

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Sunday, March 5, 2023

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

Creighton Bluejays

Coach Jim Flanery

Emma Ronsiek

Morgan Maly

Postgame Media Conference



Creighton - 75, Seton Hall - 74

COACH FLANERY: I'm usually in bed -- I've been in bed about two hours by this time. And I think it will be about another four hours before I'll be able to fall asleep.

That was a great game. Seton Hall came out ready to play. I thought they really battled. And obviously Park-Lane -- we did a good job on her in the two regular-season games, but she got going early. And she controlled a lot of the game, I felt like.

And we had stretches in that first half where we were in good shape. Didn't end the half very well. And pretty much played from behind in the second half.

So made huge plays. These guys, I mean, to come from six down in the last seconds is a credit to their belief and their talent and the work that they put in to get to that spot. So I'm really proud of them.

I just told them on the way over here I was the next person to get in the game if we had anybody else foul out. Just really proud of them.

Seton Hall is a really good basketball team. And this league is, you can tell the first quarterfinal wasn't a close game but these last three were tremendous games. And the depth in the league is outstanding.

And we're spent now. But at 5:30 tomorrow we've got to be ready to go. And for us, thankfully, Villanova got all they could handle. So it will be a battle. The two games with them were probably not indicative of either team's strength. So it will be fun. But I'm fine if we don't have to play the 9:30 game next year.

Q. Morgan, last year it was you guys on the other end of the buzzer-beater, losing this game. How did it feel to flip the script on that today?

MORGAN MALY: It's like a perfect ending because going into this game, it was the exact same as last year. So to have that happen was pretty crazy.

Q. Emma, on that game-tying 3, I credit your coach. It was beautifully drawn set. Were you ready to catch and shoot? Did you know Rachael was essentially the decoy, like she had a wide open on the key but baited the defense for you to get a wide-open 3 in the wing?

EMMA RONSIEK: I definitely didn't know that I was the one that was going to be shooting that. Rachael was open. I thought she was going to shoot it. And in the locker room after the game she was, like, yeah, I wasn't shooting it. I saw you and I passed it to you. So I didn't really have time to think about it. It just went up and thankfully it went in.

Q. Morgan, obviously that was a hectic sequence at the very end of the game. Was that one of those you just mentally blackout, you just instinctively go to the basket to get the putback?

MORGAN MALY: We sort of had a play drew up, but Emma, like the way we caught the ball, Emma really wasn't going downhill. So it was kind of broken and luckily she chucked it up there with enough time remaining. But I didn't even know we were losing. I was, like, hmm, I'll shoot it.

Q. I definitely want to ask you about that set at the end of regulation. I mean, you could have prepared for a scenario where Seton Hall was going to foul you, up three with a foul to give and obviously the double bonus situation. But what were you looking for in terms of a setup for Rachael, Emma or any one of your shooters to take that game-tying 3?

COACH FLANERY: Well, Morgan's right. The one before that, when Morgan made the corner 3, that was just one I



drew up on the fly. We didn't have that in. But they executed it.

We got Morgan to the weak side. And then I tried to get cute and do something a little bit different. But the point was the ball did get moving and they were in rotation. And I'm, like, I thought what Emma thought which was that Rachael probably should have shot a wide-open 3. And when she put the ball on the floor I thought maybe she was going to shoot a 2. But she made a great play and Emma caught it ready.

I think that's what I really am proud about is that we missed some shots for the greater part of the game, and to still believe in yourself down the stretch is huge. And then the other part that I told them is we executed down the stretch but we won the game on Morgan's putback, which is an effort play. That's just a blue-collar play.

And as a team, that to me is more satisfying even than that we executed down the stretch, is that we went and made a play to win the game in that fashion.

So, yeah, I mean, we didn't have a lot of options. And when you're down like we were, a sense of desperation sometimes clears your mind a little bit, because you know you have to execute and you know you have to let the ball fly; you can't hesitate.

Q. What does it say about the mental toughness of this team to be able to come back from that deficit in the fourth quarter and fight it out and get the win in overtime even through all the foul trouble and everything?

COACH FLANERY: Yeah, I think just like you said, Kiani Lockett, a freshman guard, and I thought she did a great job of going in there and competing against Park-Lane in a situation where we had to have her do that.

But on top of that, I thought our veterans, they were real positive. And just liked our sense of belief. But we're an experienced team. Obviously the run we had last year in the NCAA Tournament makes this team probably a little bit tougher mentally than a lot of the teams we've had because you have to have a sense of belief to do that.

And I thought Seton Hall was really prepared and played really well. And I felt like, in the back of our mind was the fact that we lost to them last year in this game. And I think you've got to fight that a little.

So I think that's also pretty gratifying that we were able to kind of overcome that because I think when you look at the game kind of slipping away in that third quarter into the

early fourth quarter, it's easy to be like, okay, here we go again. I thought we didn't give in to that.

Q. So that overtime it really was just back and forth, back and forth. As the coach it's normally your responsibility to keep your players level headed to navigate those highs and lows. But as a coach, could you possibly describe the swing of emotions as you went tit for tat?

COACH FLANERY: (Lost audio). And when I say we didn't get stops, that's probably not crediting Seton Hall enough because they're a really good offensive team, and Park-Lane was really good tonight. And other kids hit big shots. Baines and Bemby hit big shots.

But it was one of those -- usually when teams get tired and know each other that well, you don't see an overtime where it's score, score, score; you see it being a little bit more of a struggle to score.

But we hung in there. I thought our movement, our player movement was good, especially for being that late in the game. And I think that's encouraging going forward that we can be a team that doesn't just kind of sit on the ball in a situation where we're a little bit tired. I thought we fought through fatigue and ran good offense in overtime.

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