

Big 12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Sunday, March 12, 2023

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Municipal Auditorium

Texas Longhorns

Coach Vic Schaefer

Shaylee Gonzales

Rori Harmon

DeYona Gaston

Postgame Press Conference

Iowa State 61, Texas 51

THE MODERATOR: Texas is Represented by All-Tournament team members, Rori Harmon, DeYona Gaston, and Shaylee Gonzales. Also joining them is head Coach, Vic Schaefer.

VIC SCHAEFER: First, just want to congratulate Iowa State. I thought they were really tough today. You know, it was a heck of a game. Awfully proud of my kids, our team. I thought they competed and played about as hard as they could.

For us, we held them to 33% field goal percentage today. We got them on the offensive boards 19-15, but there were just some intangibles. We held them to 61 points, but our field goal percentage was 33 and we shot 21 from 3 and we had 14 turnovers against the zone.

And so when you play against a really good team -- and we had some awfully good looks. We just couldn't make some shots. Sometimes it's not your night. Give them a lot of credit. I thought, that, again, they were tough.

But, man, I couldn't be more proud of my kids. To go through what we've gone through and played three straight, play as well as we've played and play as hard as we played today, competed.

You know, it didn't come out like we liked, and we've been on the other end of that. We were out on the floor this time last year and Baylor was listening to us out there. It stings, and it should.



When you are invested emotionally in something, when you are committed to something and that's your passion like it is for these young ladies, it should bother you. Bother me, but it's not going to bother me to the point where I dismiss how hard these kids played.

Did we play well? No, we didn't play that well, but we still competed our tail off, and I'm awfully proud of them. You gotta give God the glory when we win. You know what? We're going to give God the glory when we get beat. And we got beat today. That's part of it.

But I am really proud of these kids, and Bill has himself a heck of a team. We will learn from it. Again, it's how you respond. Didn't happen the way we wanted it to happen today. It's part of athletics. Now it's how do you respond. We have a lot to play for.

I think this group has done enough to not only host, but get a really good seed. We will go home, take a day or two off, and get ready for the NCAA Tournament. Awfully proud of 'em.

Q. Rori, just going off of what Vic said, how does this team respond going forward?

RORI HARMON: This game is already over. The NCAA Tournament is next, and that's what we have to focus around.

Q. Shaylee?

SHAYLEE GONZALES: Obviously there are a lot of things we need to work on. We've just got to prepare for the next game. It's frustrating, disappointing, but we have to flush this game and move on to the next.

Q. DeYona, it looked like in the second half when you got a post touch there were two or three bodies around you at all times. How physical was this game from the tip?

DEYONA GASTON: It was pretty physical the whole game. It was two or three bodies, like you said, and it's hard when there are three people around you. It's going to

be hard to score. I tried to pass it out as much as I could. You can't really do a lot when there's a lot of people around you. It was pretty tough.

Q. Three tough battles with Iowa State this year. What have you guys learned about yourself through these games?

DEYONA GASTON: We just have to learn how to, like, guard, and also guard on the outside, because you know they shoot a lot of threes and they know how to read each other really well.

So we gotta know when to switch, like he said, and when to guard the right person. And who do we have to find in transition. Just know our personnel.

Q. Shaylee, at the end of the third quarter what was the mood in the huddle after Iowa State went on that late run there. I think it was a 9-point lead. What was the mentality in the huddle?

SHAYLEE GONZALES: We just said that we needed to better switch. We didn't do that very well, ball hedges. It was just our defense, and offensively we needed to make our shots. Whether it was layups, jump shots, or threes, both ends we needed to pick it up, and that was the mentality.

Q. Rori, what did you see from Amina this tournament? She had some nice moments early in the tournament and she had a tough assignment on Ashley today.

RORI HARMON: Probably going to see the best defender on Ashley Joens by Amina Muhammad. She didn't make it easy on her at all. That was her assignment, so congratulations on Amina.

Q. DeYona, is there anything you can take going forward, on a positive note going forward in the tournament?

DEYONA GASTON: We just gotta play better. There are going to be teams ahead that are really competitive just like them, so we have to make sure we are ready for whatever is next to come.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies.

Questions for Coach.

Q. Coach, you did a really good job on just about everybody. What makes Ashley Joens so hard to defend?

VIC SCHAEFER: Well, I think, again, she takes 20 shots, made 8 of them, got to the free throw line 11 times. It's what they put around her. You can't bring any help on her, because those kids can all shoot it.

So it really allows her to do some one-on-one stuff that -- in their philosophy it works for them. We held them to 61 points today. That's one more than our goal is every night. We just couldn't make a shot.

We got a lot of kids some good looks and we just couldn't make a shot. Sometimes it's not so much about defense as you've got to score points. It's hard to win at this level scoring 51 points.

But, no, she's been a great college player. She's had a great career at Iowa State. Seems like a great kid, too, just an ultimate competitor. We've had our hands full with her. She's scored on us my three years at Texas; I'm not the only one though, trust me.

Q. Talk about the third quarter, the change in momentum, where they pulled away. Didn't give you guys much of a chance.

VIC SCHAEFER: In the third quarter.

Q. They really pulled away in the third quarter. Just talk about that third quarter.

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, you know, we had a bad quarter at their place this year. When we got beat at their place they started out 22-11 and then we outscored 'em the rest of the game.

That was our bad quarter tonight; we got outscored 21-12. We had a hard time scoring offensively. I thought we got some good looks. We had some good looks inside.

When you are playing so few kids so many minutes, sometimes, you know, the old body isn't quite as fresh as it was yesterday or the day before. I just think my guards have had a lot on their plate, and I'm awfully proud of 'em.

Tonight wasn't our night. Again, I thought we had some really good looks. You're not going to -- it's hard to -- I think we held 'em to 53 at our place; I think we beat 'em 68-53. That's hard to do with such a good offensive team.

Third quarter was certainly a problem.

Q. Vic, obviously this was a very physical game. Seemed like every possession on both sides bodies were on the floor, people were scrapping. What did

you think about the physicality and how y'all matched up with them and how badly it seemed both teams wanted this?

VIC SCHAEFER: I thought both teams really laid it out on the line today. You know, this time of year is typically how it is. And like I said, I thought Iowa State was really tough today. They were really tough, and we tried to match that toughness. I thought it was a hard-fought game, you know?

Again, it's hard for me to be upset with my group, my team, when, you know, we battled. We just -- we had a few too many turnovers, we couldn't make a shot. Other than that we held them to 33%. That's good enough to win. We just couldn't make a shot. We got some good looks.

Some nights it's just going to be that way. Tonight it was that night. We kinda had that night the first half against Kansas State, but our defense bailed us out in the first half and we ham and egged it enough in the second half to score enough points, and we only scored 60 that night.

It's part of it. Get 'em home, get 'em rejuvenated. We will be fine in the tournament. I'm excited about this team and really proud of what they've been able to accomplish this year. They've done quite a bit. There's a lot left in front of them.

We will watch the selection show tonight and see where they have us and who we are playing, and we will regroup and get back after it.

Q. Vic, are you concerned that your guards and the offense has hit a wall at this point in the season?

VIC SCHAEFER: No, I mean, obviously today might have been an issue, but, no, we'll get 'em rejuvenated and get 'em back. They'll be fine. They played really good yesterday and made some big shots yesterday, and so I don't worry about that.

Our training staff will do a good job and we'll get 'em back. This time of year, if you're not ready to go and not ready to play, you ain't got a pulse. So I feel good about my team right now. I'm disappointed for them. You can tell up here these kids are really disappointed. I love that about 'em.

They care. But we'll get 'em back. We'll be okay.

Q. What did you like about the way Amina played Ashley, especially in that second quarter?

VIC SCHAEFER: She just plays really hard. That's her game. Her game is rebounding and defending. Offensive

boards it's hard to get a butt on her. I just love the competitive spirit that that kid has. She matches up well with guarding a guard or a forward, and it's really going to benefit us down the line.

She has a chance to really be good. She made her first three in a row and made her last two. She has worked hard on improving her free throw shooting. She is my kinda player. She plays really hard and she's tough and she competes.

She doesn't like to disappoint you either and I love that about her.

Q. Leadership-wise what do you need to see from Rori over the next couple of days as they try to get over this loss?

VIC SCHAEFER: You know, I think all of 'em, as a collective group can realize that these things happen. As I told 'em, there will be events in life that happen.

Again, it's how do you respond. How are we going to respond from this loss? There is no finger pointing. If they wanted to blame somebody I told 'em, blame me.

We just will collectively regroup and we'll get back and get in the gym and get ready for the NCAA Tournament. I think collectively as a group, I don't think we have had one person in particular. I think it's been a collective group that really tries to kinda -- and it's close team as you know. They're very close.

Q. Vic, obviously we don't know how the bracket is going to play out, but you're most likely going to host at the Moody Center and you guys are 14-2 at home. What's that going to be like? It's your first year there?

VIC SCHAEFER: I'm super excited about it. That place is an incredible facility.

But it's like anything, y'all. You can have the most beautiful hospital in the world but that doesn't necessarily mean it's a great hospital. Doesn't mean they give great care, right? You can drive up to the outside of it, it looks great. It's the guts of that building, it's the doctors, nurses, right?

Same thing with our building. While it's a beautiful building when you drive up to it, it's our fans that make that place. It's loud; they're on top of you. It's an incredible venue. While the amenities and everything in there are great, the view is great, not a bad seat in the house, man, it's the people that got their butts in seats in there that make it such a special place.

I'm excited for our kids. It's going to be an exciting time. I hope we'll have 10,000 in there for both nights. To have the NCAA Tournament on your home floor? Man, what an opportunity. That's where I'm at with our group and this team. It will be an exciting week. I'm excited about tonight.

This team has worked extremely hard to get to this point and been through a lot. So many injuries. So excited for them tonight and excited for the week.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, congratulations on your regular season title, on being Coach of the Year, and we wish you well in the post-season NCAA Tournament on behalf of the Big XII.

VIC SCHAEFER: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.