

Big 12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 12, 2021

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Kansas State Wildcats

Rachael Ranke

Ayoka Lee

Postgame Press Conference



Kansas State 56, West Virginia 58

Q. Ayoka, the play at the end of the game, was it to lob it in to you and try to just catch it and shoot it?

AYOKA LEE: Yeah.

Q. Rachel, you got some big threes this game for the second straight day. How did that feel to get those threes in a big moment?

RACHEL RANKE: It felt good because I wasn't really hitting all game, but the ones that counted for sure felt good. Just knowing that my teammates trusted me in those moments was big on them, so, yeah.

Q. So West Virginia starting to press like, just how tough was it to break their press and get the ball up the floor down the stretch?

RACHEL RANKE: They had high pressure, but we knew it was going to come. It was just a matter of staying poised. They tried to speed us up. Yeah, they were a high pressure team. They're good at that. So, yeah, we just knew we had to stay poised in those moments.

Q. Rachel, this is for you. After you hit that three in the fourth that came off the assist from Emilee, how good were you feeling about your guy's chances of winning at that point?

RACHEL RANKE: Feeling good, of course, but the game is not over until the final buzzer goes off, so as comfortable as we could have been, we knew there was still time on the clock. So even though big shots happened, there was game still to be finished. Of course obviously it turned around in less than 30 seconds. It felt good, but the job wasn't done yet.

Q. This is for both of you. Just how good was Emilee tonight? She led you guys in scoring in the first half and she had some really, really big plays there in the fourth quarter.

RACHEL RANKE: Yeah, we needed her to be aggressive all night. That was kind of the plan of attack. We know that they're kind of going to (indiscernible) off of her a little bit, so we know that she has to continue to be aggressive and get inside.

Even if they weren't falling I just told her to keep attacking and keep staying aggressive, and she did a great job of that. She was getting inside, getting into the paint, and those are the shots that we want for her.

Yeah, just really proud of her effort tonight for sure.

Q. Obviously you guys have had a few tough losses this year. Where does this rank compared to other ones you've had in your careers?

AYOKA LEE: Probably the hardest one just because there is kind of just more on the line for this one. Our season is over.

So, yeah, this one is probably number one on the list.

RACHEL RANKE: Sucks because it came down to the very last possession of the game, so that hurts knowing that we were right there and then didn't go how we want it to.

So, yeah. That one will stick with us for sure for next year.

Q. My last thing, and again, for both of you. I know the season being over is so fresh, but how do you guys view this season as a whole? I know you were picked pre-seasoned fourth in the Big 12 and then had that month pause. How do you view how the season went? I know everything was so crazy with the pandemic. Just a weird year for everyone.

RACHEL RANKE: Like coach was just talking about, we don't know everybody's situations in this time. Everything is

so uncertain with COVID and everything, so we weren't sure how this year was going to go, what to expect.

So we were hit with a lot of adversity with the shutdown and everything, and that's something that we couldn't really control. We knew we had to control what we would control, and we know we were hit with adversity -- you know, a lot teams could have given up, opted out, and I'm proud of our team because we stuck to the fight and never gave up.

I think that's something that we should all be proud of. Obviously we were projected fourth and we got -- we were placed tenth in the conference tournament, but no one expected us to make it this far, to keep fighting, and we did, and so that's something that we should have pride in.

AYOKA LEE: Yeah, I think it was a hard year, but I think there were a lot of positives just seeing a lot of people step into roles that they weren't in before, and seeing players develop and grow will definitely help us in the future.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports