

Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

USC Trojans

Coach Lindsay Gottlieb

Rayah Marshall

Jordan Sanders

Postgame Press Conference



the basketball you're playing all the time.

And it's hard to become an elite program. It's hard to become a perennial tournament team. But we're going to get there. We're going to get there with this group or in the near future.

So we just talked about getting it right and also the appreciation and gratitude for the people in the locker room who are graduating.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about just things you learned from your first stint as a coach in the Pac-12 and what you brought now in your first year at USC, maybe things that were different or things that helped you be a better coach this year than the first year when you were at Cal?

COACH GOTTLIEB: I think the biggest thing is that I'm different. I've had a lot more experiences. Gosh, that was a lot of years ago. Was it 2011, 12, first year at Cal? Talking 10 years ago. It's life experience, basketball experience, experiences with different people.

I hope I have more perspective. I hope I have a broader range of basketball knowledge and human knowledge. But they just know me today, this group. And so I think that the person I show up as every day has to be at my best every day for them.

And it's less consequential. What's different 10 years ago, what did I bring and what do I do in this moment, that's my challenge and my mission. That's our challenge and our mission.

And that's what I'm looking forward to. Just a different situation than I've come into before. And it's going to take hard work to get where we want to go. But these are the people I want to do it with.

Q. I know Sanders, she had a lot of really big shots where it felt like UCLA many times was going to pull away. She took a shot and sparked the team. Could you talk about what they did out there tonight?

UCLA - 73, Southern Cal - 60

THE MODERATOR: We welcome University of Southern California head coach Lindsay Gottlieb and student-athletes Jordan Sanders and Rayah Marshall.

COACH GOTTLIEB: Appreciate you all being here. There's no -- I told the team in there, there's no blueprint for end of the season. There's no blueprint for a loss in a one-and-done type of tournament situation. And I'm sad.

I'm sad not to have another game with this group. I'm sad not to go further in this tournament. Credit UCLA.

They're a tough team, did what they needed to do. I was proud about the way we fought back in the third quarter when things on paper weren't going our way. I think it showed a lot of toughness and character of the young women in our locker room.

And I think it's the start of something for us, not the end of something, even though this feels like the end right now. A lot of love and respect for our seniors, who didn't have to buy into something new, and to me, but they did by choice. And that legacy will go on.

And just optimistic about the ways that we can get better and be in this tournament for longer in the very near future.

Q. Could you speak to what your message to the team in the locker room after the game was?

COACH GOTTLIEB: It was long-winded. Sometimes I'm long-winded. Just talked about the overall trajectory of our year and just who we were in that third quarter or who we've been at times during the years, what we're capable of. And it's really, really hard to get to a point where that's



COACH GOTTLIEB: What Sanders did specifically? Or what UCLA did?

Q. What Sanders did.

COACH GOTTLIEB: Yes, she's a bucket, right? That's exactly what she does. You set her up. Get her a little space, not even that much space, she's going to put the ball in the basket. I thought she took -- it's a physical game. They were trying not to let her get touches. She found her spots and knocked down big shots. It was a huge part of why we were able to come back. She does that all so well, always guarding the other team's best player.

Q. Could you talk about your freshman year. You had such a good year this year and the things you learned in the first year, how you'll do this. Talk about Rayah's growth from the season, from beginning to end.

RAYAH MARSHALL: My growth throughout the season I felt like I learned a lot grew, I grew mentally, physically, stronger. Once I got the hang of things I was able to get the rhythm of college basketball.

What I will say, what I can take going into next season this fire feeling I'm feeling right now. I hate -- I actually really, really hate losing. So next time around I'm going to carry the same feeling and take it out whoever on the other side.

COACH GOTTLIEB: So the first thing I'd say, I want to talk about Rayah the person. Top recruit in the country, coaching change. Most people would say, oh, let me get recruited.

My first conversation with Rayah and her mom and her family was: We are SC. We are here for the school. We're in with you. And that's something I won't forget, ever. And I appreciate that.

And she's incredibly coachable. She's incredibly engaging. Really, really talented and yet humble enough to know that she has stuff to learn. And that's why her growth trajectory has been so steep and why it's going to continue to be steep.

A lot of times freshmen hit a wall during the year and regress or they get frustrated or whatever. Hers was the opposite. I think she continued to get better throughout the course of the year.

I think she does have an understanding of everything that she can be. And we're going to push her to get to that way. But I thought our upperclassmen really took her under their wing, and her potential is limitless. And I think

it starts with the kind of human being that she is. And it's going to be exciting to see where she can get to.

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