

# Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

## Arizona State Sun Devils Charli Turner Thorne

Postgame Press Conference

USC 71, Arizona State 65

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: I mean, just a tough game for our young team. We've had a tough time all year long sustaining ourselves. Like we'll have a good win and then we'll have a letup. Obviously big win last Sunday. I did think we were ready and focused, but we started super, super slow. Just didn't throw the first punch, didn't start punching really until into the second quarter.

Credit USC. They hit shots, and we knew they could hit shots. We didn't want to leave them that open. We wanted to guard better and we tried to mix up our defenses and we just weren't as locked in and connected as we have been. So we just had way too many breakdowns.

So great lesson for this really young team just in terms of March, and it's win or go home, so yeah.

**Q. Is this it for you guys this year? Will you play again this weekend against somebody or WNIT?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: Yeah, so we didn't opt in for the play-in games, so we're definitely interested in playing in the NIT, so we're hopeful to maybe get a bid. For this team with no experienced players that will be a great opportunity for us. It aligns with the calendar of the NCAA Tournament, and we just have to get them to understand what March is about.

Our administration has been real supportive of it, and we are hopeful actually. Given our roster and our situation it would be a wonderful opportunity for us and an opportunity to win a championship.

**Q. I'm sorry, you said no opting into the games this weekend though?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: No. We had to decide on Monday, so we decided no.



**Q. You mentioned how this has been a pattern, but I know you were hoping that after the U of A game maybe that wouldn't happen. It's just continuing to work on it, right, continuing to get them to be ready to go right out of the box and not have to make these furious comebacks?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: Exactly. You've got to throw punches and start strong. I mean, I thought they had good energy, and I don't know if it was nerves -- good energy like in the locker room and going out on to the court.

But they did get a little quiet in warm-ups. We talked about it, like, Hey, come on. Relax and let's just play good basketball. But there's nobody -- like I've said many times, there's nobody out there that's been there and done it and they're all just trying to figure it out together, which is hard. It's been challenging.

**Q. I don't know if you had a chance to look at the stats yet, but the offensive rebounding margin was 20 to 1 in favor of you guys, then Maggie added 10 boards today. It was evident the effort was there on the glass and things like that. Was it really just a case of not being able to put the ball in the basket?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: Well, yeah. You'd better -- that's a positive because sometimes we shoot that poorly and we don't get that many offensive rebounds, so I think that's why we were able to make a run and a push at the end of the game.

They shot -- like I said, they shot lights out. I think they had three shots that hit the rim three times and went in. But we weren't locked in. We left them open.

I mean, I liked the rebounding effort, but you need to have that kind of rebounding effort and shoot 43, 44, 45 percent in March if you want to win.

**Q. Just to follow up on the rebounding but in particular Maggie playing another great game today following up her wonderful Arizona game, just how impressed have you been with her over the past few games stepping up in two of the biggest games of the**



**season?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: Yeah, I mean, Maggie is just -- I mean, this is a young lady that came in and had major ankle reconstruction in September, end of September. Didn't really even get all the practices leading into the season.

We threw her in a game, our first UCLA game after one day of practice and she was one of the best players on the floor. So she obviously is very special. She just keeps getting better, and it's nice. She's still -- I think because she didn't have that kind of window she's also fresh and just giving us great energy and great basketball.

I wish there were some players around her to help. Again, all these kids are -- I'm pointing at my wrist saying end of the shot clock and I've done it all year and I am looking at blank stares and deer in a headlight and we give up a lay-up, you know, with just seconds to go on the shot clock.

So just the usefulness is tough. But Maggie Besselink is playing some great basketball, and that's why these young kids are really starting to figure some things out. That's why it would be really fantastic for us to get to play in a postseason tournament and just keep getting better.

**Q. You guys have made a couple mini runs throughout the course of the game and it looked like you guys were going to cut into the deficit a little bit earlier, but then USC would hit a three at the end or get an easy lay-up, like you mentioned. How frustrating was it when you think you were kind of figuring some things out and then Sanders or Rogers comes down and hits a big shot the next possession?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: Well, I will be honest with you; it was beyond frustrating. It was 101 out of 100 scale because they weren't doing anything special. They were not hitting tough shots. We just were playing soft and not locking in, which again, young team, everything, yada-yada, but you've got to know. You've got to know like you can't trade baskets.

I didn't have any time-outs in that fourth quarter, either, to kind of strategically make a comeback because I had to use them all during the game because we just were having so many letups. But the third quarter we were trading baskets so much, it was very frustrating.

I'm proud of our team for fighting back, but we've been in that situation too little, too late. We've just got to grow up, got to figure some things out.

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