

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 4, 2023

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

DePaul Blue Demons Coach Doug Bruno Postgame Media Conference



Villanova - 71, DePaul - 70

COACH BRUNO: First of all, I want to congratulate Denise Dillon and Nova for coming back and beating us when we had the game, should have had the game in control down the stretch. And finishing close games involves it having smarts, it involves having toughness, it involves having will to win. And then it involves simple details. You have to defend. You have to rebound. And we didn't defend, we didn't make two stops, make one stop, get a defensive rebound, and we win the basketball game.

I'm a coach that does not believe in talking about free throws ever. We work on free throws. We prepare for free throws. We shoot free throws in practice. I think we have a pretty good system for shooting practicing practice free throws that puts pressure on players every single day. But 6-for-16 is not going to win in March.

You put it all together and we blow the game, basically. We had the game in control.

I really am proud of on your players for putting ourselves in position but you've got to finish. We didn't finish. And Nova did. Nova moves on. We go home.

Q. Could you talk about Holmes' play today and getting the 3 when you needed it?

COACH BRUNO: Kendall, that's just another thing I don't believe in as a coach. Kendall has actually struggled in the month of February shooting the ball. And I haven't said a word to her. I just believe shooters gotta shoot and they've got to be free to shoot.

And the more you talk about it, and the more you try to solve it and be the shot doctor, the more -- Kendall was due to break out. She broke out, started breaking out yesterday. She had a couple of big ones yesterday. And that's the Kendall that we believe -- she's an excellent

shooter. We need her to make shots like that. And she did have a great night tonight shooting the basketball.

Q. On that final possession, what did you see there? In terms of drawing up the defense for the timeout, was the goal to really deny Siegrist as much as -- to make sure she did not have that last shot?

COACH BRUNO: Absolutely. We're always trying -- the whole game plan revolves around defending Maddy. And we played off some people all night long trying to get help for Maddy because she's such a great player. She really is one of the best players to ever play in Big East, one of the best players in America. You're constantly trying to get secondary help to her. But she's just really, really good.

Q. What did you see on the last possession in terms of how the play developed and how it was guarded?

COACH BRUNO: Again, we had help. We needed to get help to her. Again, when you guard Maddy, she's not a prescription defend -- you can't guard her with prescriptions because she's got so many things she can do. She can drive the ball to the basket. She can pull up going left. She can pull up going right.

You want to keep the ball out of her hands. You want to send a second player to her. We didn't really get a second player to her like we would have liked to have gotten a second player to her early enough.

But the possessions before the Maddy-ending basket is what needed to happen. We had the ball. We were up six with the basketball. We gotta win the game by making stops. And we made stops. And we didn't rebound the basketball. And then we didn't make stops.

So it's really much more than one possession against Maddy Siegrist. There's a lot of possessions tonight that we had to do a better job defensively. And some of the other players, Maddie Burke starts out with six points in the first quarter. That's not on the game plan.

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