

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 9, 2024

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

Providence Friars

Coach Erin Batth

Postgame Media Conference



Connecticut 86, Providence 53

THE MODERATOR: Joining us from Providence, Head Coach Erin Batth. We'll begin with an opening statement.

ERIN BATTH: Definitely different from yesterday, but I will tell you this. I am proud of our women. UConn is a powerhouse, but I've got to give some credit to the women that I coach and the journey we've been on. I hope that it's not over, but really proud.

There's a lot of things that went our way. There's a lot that really -- really a lot that didn't. Until we get more consistent with taking care of the ball and defending without fouling, it's going to be a minute, but we're going to work on that.

Overall it is what it is. A great place to play. Really great for women's basketball. The tournament has been wonderful. Me being a new head coach in the Big East, it's been a blessing. I'm really excited to be here, and I've learned a lot. Today I learned a whole lot. I learned a lot of good lessons today.

I will grow as well as with my women. When we go, we go together, and that's what we do at Providence. It's been really, really quite a blessing to be a Friar and to have this group of women to lead.

Q. (Inaudible) in the first half, what did you think of your players' ability to do that and how were they able to do that?

ERIN BATTH: That was exciting. I definitely liked how we kind of shook them up at the beginning. Yeah, that's something that I would like. I think every head coach would love to see more steals and turn the ball over so we can create for ourselves on the offensive end. It was fun to see, but again, the consistency is something we need to do. We didn't quite do it as much the second half, but really excited about how we came out.

I have been really working on getting our women to start out strong, and that's something that is important, I think, to really good teams, but then you have to finish as well.

Overall the turnovers, it was great for us. Definitely great.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about Grace's game. 23 points and a senior really stepping up?

ERIN BATTH: Yeah. Grace, she just really -- she's no holds barred. She knew what she wanted to do, what she had to do, and I give her a lot of credit for that.

How many minutes did she play? Oh, dear. I gave her two minutes. Bless her. That's more than I thought. Okay? I thought she was in there for a good 39.

Just her effort and her ability to play at a high level for so long is huge. But every time I ask her, "Are you okay?" "Yes, ma'am. Yes, Coach. How I've running is for you. Got it."

And so that's a true testament to her heart and the women around her, because in order for somebody to get the ball so much, your sisters need to be okay with that. That's the bond I talked about earlier today in this interview that we have. A lot of respect for Grace and very thankful for her.

Q. This is your third time having to scout for Paige Bueckers. What makes her so hard to plan for and play against?

ERIN BATTH: That woman is amazing. How much time do we have? I can tell you a whole lot of things that makes her great. But yeah, you can't stop her. You just try to slow her down and make her work a little bit harder.

Yeah, there's not a lot of weaknesses with Ms. Bueckers at all. So with that, we really -- I kind of made it a positive that you all get to defend one of the best players in the country. How about that? Everybody is defending her. Aren't you happy? Yeah, Sarah, you good? Olivia, you ready, big girl?

I made it a positive like, you know what, if you have her, do your very best to keep her in front. Don't foul her, and make her shoot over you. That's all I've got. She's a magnificent player.

I want to make sure I give a shout-out to Coach Geno for being the coach of the year and all the accolades his players had. It's amazing. Yes.

Q. Can you speak to not having Olivia at the end of the game and how that changed things a little for you?

ERIN BATTTH: Obviously having Olivia also on the floor, it makes us better. I do believe that. You know, today really wasn't her best game. And I'm just talking as a coach. It wasn't her best game, but her effort is always there.

And, yes, it does hurt, but this is what I'm talking about, the woman down, woman up. Something we've talked about since the day I was hired. There's always going to be injuries or something is going to happen. So are you ready?

So getting Sarah some more minutes turned out to be good. I want her to have more experience too. It does hurt. But I thought we did the best we could. I really did. We switched one through five. We tried to keep them in front. They definitely capitalize on their size when they had all five guards in.

But, again, I'm just really thankful to have Big O, double O, double O7 is what I call her. I am. She makes us better on the floor, so we do our best to keep her on the floor.

Q. The beginning of the year, you mentioned how excited you were to compete in the Big East Conference, and you have been able to compete in conferences around the country as an assistant coach. What have you learned about this conference and what makes it unique kind of in the nation?

ERIN BATTTH: Yes, I have been with a lot of different conferences. This one, the student-athletes are so versatile. I have had to coach against so many different types of coaching styles. We've had Villanova, who can move. Oh, those women can move. Marquette can move. You have St. John's and Archer, who is a great post player.

So my game plan has changed over and over again. It has made me a better coach. All of the coaches I have coached against have made me way better. You have DePaul who will turn you over like a pancake, honey.

It's been quite an adventure. Very exciting and stressful because you cannot sleep on anybody in this conference.

You cannot. I think that is amazing.

It's awesome to be a part of it, yeah.

Q. I think they outscored you 45-18 after the injury to Edwards. Obviously they stepped up their game, but did anything mentally happen to your team after seeing that?

ERIN BATTTH: You know, I think -- I don't know. I'm not in their minds, but I do try to get them engaged with the time-outs that I take and remind them, hey, I know -- I mean, the crowd is overwhelming. It's great. So I would not be telling the truth if I said it didn't bother them a little bit. They're human.

So for me being a head coach, can I bring them back? Are you here with me? We're still doing this. It's not over.

I do think there is a little bit there. I pray that she's all right. I think she's okay.

But even with Olivia going out, there's still a mental -- it does mess with you. It does. Good and the bad.

But, again, UConn definitely -- they didn't skip a beat. They didn't skip a beat. It makes a good team a great team. Again, a lot of respect for them and what they do.

Q. You said in your opening statement real quick, we're not done. Are you open to accepting another postseason tournament?

ERIN BATTTH: It would be exciting. I will talk to my administrators, but I think it would be wonderful to continue. I think a lot of teams would want to. Why not? I'm excited. We'll see what happens.

Yeah, for right now we're going to relax a little bit and kind of get us back together when we get back on campus, so hope so. Thank you.

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