

# Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

**Stanford Cardinal**

**Tara Vanderveer**

Postgame Press Conference



thought we rebounded a lot better. So we out-rebounded them. We really came out aggressive.

I think Cori has done a fabulous job. They have a really, really good team. Onyenwere is fantastic. She played really well. It started with Anna Wilson defending against Osborne, who is another really outstanding player. Kiana played well. She really got us going with her shooting and her floor leadership.

Lexie really kept the game going. When we kind of went through a lull in the third quarter, Lexie really stepped up. I thought Haley had a much better game than the night before. She really helped us. We got a lot of different kind of different contributions. A basket here from Anna, basket here from Cam. Again, Haley going 4-6 was great. Fran getting rebounds, going 2-2. Lacie hitting a big three.

I'm really, really excited about what our team accomplished.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. It was a total team effort, but you have three players on the all-tournament team. How does that make you feel at this point in the season to have your three players on this team in the toughest conference?**

TARA VANDERVEER: Well, I think coming from the winning team, and congratulations to our team. It's a total team effort. Everyone is excited for everyone's success, which I think is really special. They're just a really close group. Today I think we showed some toughness. We needed to against a very, very, very good UCLA team. A tournament team with All-American. Michaela is an All-American. I think Charisma is a future All-American. Great coaching by Cori.

**Q. Cameron is on that team. What have you seen from her since that loss at UCLA?**

TARA VANDERVEER: Cam I think she had a very good tournament. She had a great game against Oregon State. She was fabulous.

As a young player, I think she's doing extremely well. Just adjusting to a more physical play, a bigger court, coach yelling at her a lot. She does some great things for us.

**Q. Both you and Kiana talked about toughness today, made reference to wanting to show some toughness. Do you feel like you have lacked that or is it just the time to turn the volume up on that?**

TARA VANDERVEER: Well, I think that we're probably more of a finesse team. We like to move the ball, free motion. But sometimes you've got to really get in a grind game.

We just wanted to be ready for that. I think we have showed toughness, but we can show more. This game demanded it. It demanded that we rebound. It demanded that we play defense. Our team stepped up.

Again, people were extremely competitive. I think throughout the season Lexie, she's been steady. She hasn't shot maybe as well as sometimes we want her to, or she's capable of. But I love her competitiveness. I really thought she was someone that was a big difference maker for us today.

But she brings toughness every day.

**Q. Key said you said to them after the game that this can't be our best game. Can you elaborate on that?**

TARA VANDERVEER: Well, we did have spurts of just great basketball, but then we kind of fell off the wagon a little bit. We need to be more consistent as a team. We need people to really adjust to officiating better. We can't be in foul trouble, foul trouble, foul trouble.

I'm not trying to nitpick, but you win a championship game and you're looking forward to the NCAA. I think that we have to look at things that we can do better so we can be cutting down more nets.



**Q. Combined 50 points between Lexie and key, double-double from Haley. You shoot 48% from the field and from three. Only drawback would be 17 turnovers. How would you summarize all that?**

TARA VANDERVEER: Well, one of the turnovers was a shot-clock violation at the end. But 16 is not good either. I think, again, we have things we can do better. Sometimes whether you're a coach or a player, you kind of have to enjoy the moment.

Our team is very excited. I'm going to look at the good things. We're going to talk about the goals that we accomplished. Turning around probably about Wednesday or Thursday we'll say, Hey, we can take care of the ball better.

But what a great team effort. Turning things around. Last time they had 21 O boards on us. This time it's seven. Our team listened. They worked really hard. Again, I'm just really proud of how hard they played and how well they played.

**Q. I'm not going to have you compare one team to another of your many great teams. I'll ask you this: have you felt more confident going into the NCAA tournament than you would right now in a previous season?**

TARA VANDERVEER: Thanks for the question.

I'm always a worrier. I mean, it doesn't matter what team. I could probably have players -- I mean, even going into the Olympics with great players we had, I'm always looking for things that we can do better.

I can't say that I'm ever, like, really confident. Maybe certain insecurities motivate me to work harder, to watch a lot of video. I watched our UCLA game five times between our last game and today. I always feel like there's things we could be doing better.

I think if we continue to stay healthy, you're always day-to-day, you have to test negative. If we continue to stay healthy and our team keeps improving, we're capable of beating anyone and we're capable of losing to anyone.

We just have to continue to improve. We have a young group, but I know we can get a lot better in the next month.

**Q. Is this year's winning the regular season and this conference tournament title more special in a sense because of everything else going on in this world?**

TARA VANDERVEER: Absolutely right. I mean, our team traveling, being on the road for two months, it started in Vegas. Vegas is good to me, I need to go down to that slot machine before we leave.

But, you know, again, I'm so proud of our team, not just for winning but winning because they were so together as a team, they wanted it so much for each other. That's not always the case. You can have really good teams and players who are out here, but they're a very tight circle, a very tight group.

I wanted it to them. I kind of said, Look, I already got 13 nets. I want it for you guys.

**Q. What you went through being on the road, living out of a suitcase, could that potentially help you in Texas? No one else has done that.**

TARA VANDERVEER: Being down there for two weeks, that's nothing for us. Obviously, I mean, I think our team is really excited. Kiana especially being from there. We want to keep playing hard so we can keep playing.

As hard of a year as it has been, we don't want the year to end.

**Q. Specifically is this as confident as you felt in a defensive squad perhaps going into an NCAA tournament, considering that seems something that's been very consistent throughout the season?**

TARA VANDERVEER: I do feel like we can guard people. I also feel like we can shoot the ball really well. We have a lot of different weapons.

What I like is the fact that kind of no matter who's out there, they're playing hard for each other and with each other. There's not, like, a loose cannon that's all about herself, trying to get her points, someone that you can't depend on. This is a dependable team.

I think that does help your confidence just going into a situation. Again, I think we have to play hard in every single game, but the confidence I have is in our team, that they'll play hard and they'll play for each other.

**Q. You have a team in some ways it's hard to single out anybody out, so many people who have contributed. Do you feel like Kiana has taken her game to another level in the last few weeks?**

TARA VANDERVEER: Kiana does what our team needs her to do. We needed her to step up like this today, and she did.

I think the bigger the game, the better Kiana plays.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you.

TARA VANDERVEER: Thank you very much. We'll see everyone down in Texas, with our masks.

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