

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 6, 2026

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

Providence Friars

Valerie Nainima

Sabou Gueye

Orlagh Gormley

Teneisia Brown

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 and Coach.

VALERIE NAINIMA: Hello, everyone. Obviously this is new for me, so please bear with me today. I'm really proud of our team. We got down early in the game, but they stayed with our game plan. We played together and I really challenged them on their toughness, just the interior defensive one v one. They had made early threes, and we challenged them, and then I believe they made one more three in the second half.

So I'm really, really proud of them. Just in terms of our toughness, that's what Coach Erin really puts into us daily, so I'm glad that it's shining through right now.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. You said you're not used to being in these situations, but you guys always preach to your players about adversity. This is a situation where there's adversity. What was it inside of you that led you to lead this group of women to a win today?

VALERIE NAINIMA: Honestly, my belief in God. God means everything to me. I really prayed a lot, and obviously we have some really good help in terms of our staff. And having sharing the Sharon Baldwin communicate with me and whatnot, just being able to keep me calm, was great. Same with Elissa Cunane and Molly Reagan.



The other part is Coach Erin was able to call through and just talk us through everything. And what we tried to do was just keep everything routine. And my hat's off to the players. We tried to tell them early, and they handled it with such poise today.

Q. I looked it up and this isn't your first time being an acting head coach. I think you had one game at Fordham. Can you just talk about -- I mean, how soon before the game did you know you were stepping in, and what's it like to step in in that acting role?

VALERIE NAINIMA: Yeah, I knew during our pre-game meal. I think it was around 10:00. We had prepped last night, and we have some really good administration -- administrators with Jill LaPoint, our AD, Steve Napolillo, and our general manager, Kevin. We had a meeting yesterday when we were seeing that it might be a possibility. But we were prepared ahead of time, and then today when it became a reality, just took some deep breaths, a lot of prayer, and just pushed through.

Q. Sabou, you had a look in your eyes today that you just -- and then the way you played and your stat line, it's almost like you weren't going to be denied, and you weren't going to let this team experience a loss. Can you walk through your mentality on the floor today and kind of how that manifested itself?

SABOU GUEYE: So just coming into the game, as you can see, I'm blessed to have good teammates. I just didn't want this to be my last game. My teammates just trusted me and we just did it all together.

Q. Sabou, you put up 29 last month with pretty much the same stat line you did today. And then you're like, I'm going to double it, and I'm going to put up 31 today with seven rebounds. Pretty much the same field goal percentage, if not better. At what point in the game did you reach that flow state? Did you feel like tonight's my night, I'm not stopping? Even at the end of the game you were like, I'm still going to make the last shot.



SABOU GUEYE: Just having the same mentality coming into the game. The goal is to win, but also, like I said, my teammates just feed me the ball. And I wouldn't be able to do that without our point guards especially getting me the ball, and just trusting me and all the other players to set me up.

Q. Orlagh, I want to ask you, you had, I think it was a no-look pass late in the game, you had a behind the back dime kind of earlier. The swagger that your team kind of, you played with and your team played with, what is it about coming in here and playing to win as opposed to kind of hoping not to lose?

ORLAGH GORMLEY: Yeah, we just wanted to go out and play fun, full of energy. One of our big goals coming into the game was just playing with transition. We wanted to get up and down the floor. Sabou did a really good job running the lane. All of our guards did, and our posts did a good job running, so we wanted to play out, have fun, and play free.

Q. Teneisia, your first Big East tournament game you have double double, 14-14. What was it like out on the court?

TENEISIA BROWN: I mean, I was struggling to start because they were speeding us up, obviously. But once I realized like we are being sped up and controlling, we could control the pace, it was a good feeling, and my teammates, you know, they were scoring off of the boards every time I got it. So it makes me want to keep going at the boards. But it was just a great team effort all around.

THE MODERATOR: All right, thank you.

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