached your game, and did you see that coming?

LINDSAY GOTTLIEB: I mean, I definitely saw it coming. It's an 8-9 game. It's an NCAA Tournament. They have the benefit of that get-back mentality when you've lost to someone before. I thought they were really physical. I don't think they were unphysical last time, but I thought they had an intent of -- we talked about this in the locker room -- of if they don't get their actions in the first 20 seconds of the shot clock, they're determined in the last 10 seconds.

So we saw some direct line drives at the end of the possession. We saw offensive rebounds. They have a very distinct lineup where there's a 5 and then four guards. Those guards play really aggressive to make up for -- not make up -- but just out of the positions that they're in, they're really good. We knew it was coming, and they beat us to the punch on that for sure.

Q. You shared a couple of moments with Jazzy over the course of the game. Can you talk about the similarities and the differences that you have with coaching her in certain moments compared to those same moments that you might have coaching JuJu

when she was healthy and on the floor?

LINDSAY GOTTLIEB: Yeah. I mean, you try with every player to approach it as what do they need from you. What does the team need, what do individual people need. It's always a conversation.

I think Jazzy and JuJu are two different people, obviously, with two different games, but they're both elite talents who have taken on a lot in this uniform.

Really as I would with anybody, you try to make sure you are giving them the resources, the platform to be at their best, coaching them in the moment and seeing what they need. Most of the time today, it was about, number one, seeing if Jazzy was okay. She took a pretty significant hit. She's a really tough kid. She wants to play through it. But I was just checking with her to make sure there wasn't anything that was getting worse, and also at times trying to settle her down. She plays so hard and wants to win.

Just helping her settle down, see what was in front of her. And when you develop that relationship over time, you hope in the course of a game you can help get a player in the right mindset.

Q. Did you get a good look at the replay, and what's the level of concern going forward with her? She seemed to be in some discomfort.

LINDSAY GOTTLIEB: I did not get a good look at the replay, and I trust our medical staff when they said she was okay to go back in. But then I thought it was bothering her and nagging her, and when someone can't be at their best, you're not mentally as present. And I was told, collective decision, down the stretch there, let's shut her down for the rest of the game. But the hope is that she will be okay with some rest.

I will say, an exceedingly team-first and tough kid. She hasn't tapped out of a rep, of a minute, of a game and wants to play through everything, which you don't always get that, so we appreciate that. But at some point you've got to say, okay, let's shut her down today.

Q. Any concern the NCAA Tournament could use that against you in seeding purposes? We've seen that before in other tournaments --

LINDSAY GOTTLIEB: No, I believe the first game is like 15 days from now. They'll do their due diligence, and we will tell them she's fine, if and when she's fine, which is what the expectation, I think, is going to be. There's a ton of rest time. She played, right? It's not like she didn't come back in the game. But we'll make sure she gets to

100 percent, and I don't think that will impact us.

ready to do that.

Q. What's kind of the connecting thread that you've seen these past four games that you'd like to see improvement on?

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LINDSAY GOTTLIEB: Yes, you asked Londynn, no concerns. Of course there's concerns, right? But where she stands and the head spaces that I agree with is we move forward, we get better. They were all really different, right? I actually thought against Ohio State, we almost beat a top-10 team on the road. We turned it over too much.

The Penn State loss is our one loss that is not a Quad 1 loss. Really talented player went nutso. McMiller had a great game, and we didn't do what we needed to do. Then we played a consensus top-two team in the country, and I thought we battled and couldn't get it done. And today we play a 50/50 game. They're all different a little bit.

But yes, I have concerns. The concerns are we have to rebound from jump. The ball has to move. We have to get to great open shots every time. We have to be the toughest team for 40 minutes. This conference challenges you in a way that is very unique with 12 NCAA Tournament teams and those who are not are still really good teams.

The concern is that we figure it out. We get them fired up. We practice, and we come out, wherever they send us and whoever we play against, and we're the team that is a sharp as we can possibly be.

Q. Just wanted to ask about the NCAA Tournament. Obviously you have a great NET. You have four Quad 1 wins and the Big Ten has a history of sending a lot of teams to the tournament. Are those the things that make you feel 100 percent confident in your standing right now?

LINDSAY GOTTLIEB: Yeah, I mean, there were eight teams that finished above us in our league. Seven of them in the last reveal are hosting, and the other one here is obviously a tournament team that now we've split with.

Yeah, I don't think it's in question. It becomes about matchups in the tournament. Send us wherever. You usually get what you earn. We earned our way into the 8-9 game here, and we'll do the same with the NCAA Tournament. Hopefully you get favorable matchups. But at the same time, there's no favorable matchup if you don't play well, so we've got to get ready to go.

I know we have an opportunity to win a game, to win the next game, just like everyone else, and we'll get ourselves

