

# Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 6, 2026

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

**DePaul Blue Demons**

**Jill Pizzotti**

**Kate Novik**

Postgame Media Conference



Providence - 69, DePaul - 55

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started with an opening statement from Coach and then take questions for the student-athletes.

JILL PIZZOTTI: I thought Providence came out and was really ready for the game and did a great job executing. We worked to really emphasize guarding their big three, Gormley, Teneisia Brown, and of course Sabou Gueye, and then those three ladies had really a big night today. So tough loss for us and anytime the season comes to an end, it doesn't feel very good.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

**Q. How does it feel to come here, maybe not the team play as well as they possibly could, and how does it feel knowing that your season ends here today?**

KATE NOVIK: Thank you for the question. It feels sad. Of course, losing sucks. We didn't expect this result today because we expected to win tonight. We prepared as well as possible. So we were excited about the tournament and we came here. It was a great opportunity for us to show our basketball. So today was not enough effort to win from each of us.

**Q. First season at DePaul and then the Big East. Can you tell us what you learned about yourself this year as a player?**

KATE NOVIK: I just learned that no matter what, ups, downs, you need to keep working, listen to coaches, listen to your teammates, what they're telling you what you need to improve. I think I have a big gap, and Coach is always telling me that I need to get better and play harder every time I step on the court, and I'm just so grateful for every

coach who put a lot of effort on me and on my teammates to get us better this season, even though it was a hard season for us and for everyone.

**Q. What are you going to remember -- when you look back on this season, what are you going to remember most about this year?**

KATE NOVIK: I feel like every moment is so special, but I feel -- we played UConn twice. It was great opportunity for us to play against the No. 1 team in country. And, also, we got big matches this year, so against Michigan State, and we fly to Las Vegas to play UNLV. It was a lot of great moments that I will remember forever. So I'm so grateful for every moment.

**Q. As the season ends, you're always looking to the next season. In terms of for your game to grow, what do you feel like you need to do better next year?**

KATE NOVIK: Thank you for the question. It's a good question. I feel, first of all, just take a little break, re-watch every game with coaches. Just analyze what I did good, what I need to get better at. I feel I need to get my confidence back to shoot threes and just use my leadership more on the court and off the court. So not only on the court. So I want to be more vocal and more leader.

**Q. Coach, your young players showed a lot of development over the course of the season and even coming into the Big East tournament playing with confidence. Can you speak to what you saw out of your underclassmen that really kind of impressed you this season?**

JILL PIZZOTTI: Yeah, just what you said, their progress that they made and we're playing with some young guards. The Big East is a big -- it's a big challenge. We had a lot of tough games. But I think they took advantage of the opportunity to play and grow and just understand the game better and what it requires to come out with a win.

But just really, anytime your young players -- anytime your players do something great, like to see Ally Timm play well



to make three, just like you're happy for her. But you're just happy for the team and to see their progress. We've got several young players. Natiah made tremendous progress through the course of the season. Alayna West, Devin Hagemann, they had an opportunity to play, and I thought took advantage of it and certainly showed a lot of progress from November to March.

**Q. You hate to see your season end, but it does come to an end. When you reflect on the season all the relationships you built with the women that you coached with, what are you going to remember most?**

JILL PIZZOTTI: I think just -- you know, our team was -- they dealt with a little adversity early with some injuries, but they just continued to battle all season. I think what probably impressed me the most about this team was we were off to a very tough start, and then the resiliency they showed in between games to get back in the gym and just work to get better. There's not, like, a lot of magic here. Yeah, just get better, and then you have to always bring a lot of effort and energy and execution, and I thought our team did a great job throughout the conference season of just continuing to hang in, continuing to get in the gym, have some enthusiasm, and get better. And that's probably what I'll take the most from this team.

**Q. In terms of your last time of your team getting together, you know, as a basketball team together, what did you say to your team in the locker room?**

JILL PIZZOTTI: You know, I'm not convinced that after that a game like that is the best time to speak to them about all of us being together. I congratulated Meg Newman again for winning the Sportsmanship award because Meg is an unbelievably great young woman and that's a really special award that she received, and what we like about it at DePaul is just what it represents. We want to be a competitive and a resilient program, but then we want to always show good sportsmanship. So just wanted to make sure she understood that again.

And then thanked her, along with Michelle Ojo and Justis Odom for the impact they made this year on our program.

**Q. You mentioned Providence's big three, and Sabou Gueye had one year in this conference, but just obviously able to get so much on the court done. Talk a little bit about what makes her so hard to stop.**

JILL PIZZOTTI: Yeah, she's very athletic. She's very quick. She's very gifted. She does a great job of getting past people and finishing at the rim. And she's got a great pullup jumper. Even though you know all those things, and you know what you need to do to get her stopped, she can

still get it done, and that's certainly the mark of a great player.

But Sabou -- you know, we talked to our team about, Hey, March basketball is going to feel different. It's going to feel different. When we get on this court and we warm up, it's going to be different. I thought Sabou really showed that in her game today and answered the bell. She had a heck of a game and we worked hard to try to take her away from all those things she got accomplished today, yeah. So I give her a lot of credit, and Val and that group for coaching 'em up today.

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