

Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Colorado Buffaloes

JR Payne

Aaronette Vonleh

Frida Formann

Postgame Press Conference



she was a freshman in high school. So knowing that she runs their offense and gets them into their actions and things, I do think Jaylyn was able to be a little bit disruptive and just them getting their offensive flow started. So I think that was great.

Q. Aaronette, another defense question, but you looked like you were on Raegan a lot tonight and did a really good job on her. She didn't really score until the final minutes. But talk a little bit about the defense on her, especially after the big game she had last night. What was the key to slowing her down a little bit?

AARONETTE VONLEH: She's one of their best players and also very physical on the block. So just trying to match the physicality, keep her away from the basket, force her to take shots that are out of her comfort zone.

Q. Frida, there was a moment there in the third Jaylyn gets a steal and somebody gets fouled. I don't remember who, but she turns to you and she says, That was you. Do you remember this moment I'm talking about in the game where she turns to you and points to you and says, This was your, you caused this steal because of the way you played defense in that moment?

FRIDA FORMANN: I think I remember what you're talking about.

Q. In the third quarter, you went on that run, you really locked up on the defense, got some turnovers, really ran out in transition. What sparked that?

FRIDA FORMANN: That was definitely a focus because we know that's when our team does. That's how we really pull away from teams, and that's how we did in this game too. So every time we're feeling like we're struggling it's always just defense. We got to get stops, we got to get easy buckets, we got to get stops.

I think Jaylyn has that tenacity to really fire us up on it and then when we're all doing it collectively it's really good for us.

Colorado - 62, Oregon State - 54

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Colorado. Coach, we'll start with an opening statement and then take some questions.

JR PAYNE: Yeah, that was not the prettiest game we've ever been a part of, but I think what we all witnessed was two teams that really are just going to fight and scrap and do everything they can to win the game. I thought Oregon State played really well. I thought in spurts we played really well also.

I was just telling these guys in the hallway, really proud of how we never lost our cool. Like, we kept our composure through Oregon State's hot shooting, through some cold spells for us offensively, and we just never really got too flustered, which I love about this team. So really proud of being able to win and keep going. Yeah, just excited to get the victory and be able to keep playing tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions?

Q. It seemed like when you moved Jaylyn onto Bendu things changed. Their offense kind of stalled out for quite awhile. Is that what you saw? And I guess why did you wait that long I guess to go with that?

JR PAYNE: Yeah, I mean, we really take a lot of pride in our defense. I don't know that we were particularly great today defensively. But we typically take a lot of pride in our defense. We believe that every single player on our team can guard.

So I don't know that it was one person that made a difference. But Jaylyn certainly can be disruptive on the basketball. Bendu's a great player. I've known her since



Q. Frida, Oregon State's a much more confident team than when you went up there, I mean, after what they have done the last five days. Then they start off 6-7 from threes and they're draining everything. So how kind of nerve wracking was that a little bit like, wow, we're letting this team be in this game here? And can you talk about that's a well, coach?

FRIDA FORMANN: I think it's just a reminder that everyone in this conference can beat anyone. All of these teams are good. It doesn't matter if you beat them by 20 last time. You play them. They're going to come out with everything they got. They made a lot of shots and we just had to adjust because they were playing really well.

JR PAYNE: Yeah, I mean, I think I always have thought Scott's one of the smartest coaches around, and so we knew that they would make the adjustment to have a player like Talia go out, who is one of the best guards in the conference. We knew that there would be some sort of adjustment that they would make to remain competitive.

I thought the adjustment they have made in the last couple weeks has gone big. That's what they have is bigs and they're bigger than everybody else. So they have figured out how to play with both of those post players together a lot, which is hard. It kind of stunted some of our rotations and subs that we normally make just knowing that we have to have our most physical players on the floor to guard them.

But, yeah, I agree with Frida. When they come out shooting like that, that's a difficult sort of storm to weather, not something that we typically see or we allow. But to be able to weather the storm and be able to just really stay together, like I'm glad you shared that, that Jaylyn said that. I didn't know that. But that's very indicative of the selflessness of our team. Like, to be able to have a great play and turn to someone and say, That was you, like that just, that gets me excited.

Q. I wanted to ask you about Kyndill's performance. You closed the game with her, only 1-2 from the field, but overall her impact I thought defensively she was giving her effort there, kept the ball moving, made the right passes. Just in the second half there, what did you see out of her in terms of your decision to kind of play with, play her a long stretch there?

JR PAYNE: Yeah, Kindyll is one of our most reliable trustworthy players on both sides of the floor. She plays multiple positions for us. She's incredible defensively. Typically can guard someone. If someone's going off, sometimes it's like, Kindyll, go get 'em. And she can really do a great job in being disruptive and contesting shots and

just has some of the quickest hands I've seen. So she can do that very consistently.

But wonderful to have multiple point guards on the floor. Even Frida played point guard in high school, so I think we finished the game with three point guards on the floor to be able to get us into actions and good movement and finish plays.

Q. During that first half when they were pulling out to a little bit of a lead you seemed to make a lot of subs trying a lot of different lineups. What are some of the things that you're looking for or trying to find in a time like that when you're trying to get your team back in it?

JR PAYNE: Parts of that was, like I spoke about earlier, their size. There's not a lot of -- when they have that type of size, there's not a lot of opportunity to play different people at different positions because they simply aren't big enough to guard those guys. So that was a little bit of that.

When they went a little bit small, we could go a little bit small and be able to rest someone like Aaronette for a couple minutes here and there just because they have gone a little bit smaller. But I thought everyone that played came in and contributed and gave valuable minutes tonight and we needed all of them.

Q. This conference is very deep, Washington State, you're playing 11 seeded Oregon State. Talk about how deep this conference is and the fact that there's going to be a new person in the championship game because you and Washington State have never been there, just what that means for programs playing this conference as the post-season continues?

JR PAYNE: Frida spoke about it earlier, but we truly believe that any team in this league can beat any team in this league. And that's saying something when you have typically five or six top-25 teams. I think everyone in this conference is very well coached. I think we have extremely skilled student-athletes. I think we have athleticism. We have size. I just think it's a versatile conference.

I think you can play a team that's going to be unbelievably athletic on a Friday night and the next day maybe not as athletic but so skilled in scheme X and O so well that it really challenges you as a player to be able to make those types of adjustments. It challenges you as a coach. But I think without a doubt it's the best women's basketball conference in the country.

Q. Building off of that, earlier Tara and Kelly Graves were talking about how many teams should get into

the NCAA tournament from this conference. Tara came up with eight. Do you agree with that? Building off what you were saying, some of these teams are on the bubble. How many of them really deserve to be into this thing even though they may have 14 losses?

JR PAYNE: Yeah, no, I think that's a great question. I would agree. I think we should have eight in this year. It's hard because there's a lot of great teams across the country. But I think when you look at the depth of our conference and you're able to survive, even with some losses, you're able to survive and weather the Storm of the PAC 12, and still beating teams and competing like that, I think you've proven that you are one of the better teams in the country.

So I would love to see eight teams in. I think if you were to look at 7 and 8 in our conference, those teams have beat top-10 teams. For the most part they're competing at that level, which definitely garners acknowledgment and post-season appearances.

Q. Aaronette, a lot of players on this team have had a lot of different experiences in this tournament. Different teams, things like that. Last year you're in this tournament as a reserve for Arizona, losing to Colorado. How much fun was tonight for you being able to play such a big role in a big win?

AARONETTE VONLEH: Yeah, I mean, it means a lot just coming from last year, not really having that much of an effective role and then losing to Colorado instead of being on Colorado and advancing to the next day. So this is all new for me, but I'm just glad to be a part of it.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you, everyone.

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