

Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Stanford Cardinal

Tara VanDerveer

Cameron Brink

Francesca Belibi

Postgame Press Conference



I think she had some great help from Fran. The two of them together rebounded really well for us and Haley rebounded. So you've got your upperclassmen stepping up, which is how it should be.

Q. How impressive is it the presence that Talana has in a game like this, her first post-season game. She plays well defensively, puts up 10 points. What does that speak to that she is able to do that?

TARA VANDERVEER: I thought that she had a fabulous game. I think that, I have just the utmost confidence in Talana. She made her free throws. She had five assists, no turnovers. She made some big threes. She defended a fabulous player, Endyia Rogers, who -- I think she worked really hard to guard her and she did a great job.

So it's really exciting to see her have that type of game. But I think she's really been doing it all year. She flies under that radar, but that's okay with me.

Q. You guys finished with 56 rebounds. Each of you got double digits in the rebounding column, along with Haley, who had 13. Just talk about your guys' mindset today on the boards. It just seemed like there was a point where Te-Hina turned to her team and said, We have to box out, we have to box out. You guys were being so aggressive on the glass. Talk about your mentality today on the rebounding.

FRANCESCA BELIBI: I think last time we played Oregon we gave them like 23 offensive rebounds and we lost the boards. We kind of pride ourselves on being a defensive team and a rebounding team. So I think for all of us it was about boxing out, getting the boards, getting those extra possessions, and making sure they didn't get any extra possessions.

We kind of bought into that mindset as a collective. We did have a couple slipups, but for the most part we had everyone boxing out, going to the boards, trying to just crash hard. I think it was just really about our mentality and it showed.

Stanford - 76, Oregon - 65

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Stanford. We'll start with an opening statement from coach and then take questions.

TARA VANDERVEER: That was a great win for our team. Oregon has a really strong team and Paopao really got going on us. Just a very well-coached team, really talented team. So for us, this is a big win. We went inside to Cam, and she delivered. Fran came in and had a great game for us. I thought Talana Lepolo had a great game for us. Haley rebounded and had some great assists for us.

A lot of different people stepped up. We've got a lot of young players. Lauren Betts, I thought, came in and helped us. Just Indya Nivar had some nice plays. So our defense for the most part played really well, except for maybe we just forgot to guard Paopao sometimes. But she's an exceptional player. So I'm really excited that we're moving on to play UCLA.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions?

Q. In the third quarter when Cam was sitting with her third foul at whatever point they had closed the gap to six and you brought her back in, along with Haley. But Cam's presence on the floor, then you go on a 7-0 run and they just couldn't get back in it. Could you talk a little bit about Cameron's presence on the floor and just having her out there in general.

TARA VANDERVEER: I think, and Cam could answer this for herself, but Cam is extremely motivated. She plays really hard. She's incredibly talented. She just came out and said, I got to get going. And she did. She put her team on her back.



Q. Cameron, you picked up your third foul. You still finish with a 20 point 11 rebound double double. Kind of talk about where you're mindset was after picking up that third so early and how you stayed so effective while you were in foul trouble.

CAMERON BRINK: Yeah. I feel like I wasn't really nervous when I picked up that third foul because I have Lauren Betts coming in for me, I have Fran coming in for me, Kiki. I know my team can win without me. I mean, it's not great and I know I'm going to get yelled at for it. But, yeah, I have a lot of confidence in my teammates.

Q. It hasn't been that long since the Utah game, but I'm wondering how much more refreshed you play now or you feel now because of all the difficult things that happened to you in the latter part of the regular season.

FRANCESCA BELIBI: It was nice to sleep in a bed. I don't know. Yeah, I mean, a lot of things happened at the end kind of of that trip, but like that's really no excuse for us. We know that we didn't necessarily come out and play the way we wanted to play.

So, yeah, it was nice to get a couple days off to come back and regroup and sleep in a bed and then just kind of come out here and decide that we're going to just go out and play our game.

CAMERON BRINK: I also will say, I feel like we've had more difficult circumstances. Like, my freshman year, your sophomore year, there would be times where we would practice in a gym with like no lights or no running water. Like, we couldn't wash our hands after going to the bathroom. So I feel like it sucks to not be able to have a smooth travel, but I think we're built for it.

Q. For all of you, obviously you guys are one of the favorites in this tournament. Is there a pressure you have to manage or are you not really worried about that?

FRANCESCA BELIBI: There's no pressure. We're just playing basketball. We know that there are things that we want to do on the court and ways that, different things that we're trying to hit. But for the most part, like we're just kind of enjoying the ride, enjoying the moment, and just playing for each other.

So there's no real pressure. We're playing loose. Like Cam said, there was no nervousness. We get to be here, we get to play together, and we're just going out and we're doing that.

Q. Incredibly physical game down low. And on paper at least a couple of those low players had a size advantage over you. What goes into your mindset when you're not the tallest player or you're not the biggest player on the court?

CAMERON BRINK: I know teams want to be physical with me because I'm kind of slight in frame compared to others. But I feel like I've played through that my whole life. I think Tara when she was recruiting me she's, like, I'm wondering if she's actually really strong.

But it's a mentality. Like, I'm not really that strong. I have to practice against Fran and Kiki every day. They're strong. But I think it's just playing through it. So, yeah, my teammates did a really good job of finding me down low.

Q. How have you seen Agnes evolve this season into the role she has? She had the two 3-pointers today. It seems like she's kind of had some of those in her in the second half of the year, so how has she evolved this year?

TARA VANDERVEER: I think that Agnes came in really wanting to contribute. In a way she really hasn't had much game time, prime time game time her freshman or sophomore year. She gives us a lot of energy. She plays extremely hard. I think she's just getting better and better. I think she's just really scratching the surface of how good she can be. She helps us at the defensive end. She rebounds. She's very scrappy. Like you said, she knocked down her three, so that was great.

Q. Oregon, you played Oregon twice this year. They have got 14 losses. Can a case be made for that team to be in the NCAA tournament?

TARA VANDERVEER: You know, I think they play in the No. 1 league in the country. I know they have had some injuries, which have obviously affected them too. But I think they're a great team and, I mean, I think they are deserving of playing in the NCAA tournament, yes. I think we should have eight teams in, including Oregon.

Q. You mentioned Lepolo being under the radar and she didn't make the all-freshmen team, which seems like a surprise. Just wondering if you were surprised she wasn't on it, with somebody starting as a point guard for you on a team of your caliber.

TARA VANDERVEER: You know, I just, I don't get worried about stuff I can't control. I would rather have her doing what she does than worrying about what awards people decide to give to different players. She can play with anyone in the conference and she has proven that day-in

and day-out. And I think she will just, she will use it to her advantage. If she feels disrespected, then just show 'em. And I think she did today.

Q. I know the game just finished, but any scouting report for UCLA up next?

TARA VANDERVEER: I think UCLA, they have a terrific team. They're a very physical team. You got to rebound against them. You got to take care of the ball, get good shots. You've got to defend. So that's not a big secret, that's what you have to do every game, for the most part.

But we know each other very well and we will be prepared. I know our team will give its absolute best effort. So it will be a great game. Come on back tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: All right, thank you.

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