

Big 12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 10, 2023

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Municipal Auditorium

TCU Horned Frogs

Coach Raegan Pebley

Tara Manumaleuga

Emily Fisher

Postgame Press Conference



strong first quarter, kind of hit them in the face, punched them in the face, and we gave our all, so proud of my team.

Q. Tara, you guys came out on fire, hitting shots. What's been your motivation? Both games you guys came out fighting.

TARA MANUMALEUGA: Yeah, we talked about this in the locker room. March, after postseason it's like a new season. We don't think about our conference record. We don't, you know. We're not focused on that. We take it game by game, and basketball is a game of runs. We tried our best to focus on that.

Q. Emily, Lucy scored the last 12 points for you guys and really kind of just caught fire. She was playing with four fouls. Talk about what her performance did for you guys and how she played.

EMILY FISHER: She is tremendous. She is super fun to play with. She has that fire, that passion. You just know she is a scorer. She is going to go for it. We can always expect that from her.

She is a fantastic player, and I wish her all the best wherever she goes after this college year. But she is just a super fun player to play with. Yeah, I just -- she is just tremendous.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies. Questions for Coach?

Q. Coach, that back and forth, Lucy gets the layup and OU scores on the other end, how do you process this?

COACH PEBLEY: I mean, it's basketball. They were in the moment every possession. Again, this team has -- I just have loved this team because they're fun to be around. They're fun to coach. I know the record may not indicate that, but truly they're fun to coach.

I laugh more and smile more coaching them within a game, even in tight moments like that, super intense moments, than I may have ever in my career coaching.

Oklahoma 77, TCU 76

THE MODERATOR: Welcome TCU Coach Raegan Pebley, Tara Manumaleuga, and Emily Fisher. Opening statement from Coach.

COACH PEBLEY: Just incredibly proud of our team. Really, really proud. I thought they did everything that they needed to do. It was super physical. They were really tough. I thought they just persevered through a lot of adversity. Not just through the season, but in the game.

That last play we were pretty confident they were going to go to Skylar or Madi, especially with Taylor inbounding the ball. I thought it could have easily rolled out just like the three that we shot that literally went down and back out. That's just how it goes. But super proud of our team.

Q. Both Tara and Emily, how do you process a game like this, where it's so back and forth? This could potentially be your last game. How do you process this?

EMILY FISHER: I think it's being proud of the effort we put in the whole game. Sure, you can look at things that might have gone wrong or try to fix it, but it is what it is, and I'm proud of how we got here in the season.

We put up a good fight, and that's what we tried to do. I think it shows how proud we are of the culture on our team.

TARA MANUMALEUGA: Yeah, win lose or draw, I can't fault any one, the way any one of my teammates played today.

It's March. It's survive and advance mentality we came out

So it was fun. It was just a fun game. It was fun I'm sure to play in and definitely fun to coach. I've coached in games like that before and I can't necessarily say, like, fun. It was intense, rewarding, but this was all of that.

It has everything to do with our roster, top to bottom.

Q. And Lucy scored the last 12 points. Played with four fouls for a good chunk of the second half. Did that affect your offense or --

COACH PEBLEY: No, I don't think so. We had a good rotation. Sometimes we were double big, sometimes single. What makes Lucy really good is Bella in that she has a great counterpart in Bella. I know Lucy was really productive for us down the stretch, but we're not in that spot without Bella and her interior presence on the defensive end in particular.

They all just gave everything they had, and I knew they would. I knew they would. They weren't satisfied yesterday, and they wanted more.

Q. You mentioned Bella. She had four blocks. She looks like she is having fun. What kind of vibe do you get from her?

COACH PEBLEY: She makes me laugh. She is hilarious. She should have been somebody people mic'ed up during the game. I love her. Yeah, she is fun.

She is disappointed she went through the whole season and didn't break her nose. That was one of her goals. She loves to be physical. She is a great talent, and I think she is going to have a chance to keep playing overseas and keep adding to her experiences.

Q. As someone who has broken their nose three times, it's not as fun as it sounds.

COACH PEBLEY: I have too, girl. When it sticks out this far it's going to happen.

Q. Everyone made a play, whether it was offense, defense, Paige Bradley had a big three. Talk about the team over the last few weeks.

COACH PEBLEY: We had so many pieces that were playing a lot. That first round of conference, the Big XII is a conference you don't ever want to be young or new in, especially with so many people playing significant minutes.

Every single time we play teams we played them better the second round. I just think our team was growing up within

the league. To get, I think, grad transfers, fifth-year seniors, true seniors to continue to develop within the season it can be really hard.

They just kept growing and learning and fighting. They love each other. They love -- this team loves each other so much. When you see teammates who have a dad who is going through cancer, a sister going through cancer, and the list is also long of other things, like, you're going to give them everything you have.

When they're showing up and giving everything they have, you have no excuses. This team just -- they really, really, really care about each other.

Q. This is your last game?

COACH PEBLEY: Yeah.

Q. What do you take from maybe your whole time at TCU or even just this season in particular?

COACH PEBLEY: So much gratitude. So much gratitude and joy. Man, this is -- it's incredible that I got to do this and I got to do it at TCU. I got to do it in Ft. Worth near my family. I got to do it in the Big XII in a league I got to play in as a student-athlete. I got to do it with the people that I got to do it with. The staff that I've been partnered with over the years, man, are just tremendous, way better than I am.

I've gotten to be a part of the lives of so many amazing women. Again, I've said this before, but this league is -- literally if you could put a conference in the Hall of Fame you would have to put the Big XII in there right away for women's basketball.

We have had Ceal Barry coach in this league, Marsha Sharp, Gary Blair, Kim Mulkey, Sherri Coale, Bill Finley. Jim Littell, who is an incredible coach as well. I know I'm leaving people out. Marian Washington. I mean, holy cow. Such a pioneer in our country. We have had incredible even more incredible Hall of Fame players. Brittney Griner, Danielle Adams, Danielle Robinson, Bridget Carleton, Zahna Medley, Lauren Heard, Edwina Brown. Such a long list of incredible, incredible talent. Shelly Sheetz.

To be able to be on the sideline in a league like this, so incredible. I'm so thankful God has given me everything I have ever needed, all the time, and I have zero, zero regrets or hesitations or pity. Nobody should pity me. I'm so thankful. All right. Thanks.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

