

Big 12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Friday, March 7, 2025

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Oklahoma State Cowgirls

Coach Jacie Hoyt Stailee Heard

Postgame Press Conference



was anyone's, especially from beyond the arc, does that mind-set change about at least game plan going into the second half?

JACIE HOYT: Not really. In fact, I was mad at our kids for not shooting more. I told them: You've got to stop thinking and catch and shoot.

They did a good job of congesting on us, and I didn't think we were good at reading that. We were just driving into congestion. I thought those early misses got in our head. So it was actually the opposite. Just told 'em you've got to let it fly, and that's what we do.

I was proud that we -- we still didn't make as many as I wanted, but we did a much better job in the second half.

Q. Jacie, you guys won despite shooting just under 30%. A lot of it was due to Stailee getting to the foul line. How important was that to have that constant pressure on the rim on a night when shots weren't falling?

JACIE HOYT: The best thing Stailee did was not just put pressure on the rim, but she did it in transition. In a game like that, where things are sticky and hard to score in the half-court, for us, you gotta push.

Stailee was phenomenal at that. She led the break for us on half of the fouls she got. I thought she was smart at finding ways to get to the free-throw line.

Q. And then Stailee, just to follow up, I'm sure it was frustrating to not have your shot going, but talk about your will, just getting to the free-throw line over and over and getting points that way.

STAILEE HEARD: Sometimes you have those games where shots won't fall, but you have to find other ways to score. Like she said, we're a fast-paced team, and we like to push in transition. And I think putting pressure on the defense to not foul is just like -- I love to do that because I know they can't keep up. And getting to the free-throw line, those are easy points. Whatever it takes to win.

Oklahoma State 62, Texas Tech 59

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Oklahoma State Head Coach Jacie Hoyt and Stailee Heard. I just shared with the media that Stailee's 17 made free throws is a single-game record for the tournament. And Coach, if you'd like to start us off.

JACIE HOYT: Just a really hard-fought game for both teams. I mean, there's nothing that anyone on either team left out on the floor. I'm really proud of our kids for just finding a way to win a game that was really tough for us to score.

It was ugly. It was all heart because there was nothing pretty about it. But, you know, I was a little bit -- the double bye is great, it's great. But to play a team that's already played two games and come in, that's a little bit challenging, I think, just to get used to the gym and the rims and all of that. I thought that was definitely the case for us the first at least five minutes.

But Stailee did Stailee Heard things. She is hands down one of the best players in the conference and in the country. She proved that tonight. I thought Ténin was really good, especially considering the foul trouble she was in early.

And ultimately it came down to rebounding for us. That's something we continue to hang our hat on. We know that we're not going to always shoot it as well as we would like to, and I thought rebounds made a difference in the game tonight.

Q. Coach, obviously feels like all season we talked about how it can be anyone's night, especially from three. And like you said, it was just a fight to win. Going into that second half, when it didn't feel like it

Q. How did you feel physically going to the line that many times physically after all those fouls?

STAILEE HEARD: Good.

Q. Coach, you mentioned that rebounding is something that your team likes to hang their hat on. 15 on the offensive side, that led to 16 second-chance points. In a game that's as messy as this, how valuable were getting those extra opportunities?

JACIE HOYT: Oh, it was huge. I mean, those were some of the easiest points that we got tonight. I remember Stailee scoring an easy layup off of it. I thought Lex did a really good job of rebounding. We didn't always have something to show from it, but it was extending the game for us and giving us those extra possessions when we really needed them, because scoring was so hard.

So that's something, again, that's really important to us.

Q. Stailee, I just have a question. As much as you love winning, you hate losing as well. What did you tell your team going into that fourth quarter when you are down 1 to go on that run and force Tech to force that timeout 2 minutes in?

STAILEE HEARD: Just we're not losing this game. Teams can't hang with us for forty minutes. And Coach tells us that all the time. I feel like that's really true. We have depth, and I think that's one of our best strengths we have.

We can just run teams, and easiest points are in transition. And I feel like -- I feel like what I say, they really follow and listen. And some of my teammates have done a really good job at doing that as well. I just told them: We're not losing this game. This is our quarter. We're going on a run here.

Q. Coach, Baylor was another team that kind of went down to single digits today as well. Celebrate this win, but what do you look forward to tomorrow with another tough match-up coming up?

JACIE HOYT: The thing about this time of year, you don't really have time to celebrate. It's all about finding a way to win the next game and surviving and advancing. There's nothing easy this time of year.

So just like Baylor had a close game, we had a close game. That's what this month is made of. Really important for us to just move on to the next one as quickly as possible. Whether you had a good game or a bad game, it really doesn't matter because the most important thing is you still get to play.

Q. Coach, you spoke about Ténin and her impact tonight, playing less than 20 minutes in the entire game but recording a double-double. Can you speak about the messages that you had for her at halftime and how to keep herself in the game?

JACIE HOYT: We encouraged her -- she sat with the foul trouble. We sat you for a reason. So now it's time to go.

She certainly did that. I thought she ran the floor really, really well. Defensively, my goodness, she made all the difference. Only had two blocks, but she completely changed the way that -- in the first half, they were able to drive and scoring a lot at the rim. And then T really changed that in the second half for us.

We just really encouraged her: It's time to do what you do. She's been playing so well for us, and she knew exactly what we meant when we said that and took it and ran with it.

Q. Stailee, Coach mentioned the long layoff. Do you think that contributed to sort of the slow start for you guys, waiting until the third day of the tournament, last game of the day?

STAILEE HEARD: Probably a little bit, but I feel like once we woke up, we were just back to the team. And Coach went back to earlier in the season when we had our bye week, and we came off of a good rest time and came out and did what we did with K-State. I feel like we can't start slow.

Q. And then, Jacie, it looked like Jadyn came in and did a good job of frustrating Bailey Maupin and making things tough for her. What did you see from her defensive intensity?

JACIE HOYT: I thought she was a huge spark for us on both ends of the floor. Like you said, made it hard for her. That's an area where we have been challenging her, and it's been really neat to see her grow up as a freshman. She was, honestly, not someone we really trusted with those assignments early, but she has grown so much in that.

She took a huge step forward tonight. Bailey Maupin is one of the best scorers in the conference, and for her to do that against someone of that caliber, that should give her a lot of confidence. I know it does me.

But I thought offensively she was a really big spark for us as well, pushing tempo.

Q. Coach, Texas Tech was the 14th seed in this tournament. What does it say about the competitiveness of this conference that that's the type of games you're going to get, doesn't matter if it's a top team or a bottom team?

JACIE HOYT: Yeah, one of the best conferences in the country, right? From top to bottom. You're going to be challenged every single day. That's the beauty of this conference.

You know, I mean, Tech, they're playing really well. And this is the time of year where it doesn't matter what the rest of your season was like, anyone can get hot at any point. I think that just -- you've gotta -- you've gotta be at your best, doesn't matter what happened the first time you played them or any of that.

There is no doubt about it. We got five teams in the Top-25, you know? And a lot of those teams -- Tech played really, really close. So we knew it wasn't going to be easy by any means.

I'm really proud of our conference, and I hope that people are paying attention right now, with that being said.

Q. Coach, it's just an every day thing, you guys still have to come back tomorrow and play a really good Baylor team. When you come back tomorrow, is it kind of a focusing on what worked today type of attitude? Obviously not shots falling and figuring out how to win. Is it that same attitude or is it, wash it over and go back to what's worked all season?

JACIE HOYT: We were trying to do what we did all season, it just wasn't working. Two totally different teams. They play a different style, different personnel, that sort of thing.

It's really -- it is about preparing for whoever we're playing, but it's mostly about us. Just coming up with a good game plan of how we're going to attack whatever they do defensively or offensively.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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