

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 5, 2022

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

Georgetown Hoyas Coach James Howard

Postgame Media Conference



UConn - 84, Georgetown - 38

COACH HOWARD: I just want to thank everybody who came out, media. It was a long year for us. We thought we'd come out there and just try to see where we would fall today with Kelsey Ransom not able to go. Thought in the first quarter for the first six, seven minutes, we were okay. Forced a bit. But then the talent of UConn took over.

So we're proud of our young ladies. And we'll continue to learn from this and grow from this.

Q. You said yesterday that you wanted to pack it in defensively and rebound. What can you take from this moment and get ready in the offseason for next season?

COACH HOWARD: I think probably one of the biggest things we're going to probably be totally different next season. There's a lot coming in. And there's a lot going out. I think when our building blocks would be for the Ransoms and the Jillian Archers and the Graceann Bennetts, the two freshmen, Brianna Scott and Ariel Jenkins to get better over the summer.

And as soon as we get back to the floor, it's the development of those five kids while we continue to add the pieces that's needed, that we have a pretty good class we believe coming in and still have three scholarships on the board to see what the transfer portal looks like.

Q. What happened to Archer there? She was in a boot at the end of the game?

COACH HOWARD: Ankle. Came down right before the half. And they tell me she landed on someone's foot and she rolled it. And when the doctors, I guess, went and started to give her some exercises to see if she could go, came back and couldn't put much pressure on it.

Q. For Mary Cougherty in her final game, you had multiple players this was their last time most likely touching a court, but for Mary Cougherty who had some injuries this year, to shoot the way she did -- she shot very well at UConn when you played in Hartford, but how would you characterize her performance today, given the offensive boost after scoring only nine points in the first half?

COACH HOWARD: Again, I think Mary has been a young lady who throughout her career, when she was at Lehigh, she shot the ball well. She has been impacted by injury. But there's times this year when she gets her rhythm she can knock it down with the best of them.

I thought tonight we really needed someone to hit a couple of shots, and I think in that second half she knocked down a few of them to help, to just get us in the scoring column.

But she's a great young woman. And she works hard at it every day. But just with everything she had to deal with, with either something with COVID and something with injury, something with something else, it kept her off the floor for a long time. And we were able to see parts and good pieces of her game when she was back out there full time.

Q. Wondering if you could speak about their defensive effort, UConn's. They kept you without a field goal for quite a while. What made it so difficult today?

COACH HOWARD: Their length, their experience, their why. And what I mean when I say "why," they're playing for a national championship. They ain't playing for anything else. They ain't playing for Big East championship. They're playing for a national championship.

And with the mindset of what they bring to the floor, it's about getting back and finding their chemistry just because of the injuries that they have faced.

So at this time, this ain't about Georgetown, this isn't about any team in the Big East right now. It's about them. It's

about them finding their chemistry to go forward in this tournament and the NCAA.

So that's what I saw out there. I saw veteran players when you look at some of the kids they have out there on floor that's been with them for a long time, that length is great. And then having Paige back and you bring in Azzi. They're a very aggressive team that takes away passing lanes, that jumps everything that you're trying to do. They're not going to allow you to get into rhythm.

Q. Given that your team's going to be different next year, what do you take, though, from the final three games before this one? And you had an eight-game losing streak, you could have folded the tent and the team didn't. What do you guys take from that going into next year?

COACH HOWARD: I think the competitive spirit. We could take that. I thought our team in the last eight games, they came to play. We ran into that name UConn both times during that eight games. And it just shows where the talent is and pieces that you might need to play against this. And it's going to have to be some experience. It's going to have to be kids that plays well off the dribble and sees the floor. And I think that gives us a different gauge against the UConn's.

Moving forward, I think we know we can play with everyone else in the conference, as we return those five kids who played a lot of minutes. But adding the other pieces, that we believe that should give us some added depth or new starters, because of the type of caliber of kids we're going after, you land those kids. Now we know that we're going to be a pressing type of team. We know that we can extend. We know that we can turn people over. But then you've got to also have those players that's going to continue to be able to play to that system.

Q. We talked with Milan yesterday. She said she brings the juice every day in practice and games. Can you just reflect on what she's meant for your program since transferring in?

COACH HOWARD: Absolutely. Milan is a great story. She's a kid with a big smile, out of Florida down there. And comes from an athletic family. Her brother plays at the University of Michigan, one of the top linemen in the country, defensive linemen in the country. 6'8" kid.

They've got that pedigree that comes after you. And she knows what it's like being at the ACC level, coming out there playing against talent night in, night out. She's never down. She's always up.

And her experiences in that locker room help young players through some tough times. You get eight, 10,000 people in the stands and you've got freshmen and they are looking like, wow, and she's telling them, hey, it's just another game, y'all; you've got to go out there and enjoy the moment.

But that's what she brings. She brings that calm.

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