

Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Sunday, March 7, 2021

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Stanford Cardinal Kiana Williams

Postgame Press Conference

Stanford 75, UCLA 55

THE MODERATOR: We will take questions for Kiana.

Q. Could you put in perspective really this whole journey so far that you've had. It seems like this team in the last few weeks has been getting stronger.

KIANA WILLIAMS: It's been one heck of a year, to say the least. Just super proud of my teammates. Felt like we were on a roll forever those nine, 10 weeks. But we stuck together and we really leaned on each other. It was hard at times living out of a suitcase, living out of the hotel rooms. But we wanted to play so bad, we just had to make certain sacrifices.

To win the regular season, to come here and back it up with the tournament championship, just says a lot about how tough we are. I'm super excited about how we bounced back from that UCLA loss. We were watching film yesterday after that Oregon State game. I was just getting frustrated, little things we didn't do. I'm glad we fixed them tonight.

Q. How well you have been playing, I don't know if I've ever seen your confidence be higher. Do you feel that way?

KIANA WILLIAMS: Absolutely. March, it's time for winning. Big players make big plays. My teammates have confidence in me, my coaches have confidence in me. I have to have confidence in myself.

They were finding me in my spots. I was just knocking 'em down. Not just me, but everyone. Everyone has to have confidence. We can't really rely on one person. I think that's really where our strength is, is we don't have one person that you can really key on. We have that warrior strength-in-numbers mentality.

Q. What stood out afterwards, red and white confetti



littering the basketball court, endlessly dancing. You all performed the TikTok. It almost seemed fitting, Stanford is back. Talk about that moment. Just watching it from up here, you could just feel the vibration.

KIANA WILLIAMS: Yeah, we were just so happy for one another. It's been a tough year. It's been a long year. Just to win this tournament, win the regular season, it's rewarding. Just really happy for my teammates, for our coaches, how hard they've worked, how hard we've worked on and off the court.

So, you know, when the confetti came down, it was time to celebrate and dance. In the locker room, This can't be our best game. We have business to take care of in San Antonio, my hometown. We're going to enjoy this, but we're getting ready for San Antonio. We want to be the last team standing.

Q. You were six of seven from three. Your pro neighbor, Steph Curry, won the three-point contest today. He's in the All-Star Game right now. How did you feel that flow going that you could shoot the three that well today?

KIANA WILLIAMS: Just confidence. I love coming to the Vegas tournament, Pac-12 tournament. Tara reminded me how well I shot my freshman year when it was up in Seattle. She just reminded me of those things. That's given my confidence. Like I said earlier, my teammates have confidence in me, I know my coaches have confidence in me. I have to have confidence in myself and let it fly.

Q. Did this feel like comfortable settings since you were essentially playing in Las Vegas as a home site?

KIANA WILLIAMS: Yeah, it was a full circle moment for me. Tara joked about going to play the slot machines before we get on the plane.

Yeah, we were in Vegas I think early December, just to come full circle, win it all here, it's a blessing. I'm just so happy for my teammates and our coaches.



Q. Key, I heard you talk about how tough you all are. Did you feel like you not only to prove it to other people, but at any point this season did you have to prove to yourselves how tough you were? Do you feel like you've done that?

KIANA WILLIAMS: Absolutely. I think that was the main goal for this game, was proving to ourselves that we can box out, we can be the more physical, aggressive team. Like I said in the postgame, there's this saying that Tara says we're nice girls from Stanford, but I think we showed we can get down, get dirty, do those little dirty plays, come up with the 50/50 balls, box out.

UCLA is a great offensive rebounding team. We knew if we took care of the rebounds, we'd have a chance.

Q. When the first three goes in, do you know it's going to be a good night?

KIANA WILLIAMS: I can say I agree. Any time a shooter gets their first shot to go down, whether a layup, a pullup or a three, having that first shot be a good shot, I think it sets you up for the rest of the game. Yeah, I agree.

Q. When we spoke a few days ago, you were talking about how though you guys had an 11-game winning streak, you still had room to improve. Looked pretty darn good tonight. Do you still have room to improve?

KIANA WILLIAMS: Oh, absolutely. That third quarter wasn't our best quarter. I don't really know. It felt like we got outscored. That starts with me. I got a little frustrated, went a little internal. My teammates willed me back in to finish the fourth quarter.

Just putting together a complete game for 40 minutes. We played really well in the first half. Tara challenged us to play even better in the second half. So there's always room for improvement. We're going to watch tape and watch some teaching clips to just get ready for the NCAA tournament.

Q. Kiana, feels like you have guards, wings, bigs. Feels like a very complete team. Why do you feel like this particular group is going to be a tough out? Why do you feel like you guys can go all the way?

KIANA WILLIAMS: You said it, we have guards, we have bigs, we have wings. We have an inside presence with Cam, Fran and Ashten. We have Haley slashing in there. Lexie, her being aggressive, knocking down shots, Lacie. We're so versatile and so deep.

I think Tara said this to us a few days ago, we've had seven or eight different people lead us in scoring. Being a deep team, especially going late into March, trying to make it to the Final Four in April, we're really going to rely on everyone. Teams can't just scout me or just scout one person on our team because we're a threat from all five positions. That's really important for a national championship caliber team.

Q. Your team's last loss was against UCLA late January. Was there a revenge factor in this game? What were your most important takeaways?

KIANA WILLIAMS: Absolutely, I said this earlier, we were watching film, watching plays that they were just effort plays. Rebounds, just watching them rebound over us, not boxing them out. For sure it was a revenge game for us. We had to prove to ourselves that we can do the little things, we can box out, rebound, we can execute. I think we took care of business from the tip.

Q. As a leader on this team, with three of you from Stanford on the Pac-12 all tournament team, how have you seen Cameron develop from that game till now?

KIANA WILLIAMS: Cam doesn't know how good she is. I think she's really going to be an X factor for us in this NCAA tournament. Her ability to rebound and get putbacks, she can stretch it out, shoot the three. She's going to be an All-American, for sure, during her time here at Stanford.

Just so happy with how poised she plays. She fouled out today, but she still contributes in a lot of ways, really rebounding and getting us going in transition.

Q. You mentioned the road you have been on this year. Will that help you in the NCAA tournament since you've been living out of a suitcase for a month? Is that something that will help you mentally that you've been through this already?

KIANA WILLIAMS: Absolutely. We've talked about that. We've lived out of a suitcase for nine weeks. I think we can do it for four more weeks. I think we have an advantage in that area.

It's my hometown, too. I guess we're going to be the home team (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Appreciate the time.

KIANA WILLIAMS: Thank you.

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