

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 5, 2022

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

DePaul Blue Demons Coach Doug Bruno Aneesah Morrow Postgame Media Conference



Marquette - 105, DePaul - 85

COACH BRUNO: The score of the game, I don't even -- what was it, 105 by Marquette? But the score was really 49-17, and that was the rebounding numbers. And when the team can beat you off the backboard 49-17, that's just a tribute to the toughness and competitiveness, combativeness, the grit of the Marquette basketball team. That's what Marquette did to us tonight on the backboard and it translated into the score.

So whenever we sit here and are forced to face the music after a tough defeat, I think it's very important for people to recognize why the defeat happened.

You can scream and holler and make excuses but when you ask the players to look themselves in the mirror every day then you have to look at yourself in the mirror, look your program in the mirror and give credit to the team on the other side of the ball that had 49 rebounds and kept us to 17 rebounds. I think that in a nutshell was the basketball game tonight.

We didn't defend well on top of the rebounding factor here. Marquette is a team that -- Megan has done a great job with this ball club, but it's not exactly an offensive juggernaut, but they did score an awful lot of points tonight against us. It's a tribute to the work they did to get better offensively, but I thought we could be better offensively.

I think that's where the game kind of went from us and we were never able to recover. Third quarter probably to four, five, couple times, but we were never able to get over that hump. And then once we got to the seven-, eight-minute mark of the fourth quarter we figured we had to roll the dice. The only way we could catch them is to chase them and you're going to get blown out. And that's what happened.

Marquette did a great job and Coach Duffy did a great job. And 49-17 says it all.

Q. Aneesah, Coach just described what he thought was the difference in the game. What do you think made it so difficult to get after the boards today?

ANEESAH MORROW: I would just say Marquette's determination to get me off the board was one of the biggest things. Sometimes they were sending three and four people to box me out or just go for the ball. So that was a big thing today.

Q. Obviously we don't know what the future holds with the NCAA Tournament, but what do you think you take out of this experience with your first real postseason tournament? What do you hope to take forward from here?

ANEESAH MORROW: Just to continue to grow. This is not the way I imagined ending my season, but -- in the Big East Tournament. But just to continue to grow every day, the next day, time to get better. So we can't dwell on the moment.

Q. How did it feel to be honored by the Big East before the game?

ANEESAH MORROW: I was super excited about that. The regular season was very exciting for me. So I'm really happy about that.

Q. I wanted to ask about the impact some of these seniors have had, Lexi and Sonya, in your first year and your game?

ANEESAH MORROW: They have had a big impact. I wouldn't say just the seniors, but everybody on my team. They're super competitive. They always want to win and go after everything. Very competitive, not just on the basketball court. But I would say that they have sparked my competitive nature even more considering that it started at home. So, they helped me with that. Also being great

leaders on and off the basketball court as well.

Q. You played 32 games, won 22. If you could make your case to the selection committee about why DePaul belongs in the tournament, what would it be?

COACH BRUNO: We've played a very difficult schedule. First, the case starts with the Big East. Let's start with Big East. This is a really good league. And this is a really tough league top to bottom. I don't think we get recognized for that.

And, yes, UConn is the obvious great team, but the rest of us are really, really strong teams. And we've played enough people from the other leagues that I know that we're a good enough team to play in the NCAA Tournament, for sure.

Now when you add everything together, I'm not going to -- you can say what case can we make? We can make the case that we played a really formidable schedule and had some good wins for the year. We have also been inconsistent.

You're asking me a question and I just really -- do we want to play in the tournament? Yes. Do we believe we should play in the tournament? Yes. Yet I just have a hard time as a human being -- I don't like to swear up here, but I'm going to swear, all right -- bullshitting myself and the world. I just -- I don't want that in the paper, please, all right? But I just really always look in the mirror.

And there's four or five games we left out there that I think we could have had. And I guess if I was a better politician right now I could be smoother in my campaign to answer your question more smoothly and try to get inside the heads of the committee.

But basically they've got a job to do. It's a tough job to do. All right. Let's take us out of it right now and let's just talk about the Big East.

Absolutely Nova and Creighton and DePaul are good enough. Let's take us out of it. Creighton and Nova deserve to be in the NCAA Tournament, period, of course along with UConn. That's a matter of fact. Going in today's game, I believe that Creighton and Nova and DePaul deserve to be in the tournament.

So it doesn't really change. I look at how good are the other teams, and there's a Kentucky team still rolling around out there that we beat handily. And there's a Northwestern team that they're talking about being in the tournament that we beat pretty handily. There's teams we've beaten and we played a really difficult schedule.

And when you're in this league you have to play UConn twice a year also. And we finished that game, we have them beat except we don't finish the game in the last three minutes.

At any rate, you're asking me a question. I'm still babbling along here, and I don't know that I really have a great answer for you other than I think we're a quality enough team. I think we deserve to be in the tournament. And yet what they're going to do and how is it all going to play itself out and I shouldn't be quick to dismiss us from that possibility.

It's also interesting to watch other leagues and watch the guys' side where people with 16 and 17 wins get in. And forget the guys -- even on the women's side people with 16 and 17 and 18 wins get in, and you are sitting here at 22. You'd like to think that should have been enough along the way, given the schedule that we did play.

Q. It's one thing to devise a game plan on paper, to try to stop and limit a dynamic and at times dominant player like Aneesah Morrow. From your perspective how much can you credit Coach Duffy for devising the game plan and for her players to go out there and execute it, limiting her to just six rebounds and ending that double-double streak?

COACH BRUNO: You said it all. I think I said it earlier. They just did a great job. I think Aneesah answered it best when she said they were sending two or three people. All year long we've been telling our team when they send two or three people to keep Aneesah from rebounding the rest of you need to rebound.

That should have opened the door. Still should have been -- Aneesah Morrow shouldn't be the reason it was 49-17. There's four other players on the floor all the time that could reap the benefit of the fact that they sent the kitchen sink at Aneesah.

That really relies on the rest of us that we didn't go get the ball. I think that's really where it's all at. It's not just about Aneesah. I think that's something anybody should do, and Marquette did it well tonight. But it's incumbent on the other players to go pick up that rebounding slack.

And Marquette's, that's their identity is rebounding the basketball. And they're a great rebounding team. But this was more than what they usually do. I mean, 49-17 is a gross disparity. And that's on us. That's on the rest of the players for not going and rebounding when Aneesah was kept from rebounding.

The Big East really does deserve -- I guess I need to be more of a politician. We deserve, this league -- it's hard for me to watch -- the Missouri Valley get two and then they talk about us getting one. See, I don't count UConn. If it's UConn plus one we're not getting two, we're getting one. All right? Because nobody else wanted UConn in their league with them.

So UConn plus one is us getting one and the Missouri Valley getting two? And the Summit getting two? And the West Coast Conference getting two? I just, I really, I'm a firm die-hard believer in Nova and Creighton belong in this tournament, with a little luck us too.

Q. (Question about losing records)?

COACH BRUNO: I'll let you write about that.

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