

Big 12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 10, 2023

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Municipal Auditorium

West Virginia Mountaineers

Coach Dawn Plitzuweit

Madisen Smith

JJ Quinerly

Postgame Press Conference



West Virginia 61, Oklahoma State 62

COACH PLITZUWEIT: Certainly a heartbreaking loss for our young ladies. Our effort and intensity were good. We just couldn't get stops down the stretch and that hurt us.

At the same time, they made some shots that were contested shots and we had some shots that didn't go in. Obviously one more play, and it's not the last play of the game, but certainly think our young ladies have earned an opportunity to keep playing in the NCAA Tournament.

With the resume we have, tied for 4th place in the Big XII, I think our ladies deserve an opportunity to keep playing and play in the Big Dance.

Q. JJ, I guess that fourth quarter, what did you see that went wrong for you guys and right for them?

JJ QUINERLY: Just like Coach said, we didn't stop them from scoring the ball in the fourth. And honestly, we can't go back and change anything, but I'm sure everybody wants to. But we can't.

Q. JJ, I've never seen a ball stay on the rim that long. What was going through your mind when you saw that ball look like it was going to fall out and then it stopped and fell back in?

JJ QUINERLY: Was hoping it was going to fall out, honestly. I mean, I think our girls played hard otherwise, but hope we get to go to the NCAA, so, yeah.

Q. JJ, Madisen had another 20-point game and her individual effort all season, but especially over these last four games where you guys have won three in a

row coming into it. For her, if this is it, what are you guys going to send her off with?

JJ QUINERLY: Maddie has been with West Virginia for a long time, as y'all can see. Her going out like this, it hurts. It hurts me and I know it hurts her so much more. But just say to her that we love her, we will be here for her, for anything.

Q. JJ, how tough is it to have a cramp in that situation, not be in the game at that point? It looked like that's probably the toughest thing for you to get over and take in this game.

JJ QUINERLY: I mean, cramps, injuries, and stuff like that are going to come. I tried to get back in as soon as possible, but, I mean, I know my team. I believe in my team, so I knew my team could withstand the storm and get through it.

But the ball went in, so...

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, JJ.

Questions for Coach?

Q. Coach, kinda going off the question about Madisen, I believe she surpassed the school's all-time minutes played mark. What can you say about her effort down the stretch, not just today, but the three games going into this?

COACH PLITZUWEIT: Maddie is a young lady who not only plays her heart out, but she is doing a great job during timeouts, on the court, just doing a great job of trying to lead us every way possible.

Again, I really believe that our young ladies have done what they need to do to keep playing and have an opportunity to play on the biggest stage of college women's basketball. Our hope is to send her out that way.

Q. Coach, looked like okay Oklahoma State was able to get in the lane in the first half. Did you make an adjustment to take that away, and in the last play did

they do anything different or just a play that they executed a little better?

COACH PLITZUWEIT: They had stretches where they were able to get to the rim obviously with dribble penetration, ball screen scenarios. I thought -- we had an option we could have followed down the stretch. The hard part about that is if you put yourself in a spot where it becomes an intentional foul, you're reaching, lunging, those kind of things.

So opted to play it straight up and come over and lend assistance, and obviously needed to lend more assistance on the last play.

Q. I was going to ask you about that. You guys had a foul to give so you made the choice to --

COACH PLITZUWEIT: We made the choice. Yeah, we did. It's something that -- I think you can go back and you can play it a million different ways, but the hard part is if all the sudden you're trying to follow at the end and you don't get it, this is a clean look at the basket, this was a contested shot at that point in time.

Q. Coach, Naomie Alnatas, did you notice anything different from her in the fourth or just making great plays?

COACH PLITZUWEIT: She is a great player and someone who can make things happen for them. I think she is someone that can get to the rim. I thought the rebound that Collins got down the stretch was a big-time rebound for them. We had kids trying to go get it and she just jumped over the top of the crowd and made something happen.

Naomie Alnatas is a young lady who can score on kick-out opportunities, she can get you off balance, step through, one of her go-to scenarios. They just made one more play down the stretch than we did.

Q. Coach, I know this is a tough time to talk about this, but it's been a cool season for you. I mean, your first season in Morgantown. Can you talk about what it's meant to you, the buy-in from the players in your system and hopefully going forward to the NCAA Tournament?

COACH PLITZUWEIT: I think certainly when you look at how much we have grown from the beginning of not only this season, but the beginning of the Big XII season to now, I just give our young ladies and our staff a lot of credit for continuing to work and to grind.

We're a team that has to be incredibly good defensively to give ourselves a chance. We do. Unfortunately, that didn't work for us down the stretch. We didn't get enough stops in the fourth quarter.

But I think our young ladies probably exceeded a lot of expectations, and I think their ability, their want, their connective ness, all those type of things continue to grow and will continue to grow throughout the season yet because I don't believe that we're done and I don't believe that our ladies should be done, I don't.

To finish 10-8 in the Big XII in a great conference, to finish the year in the regular season, obviously not this game but finish, winning five of our last seven and upset two top-25 teams, I think there are at least six wins that we had of teams that are projected to be in the NCAA Tournament.

I believe that we have -- we should have an opportunity -- if not that's going to be tough for the Big XII, that's not only tough for our program, it's tough for the Big XII if we don't have a chance to keep playing in the Big Dance.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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