

American Athletic Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Monday, March 11, 2024

Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Dickies Arena

Tulane Green Wave

Lisa Stockton

Kyren Whittington

Postgame Press Conference



Temple - 76, Tulane - 72

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started with an opening statement from Coach and then take questions for the student-athletes.

LISA STOCKTON: You know, certainly I congratulate Temple on that win. I think that was hard fought, obviously, to the end. I could not be prouder of our team. We came here and said, This is a clean slate, and we could start again. I thought that our team was so locked in for these games, so focused. I think you saw Amira, Mabry, and Kyren Whittington, they're tremendous, they're studs, right? We came here to just compete and, yeah, that locker room, people were so upset, and I love it, because we came here as a 14 seed and we really expected to be here tomorrow. I think that's something I'm really proud of them. So, we had, we struggled at times during the season, but I'm so proud of how we came here and finished the season.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach. Questions?

Q. Is it fair to say that you got the whole off-season to be tired, so, regardless of the number of minutes you played over the last 72 hours?

KYREN WHITTINGTON: Yeah. (Laughing.) Yeah.

Q. How do you not -- how do you not get tired? How do you, when you're playing out there, do you say, okay, right, I can't let -- is there anything you got to do to keep that energy?

KYREN WHITTINGTON: It's mind over matter. It's mental. I just, I mean, of course I was tired, you can see on the

court, I'm huffing and I'm pulling for air, but it's really mind over matter and being selfless. It's really about your teammates and one more play, one more possession. When I had the ball in my hand and stuff like that, people are depending upon me, the whole program's depending upon me when that ball's in my hand, so you just don't have time to be tired.

Q. You left it all on the floor tonight and you were carrying the brunt of the offense. Can you take us through what you were seeing from Temple's defense and how you were able to score so easily at times?

KYREN WHITTINGTON: I think because they were paying so much attention to me and Amira we had a lot of kick outs, they were doing a lot of double teams off of screens where they would almost trap or ice, that back side corner was open, things like that. Maybe I had my roll or coming off the screen, it's all a read, honestly, but, yeah, we had all those options.

Q. You talked yesterday in your post-game press conference about togetherness of your team and how important that was in the last two games. How important was it and how crucial was it in going into that triple overtime with the amount of games you already played previously?

LISA STOCKTON: Well, I think a concern was that Marta had fouled out. That was certainly a problem. But I thought the people that were on the floor really were locked in. Fatigue was certainly a factor when you go into that third one. But you look at them and they sat down in the first overtime, it was the second overtime, but they were competitive and they kept talking and kept competing in that. That's hard to do. I never saw them duck their heads. Any adversity, I thought they did a tremendous job there.

But we stayed together this whole trip. They were locked in this whole trip. I think that really says a lot really just for the character. We said we kind of limped in here with our tail between our legs a little bit. We lost some close games and they came out here and we just weren't going to lose.

Q. You mentioned coming into the season, coming into the tournament limping. What does it mean to have this nice stretch in the tournament and looking to build it for the future?

LISA STOCKTON: I think we learned a lot this year. I think the program, I think these kids learned a lot. We had some injuries and we had to fight through those and then that just kept us -- I felt like that just didn't go away. So then when we got everybody back, we just couldn't get traction. To answer your question, I think it says a lot for the future because I think you can learn a lot from that.

I said it just a minute ago. I think Mabry and -- I mean, Kyren and Amira were just incredible this weekend and they have been incredible toward the end of this season and they're both going to return. We've got a kid that we lost in the first game of the year that I think's a really good player, and she's going to return. I think they can take the lessons they have learned and build on what they have, and I think we can have a good program next year.

Q. With 11.9 seconds to go down two you can play it both ways and make the free throw, foul again, why did you decide to go for it?

LISA STOCKTON: Without the timeout it was hard because we didn't have a timeout. It could have gone either way. I was worried about the fatigue factor. I thought if we missed that and we could run that down, that would really help us. It was a gamble, a gamble you play. The timeout advance thing is so good, because 11 seconds is nothing, right. We just weren't getting that ball up the court as fast as we were at the start of the game, so I think that was a big concern.

Q. Kyren, the free throw where you intentionally miss, was that your call, was that something you practiced before, because it gave you almost a perfect bounce?

LISA STOCKTON: I do want to say this: She wanted to do it before I told her to do it. She really wanted to do it. We were trying to get everybody lined up and that. But it was a pretty good miss.

KYREN WHITTINGTON: It was almost.

LISA STOCKTON: It was a pretty good miss.

Q. First quarter and a half they make the adjustment and then you make the adjustment back. Talk about the back and forth of, you had a great start, they adjusted, and you then adjusted right back and had a really solid game the rest of the way.

KYREN WHITTINGTON: That's competition. It was fun. They had their players, we have ours. I really enjoyed the game. I hate that we lost, honestly, but I enjoy the competition, and it kept me fired up. And the fatigue factor, that's out your head when you're going back and forth like that. We were just competing. So it was exciting, we didn't get the results that we wanted, but it was fun.

LISA STOCKTON: I will throw this in there, I think Temple, we just didn't really play very well against Temple the last two games. I thought we played with 'em for like three quarters, then we would lose it. We didn't come into this game going, Oh, yeah, we feel good about this. Like, Charlotte, we really had two close games with them and won one of them. But I just never saw the team ever just worry about that at all. I thought they realized what we had to do, transferred it on the court, and when we started, I'm like, they're not worried about what happened last game. So, yeah, again, I give them a lot of credit for that, too.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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