

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

Iowa City, Iowa, USA

Coach Lisa Bluder

Women's Basketball Press Conference

Iowa 70, Iowa State 57

LISA BLUDER: First thing I want to do is thank our crowd. They were amazing today. They really came out. They were loud right when we needed them to be loud, gave us some great defensive energy.

I am extremely happy with our defense this game. I thought our team played with such energy and such focus. I mean, they knew their personnel. They knew their scout really well, and they just did an unbelievable job defensively.

That third quarter, probably one of the best third quarters I've seen, but you know, when you look at paint points, that we had more paint points, 26-16, and when you consider they're 6'6" inside, that makes you feel pretty good. We had more rebounds than they did, turned them over more. It was just a really, really good game, and I'm really happy for my team.

Q. What's a game like this -- you have the national exposure, the only game with two rated teams and led by former Iowa high school girls, including yourself. What's it say about the state of Iowa high schools?

LISA BLUDER: I just think that the state of Iowa is just amazing for basketball, always has been. We've had basketball in this state longer than anybody else, over 100 years. Jan Jensen's grandma is in the Hall of Fame. It's just an amazing tradition that we have of basketball for girls in this state.

But our AAU programs are really good, too. Our AAU programs teach fundamentals. They don't just roll the ball out there, and I think that also is a big advantage for us in-state schools because all four of us are really good basketball teams.

Q. Lisa, I imagine it's been a while since you guys went into halftime with 23 points. What was your message to the team at that point? Their response obviously in the third quarter was great. What did you



think was the difference there?

LISA BLUDER: We talked about how great our defense was. I thought our defense was really good the first half of this game. We hold Iowa State to 28 points? We just said, hey, the shots are going to fall. We felt like we were getting good shots, and the numbers are going to -- the statistics are going to come out in the end, so we just really talked about how we thought we were going to score better in the second half.

Q. Lisa, definitely a different mood now this week than a week ago. You've pretty much publicly challenged your team to step up defensively. How have you seen that change over the course of the last seven days?

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, again, I think this is one of our best defensive efforts, and I really felt like there was a focus, too. There was an energy and a focus to our defense. We knew we were trying to do some different things off of certain people, and we created 15 turnovers out there. So I thought that was very good.

Also, we went eight straight days. Tomorrow is a day off for us, so I was really worried about their legs tonight, and it didn't bother them at all.

Q. Coach Fennelly mentioned that they played good defense throughout most of the shot clock but you guys were able to get a lot of shots at the end of the clock. How do you explain that?

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, sometimes like Addie got a great put-back in there; Kate had two threes, one didn't count at the end. I think Gabbie might have had one, too.

But you know, we're not usually patient on offense. I wouldn't call us that. But we really felt like we needed to work for good shots. Obviously they had a good defensive effort in the first half, and we just wanted to work the offense a little bit longer because the longer you work, the more tired they're going to get, and we have an opportunity to get to the free-throw line more, and that opportunity --

Q. Coach, did Kate turn an ankle in the postgame celebration?

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, she plays for 36 minutes and 13



seconds without an injury, and then walking off the court she twisted her ankle. I think she was walking. Yeah, hopefully she'll be okay with that.

I thought Kate and McKenna's defensive efforts were outstanding tonight. I think everybody was as a team, but I thought those two guys really took the challenge of guarding Jones. I thought Monika really took the job of guarding Soares. But I thought those guys did a really good job on Jones.

Q. Did Gabbie lose a tooth?

LISA BLUDER: She did. She lost a tooth out there. Good thing we've got a great dental school here. I think she caught an elbow.

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