

Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Sunday, March 7, 2021

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

UCLA Bruins

Michaela Onyenwere

Postgame Press Conference



Stanford 75, UCLA 55

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Michaela Onyenwere. We'll take questions.

Q. Coach was talking about how she's disappointed. The team is disappointed. Moving forward she's going to pull people's cards, check everybody's hearts moving forward. Can you give us your thoughts on tonight's game?

MICHAELA ONYENWERE: Yeah, I think it's tough, it's a really tough game for us. We didn't come out the way we probably should have.

Stanford is a great team. There's not much room for lapses when you're going against somebody who is a top, top team. So credit to Stanford. They were able to execute what they needed to execute. We weren't able to take away their strengths like we knew we could.

Moving forward, we're going to look at this game, yeah, find ways to get better (tearing up). Yeah... We're going to find ways to get better and move onto the tournament and be better.

Q. Coach talked how she's really confident you will be able to take ownership and respond. Are you confident you will be able to respond to this loss?

MICHAELA ONYENWERE: Yeah, 100%. That's one thing about my team, is when we're knocked down, we're not knocked down for too long. Like I said, we're going to go back in the film, find ways to get better, because we have a lot of basketball yet to play.

I'm super grateful to be on a team of people that I do have that are fighters, that are warriors. This is just a bump in the road, but we still have so much basketball to play.

Q. Does it help you guys or hurt you guys to have a

little bit of time off?

MICHAELA ONYENWERE: I think the time off will be good for us just to kind of give us a mental break for a little bit, just to get things in order for the NCAA tournament. I think it's good for the time being.

Obviously we want to be back on the court and playing as soon as possible.

Q. How did you feel tonight playing overall?

MICHAELA ONYENWERE: Yeah, I think it was pretty tough, I would say. We didn't really come out the way we knew we could, so that was just pretty tough getting into the rhythm of things.

I think the second half we showed what type of fight we do have. It took a little bit too long for us to do that against a team like Stanford, but it did show what we did have, what type of fight we had. When we're really focused in, locked in on little segments, what we're able to do.

Yeah, it was tough. Obviously we can go back and get better from this moment.

Q. You had 30 points. As the leader of the team, is there any conversations you're going to have with the team, a team meeting?

MICHAELA ONYENWERE: I think that just collectively I don't stick out from the team. I think I could have done a lot better regardless of how many points I scored or not. So it's not a matter of, Hey, like I did this, so we all need to do this. It's like, What did we do that we can get better at? What can we do to move forward from here, get better for the NCAA tournament?

I think as a leader on the team, it's definitely something that I can go back and practice and I know that I can speak up when I see fit. But also I would love my teammates to hold me accountable because we know that we have each other's back like that.

I think it's just a team collective effort in that sense that I



need to give more heart, we need to give more heart. At the end of the day it's just a 'we' thing.

Q. Back to the regular season, the first time you played Stanford you lost, then went on to have one of your longest winning streaks of the season. You say you feel like you can do the same thing. Do you feel like Stanford being as hot as they were, do you feel like this is one of the hardest teams you're going to play all year?

MICHAELA ONYENWERE: I definitely think Stanford is always a very talented team. They have been since I've been in college. We've always had really great battles with them back and forth. I would definitely say they're up there. We talked about how they're a Final Four team, but that's also something we believe of ourselves.

This was tough. We did not come out the way we wanted to come out. We have so much more left in us. We're really, really grateful to be able to compete against some of the people like Stanford in our conference who are going to push us to be better, push us forward to be better in the NCAA tournament, too.

Q. You moved into seventh all time in scoring for the program. We just saw Coach break down talking about how she felt like the team let you down. What does this program mean to you?

MICHAELA ONYENWERE: Yeah, this has probably been the best four years of my life. It's definitely going to be tough leaving these people when this time comes. But I'm super grateful to be able to be at a place like UCLA where I've been pushed to be the best player I can be, but also the best person as well.

I've had the best experiences here. My team did not let me down. We just have to do a little better in the NCAA tournament. At the end of the day it is we and not just me.

UCLA has given me a lot. Super grateful for my experiences. I'm definitely going to miss it when the time comes, so...

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

MICHAELA ONYENWERE: Thank you all. Have a good one.

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