

Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 7, 2024

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Colorado Buffaloes

Coach JR Payne

Aaronette Vonleh

Jaylyn Sherrod

Postgame Press Conference



JAYLYN SHERROD: Yeah, I think we're playing good basketball now. We've got to clean up some things. I think I've got to do a better job personally managing the game and being better. But I think we're playing good basketball right now.

Q. It does feel like you guys are playing better basketball this week. And then you have the fourth quarter issues come up again at the end. But is there still a positive takeaway, you guys are trying to turn the page going into the NCAA Tournament?

JR PAYNE: Of course. If you compare the way we played the last two games with how we played some of the previous games, it's a no-brainer. We played excellent basketball this week here in Vegas.

Obviously, like I said, disappointed with the outcome, but I think connectivity, our ball movement, our defensive energy, all of it was significantly better than it had been.

Q. Now that you guys have some time before the NCAA Tournament, what do you think will be the priorities in terms of addressing previous issues or just turning a new page?

JR PAYNE: It's pretty easy to turn the page when you're going to the NCAA Tournament. I think that we will rest and then just really refocus on what was really positive for us this week, what are some areas that we could have been better in this game down the stretch.

For us, it's all about just identifying what needs to improve and improving it. So that's pretty tactical. I think our energy and togetherness and synergy was really good this week, and we'll need to make sure we keep doing that.

Q. Battling with a player like Raegan Beers and being isolated in that match-up one-on-one both defensively and offensively, what was the mentality going into that match-up, and just as the game progressed as you were working through it?

AARONETTE VONLEH: Just trying to match her physicality. She's a really strong, physical, dominant

Oregon State - 85, Colorado - 79 (2OT)

JR PAYNE: Tremendous game, pretty indicative of the Pac-12 Conference, and two really good teams that battled and competed and executed and made a lot of great plays tonight. I thought it was a great basketball game.

Disappointed with the outcome. Proud of how we played in a lot of ways. In the end, key offensive rebounds I thought hurt, key turnovers -- they scored a lot off of turnovers even though we didn't have a lot. 17-10 is usually in our favor, not in our opponent's favor, so that hurt. So two very good teams I thought battled tonight.

Q. I know you didn't like how you played Oregon State either time during the regular season. Were you much happier with the way you performed today, first off?

JR PAYNE: Definitely, better on both ends of the floor, I think.

Q. Up 12 in the fourth quarter, what did you think kind of changed from that point for Oregon State to steal the momentum and force overtime?

JR PAYNE: I think we had some key turnovers and some key O boards that we gave up. Probably shot selection. I honestly don't remember exactly what shots we took, but they were getting stops and we weren't. I think that was it.

Q. Jaylyn, the way you guys game into this tournament with five losses and six games probably wasn't ideal. You got a big win yesterday, a really decisive win, and you go to double OT today. Do you feel okay, do you feel okay about the way your team is playing now?



player. Just trying to match that and just keep her away from the basket, make her do things that she doesn't want to do. Keep her off the boards.

Q. Easy to turn the page going into the tournament. What seed do you think you should be? The selection committee chair is here somewhere. What's the best case you can make?

JR PAYNE: I know we jumped five spots in the NET yesterday. I don't know exactly where we sit but we played one of the toughest schedules in the country and been competitive in every single game we've played.

So we haven't won them all. South Carolina is the only team that has. But there isn't a single game we've played that hasn't come down the wire. And I'm talking about a lot of top-10, top-15 teams.

So I definitely think that we should be hosting. I'm certainly hoping that we'll be hosting, and we will be anxiously awaiting and training until our number's called.

Q. Jaylyn, I know you don't like any loss but does this hurt more because it's OSU again and this is a team you guys haven't been able to solve yet this season?

JAYLYN SHERROD: No, I'm just really upset with how I played, to be honest with you.

Q. In what way?

JAYLYN SHERROD: I had too many turnovers and I don't think I managed the game well down the stretch.

Q. This schedule today, with the games and the match-ups and six ranked teams, two teams that are on the bubble, this feels like the day that everybody has been waiting for in this tournament, given the way that the conference has looked. Can you just talk about competing on a day like this, when you look at all the match-ups up and down the schedule and the strength of this conference, generally?

JR PAYNE: To be honest, I don't really even know who is playing each other outside of our game because we had such a short window to prepare. But whoever is playing in the Pac-12 is going to be a battle just because that's what it's been all year.

There's been a million -- not a million -- but a lot of games this year that some people would say were upsets. Those of us who coach in this league knows it's not an upset because everyone is very good, very well prepared and very well coached.

And I think for fans of women's basketball, today's a great day just to watch really good hoops. And I'm sure the rest of the games will be competitive like ours were.

Q. You have Jaylyn sitting next to you, who played a really great game in a lot of ways and she's still upset and willing to take kind of the burden of the loss. Just what does that tell you and all of us about who she is as a player?

JR PAYNE: Jaylyn and I talk about this fairly often. Coaches and point guards get all the blame and all the glory. Anytime things don't go our way, it's her's and my fault usually. And when things go well, we also get a pat on the back.

But Jaylyn's a very smart, young lady, as we all know. She has multiple degrees. And she's very smart but she's also very passionate about this game and our team and wants to win, and so of course she's going to take responsibility, which, in time, she'll realize that is not the case.

There were a hundred different plays that happened tonight that could have changed the outcome of the game. But she's also ultimately very competitive and is going to want to be able to attack whatever didn't work. Whatever didn't work, watch it, own it, fix it. So I know we'll do that collectively as a group moving forward.

Q. All three games they've done a really good job against Frida and Maddie. Frida got more shots off today, but Maddie only got three up. She's been shooting the ball so well lately. What did you see from them that they did to take her out of the game?

JR PAYNE: I don't really know. I didn't really see anything different they were doing. They play pretty long on the perimeter. So probably playing shooters tight. That's typically what they do. And so I would assume they were guarding her pretty tight.

Q. You've talked about how your group is so veteran and experienced. How have you seen them respond to adversity so far this season? What gives you that optimism they'll continue to do that moving forward?

JR PAYNE: I think they own -- we try to individually and collectively own where we are when things are really good and also when things are not the outcome we desire. So this group, I thought, responded so well coming into this tournament.

Like I said, we played really well, and I think it's just a game. Right? It's a basketball game against two really



good teams, and we'll take it, learn from it, and we'll be so prepared for whatever comes next.

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