

American Athletic Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Monday, March 6, 2023

Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Dickies Arena

Tulsa Golden Hurricane Coach Angie Nelp Maya Mayberry Maddie Bittle

Postgame Press Conference

UCF 69, Tulsa 53

ANGIE NELP: Obviously we're all just disappointed with the outcome of today. I really felt like we have some good learning opportunities for our young team. I thought UCF did a good job. They really attacked our paint really well, and they defended us, and we didn't shoot the ball as well as we could have, and we kind of struggled to get going in transition a little bit.

But I really felt like our team worked really, really hard, and we were put in some adverse situations for some foul counts early and I felt like our team stepped up there in that first half to keep that game close at halftime.

Q. Coach, is it too simple to say that maybe the turning point of the game might have been the offensive foul and the technical foul and that UCF got a spark from that stretch that maybe caused you to chase it the rest of the way?

ANGIE NELP: There's no doubt that those things affected the game, but I wouldn't say it was the only thing. I don't want to go back and look at -- you're going to go back and you're going to look at the way they got to the free-throw line, you're going to go back and you're going to look at the way they got into the paint, you're going to go back and you're going to look at the way that we didn't shoot the ball well and execute some things offensively.

There were probably multiple moments in that game that kind of helped with that shift.

Q. How hard is it to beat a team three times in a season? That must have been a challenge.



ANGIE NELP: Well, I think it's a cliché for a reason. It is hard to beat a team three times in a year. One thing that I really love about this team is just how hard they work, and these two individuals up here, nobody gives more heart than these two that are sitting right here.

Obviously we have a lot of youth on our team, and we have a lot of opportunities, and we're going to learn and we're going to grow from this game. You just look up here, and I really believe that both of these young women here just really represent Tulsa and gave their whole heart in this game.

Super proud of them.

Q. If you could just reflect -- I know the season just ended or the tournament just ended, but a global look at the season, 17 wins, the most in quite some time in Tulsa. What can you say about kind of the turnaround and the trajectory that you've put the program on for the season?

ANGIE NELP: Well, we're obviously still hopeful. Right now obviously we're going home from the conference tournament earlier than what any team would have liked, but I can't say enough about these two up here and this year and just what this team has done. This team has seen adversity all throughout the year. We've seen adversity in November and December and January and February, and I love how this team stayed together, and we're really connected, and we're all about teamwork and we're all about toughness, and you see that reflected in our season and you see the success that they've had.

I keep referring to these two because these two have made a lot of history over these past two years, and they give their everything every time they step on the floor. Excited for the growth, excited for the trajectory of the program, but we're definitely going to miss these two quite a bit.

MADDIE BITTLE: I'm so grateful for the opportunity that I got to step on the floor another year with this team, with Coach Angie. I'm just really grateful. I'm going to miss it a lot, and I'm still hopeful that we'll get to go to postseason,



so we'll just see what happens.

MAYA MAYBERRY: Yeah, same for me. This tournament didn't end how we wanted it to, but I'm still hopeful for next.

ANGIE NELP: I will say this: These two young women up here obviously have done so much for our program, but in addition to stepping on the floor in practice every day, leading a young team this year and helping people on and off the floor, I don't think you'll find two better individuals that are going to go into their career and go into a community, and they're going to be leaders in the community, and they were so impactful on our team, and they're going to continue to be impactful anywhere and everywhere they go.

Q. Maya was the winner of the Ambassador Award from the conference as really the leader and all-around individual within the conference. What does that mean to you? Maya, if you could reflect on that, too, being chosen that by the coaches, what that means to you.

MAYA MAYBERRY: I was very grateful to get that award. I mean, I try to be a leader, and for other people to see that was really awesome.

ANGIE NELP: You know, one thing about Maya that we're just so fortunate to be blessed with every day is just her servant's heart. She's always serving her teammates, and she's always serving. There's a community service project going on every weekend that you're going to probably find Maya Mayberry at, and just her willingness to serve others and just the unselfishness that you see her play with on the court is the same unselfishness that she lives every single day of her life. I really don't think there's anyone more deserving of that Ambassador Award than Maya.

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