

American Athletic Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Dickies Arena

Temple Owls

Diane Richardson

Demi Washington

Tiarra East

Postgame Press Conference

Rice - 60, Temple - 57

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

DIANE RICHARDSON: Yeah, well, it was a tough game. It was definitely a tough loss. Rice played really, really hard and they wanted it. There was some missteps on our part. We turned the ball over 22 times, so, you know, it was nip and tuck most of the game and you can see we lost by three, two teams battling it out and they came out with the win.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We're going to start with questions.

Q. Obviously it's really fresh. You haven't had much time to process it, but what was your message to everybody in the locker room and have y'all thought at all about what you guys were able to do this year, especially coming from last year and the fact that your season might not be over fully yet?

DIANE RICHARDSON: Well, we talked about it in the locker room. I'm proud of them because we had a turnaround season, and probably one of the biggest turnarounds in the NCAA. So I am proud of that. I'm proud that they fought all the way through this season. We came up short, you know, and it's a disappointment, obviously, because we wanted to be champions. But, you know, hopefully we'll live to fight on with the WBIT.

Q. Could you just take us through that last inbound where Aleah turned it over and what was the play call



and how did you see it play out?

DIANE RICHARDSON: Well, Coach Myles drew up a play, and I think in the anxiety a little bit she made the pass in the corner. The pass was supposed to go to T-Mac and then we were going to run our stuff. But they intercepted the ball, which gave us a terrible ending.

Q. At 1.8 seconds is almost no time, but are you replaying that last shot? Like, maybe I could have taken another step or you thought maybe it had a chance when you let it go?

TIARRA EAST: Yeah, I definitely think I could have took a few more dribbles up the court to get a better shot off.

Q. T-Mac, clearly every opponent here was going to be marking her, and she had a tough time and today had a tough time even getting shots. Is there anything -- is it just hard when that denial's going to be there and it's got to be someone else, maybe?

DIANE RICHARDSON: Yeah, well, you know, I did have a conversation to get open, get open. I think she saw the defense there and it kind of just stifled her a little bit. But she's a great shooter and we wish she could have gotten some more shots off. I think it would have made a difference for us. But she's a great shooter. We're confident in her shots and I just wish she had taken more.

Q. So you mentioned those 22 turnovers. That's honestly not ideal. One thing Rice mentioned was that they were learning from every possession. Is that something you can kind of see them doing and how do you respond to that when you see that happening?

DIANE RICHARDSON: What, with our turnovers?

Q. Yeah.

DIANE RICHARDSON: You know, a lot of them we did have some charge calls and some travel calls and I would love to look at the film to see how many of those contributed to our 22 turnovers. But we had to be stronger with the ball. I knew that they would come in and try to put

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pressure and play the passing lanes. But I'm going to look at that -- obviously, I'm going to look at that and see where we are in terms of that because I think we're going to play on.

Q. You mentioned the charge calls and the travel calls, but just in general, it seemed like you guys played in foul trouble from early on. Can you talk about how that changed your approach throughout the game?

DIANE RICHARDSON: Yeah, early fouls, early we had to sit some of our players on the bench. That always messes up your game plan. So we had to adjust and had to bring some people in and try to fill the void, but we had to be careful defensively because we didn't want to get any excess fouls and have people foul out.

Q. Demi, you're one of those players that had to sit early. Can you talk about how changed your approach on the court with the two early fouls and the third one?

DEMI WASHINGTON: Yeah, I think while I'm on the bench just cheering on my teammates making sure that they know where they're supposed to be and what our assignments are. Then for the next time I do get back in, just realize how the refs are calling it and if you watch the game, then you know I didn't get any more of the Malia fouls any more, so I just changed my approach.

Q. Do you have an update on Tristen after that?

DIANE RICHARDSON: I haven't had a chance to talk with our trainer. I know she got hit in the head really hard, so I think she's about to go through concussion protocol.

Q. Just to talk about Aleah. She had a hard time these two games down here. What can you speak -- was it something physical, was it something she wasn't seeing on the court? Could you go into what you thought about her on these last two games?

DIANE RICHARDSON: Yeah, she's had a tough two games since we've been down here. I don't know what to attribute it to. Maybe it was the defense or maybe it was her trying to set up her teammates, so I wish that, again, we could have had her scoring and her assists.

Q. Obviously, right now this just kind of stings a lot, but since you guys most likely have at least one more game to go, does this kind of fuel that wanting to keep your season going?

DEMI WASHINGTON: Especially for me, this is my last go round, so whatever chance I get to dribble the ball I'm going to take.

Q. On the play there where Tristen drove in there, did you get an explanation from the refs? My understanding is they did do a replay review to see.

DIANE RICHARDSON: No, I did not get an explanation. I didn't really see what happened, but I saw her laying down on the ground, and obviously there was some contact, but I don't know how it was initiated. I did try to look at the replay, but my vision is different.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you very much.

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