

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Sunday, March 6, 2022

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

Colorado State Rams

Ryun Williams

McKenna Hofschild

Sydney Mech

Postgame Press Conference

Colorado State - 82, San Jose State - 43

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from coach and then take questions for the student-athletes.

RYUN WILLIAMS: It was just good to get that opening round win to play well on a tournament court. I was really proud of how we defended. I thought that was the key to our night and kind of the start of that basketball game.

So everybody was involved. So it's great to get everybody involved in the tournament, get that tournament feel going and proud of our team.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. In the prior two wins over San Jose State it was you and Upe going off career nights. How satisfying was it to have a complete team offensive effort?

MCKENNA HOFSCCHILD: It's awesome to see everyone kind of doing their thing. I think Syd stepped up. Karly, Kendyll, they all had really big games. And to have this game in a tournament atmosphere going into tomorrow it's going to be huge for all of us with the confidence and just feeling comfortable out there on that court.

Q. Sydney, I know you've had your ebbs and flows of the season, but it seemed like you started to assert yourself more offensively. Was that what we saw tonight or was it just the defense that was presented?

SYDNEY MECH: I felt a lot more comfortable out there confidence-wise and this whole season my teammates are always telling me to be aggressive and McKenna is always



on me about it too.

But I don't know. I just, tonight I, something turned on and I just went out there.

Q. McKenna, how do you feel coming into tonight's game after being awarded and named for the All Mountain West Team?

MCKENNA HOFSCCHILD: It's awesome. It's definitely an honor, but I think it just shows kind of how good this team is and they make my job very easy, so they make me look good and without them I wouldn't be here. So I think it's more of a, kind of a Rams award. But, yeah, it's definitely an honor to be a part of that.

Q. I wanted to ask you guys, how are you going to take this tonight's defensive performance into tomorrow's game against Wyoming?

MCKENNA HOFSCCHILD: I think just knowing that we're capable of doing it for four quarters. We showed stretches a lot during the season, but I think seeing for tonight having 40 minutes of just a full effort from everybody we're going to take that into tomorrow.

We know what Wyoming does a little bit different things, but as long as we're locked in and focused I think we can put it together a really good game.

SYDNEY MECH: I think you worded that really well, but (laughing) just like, we know what Wyoming's all about and we know what it takes, like you said, and just like how we played defense tonight, those four quarters and coming out and competing against Wyoming. Having a little chip on our shoulder from last game will help a lot, but I think we're ready.

Q. When you look at a night when you score 82 points everybody looks at the offense, but the key was I think you held them to less than 25 percent shooting. They were 0-11 from behind the arc in the first half. How key was it for you to come out with that kind of defensive performance to start the tournament?



MCKENNA HOFSCCHILD: Super important. I think setting the tone early and just kind of creating that expectation each game we go into is huge. We know that we have a lot of weapons on the offensive end. Defensively we know we have weapons too, we just sometimes don't find that on a night. But knowing that we can do it we're going to keep bringing it and that's going to make us very successful.

Q. If you play defense like you did tonight does it not put a little bit of pressure on you to back up that performance again tomorrow night and is that a good thing?

SYDNEY MECH: Yeah. Sometimes it does put a lot of pressure knowing you got a big game tomorrow and performing well on defense is always kind of key. But I love it. I love defense and I'm excited. Wyoming's a good team and I'm excited to come out and show them what we got defensively.

Q. Was taking the ball to the paint a big key going into the game?

MCKENNA HOFSCCHILD: Yeah. We definitely emphasized it. We knew that if we spaced the floor, got into our motion offense, we could really attack those gaps. And I think it was evident from the beginning all the way through the end of the game with our post play and our guard play. So that was definitely a big key for the way we wanted to play tonight.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you and we'll see you tomorrow. We'll take questions for coach.

Q. I know one thing you won't like is that you gave up 15 offensive rebounds tonight, but does it speak volumes you gave up zero second half points?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Yeah, it does speak volumes. I think they had seven in the first quarter, I think was the number I was told by our staff. They were crashing hard. They were sending four to the O glass and we just thought if we could just secure some of those and get some clean outlets we could be able to run and play to our strength.

But I thought as the game went on we settled down on the glass, which was a huge thing. I see we out-rebounded them, which was big and, again, allowed us to get out and get some transition points.

Q. You have at times this year relied on McKenna or Upe to really kind of lead the way. How important is it to have Sydney picking up her game at this time of the year and having a team offensive performance?

RYUN WILLIAMS: And we needed that. I thought, you know, McKenna and Upe have been outstanding all year long. I thought they both maybe started a little unsettled. It took them a little while to get in the flow.

Once they did, I thought they were really, really good. But to have the pickup from their teammates and to have everybody involved in that first half and really throughout the night, the ball had energy, we shared it, I thought everybody played with a really good confidence and a really good conviction tonight.

So, much needed. You don't go through a tournament with one or two kids playing really, really well. Everybody has to be involved. Everybody has to have their moments.

And I liked tonight. Everybody had I thought some great affect on this game offensively. I thought everybody had great affect on this game defensively.

Q. You guys shot so well from the field and even the three. Was that a goal going into this game or just a pleasant surprise?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Yeah. Our goal was to make every shot, okay? (Smiling.)

And we did play offensively tonight. I liked our mentality. I thought we were really aggressive. I thought we were pretty solid with the basketball.

But we thought if we could spread them out, we could get some downhill penetration and play aggressive to the rim. I thought our decisionmaking tonight when we did get the ball in the lane was really good. Sometimes we're a little shaky there.

But I thought tonight our kids really, they played with a great concentration in that area. So I like those numbers, but do they carry over to tomorrow? They don't. So we'll have to reset, regroup, and hopefully we can perform as well tomorrow offensively.

Q. After coming off an overtime loss against Wyoming what do you plan on doing differently tomorrow?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Well, hopefully make that one more shot that we didn't get done last time. I mean, it's always a very competitive game when you play Wyoming. They're a very tough team. They're very well coached. So it's always kind of a grind type of game. You can't create offense for them. I think what we've got to do better that maybe we didn't do as well to close out that game in Laramie is our ball security. We gave them some opportunities there.

So defensively what I liked about tonight, which you're going to obviously have to do well tomorrow night, is we just sustained effort and we sustained execution for four quarters. It's kind of been our, kind of our tendency to maybe allow a team to go on a two-minute run, a little three-minute stretch, where that lead of 13 gets cut down to three or four.

Now their belief, their momentum is a little different. So I like that about tonight. It was really solid. And you're going to have to do that against a very, very good Wyoming team.

Q. You have a late game tonight, even later game tomorrow, what do you do to keep your team fresh so they have energy coming into an 8:30 tip?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Well I was going to hit Celine Dion, but she's not playing I don't think, is she? She's not? Adele?

Q. I think Katy Perry is in town. If that's your vibe?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Yeah, these long days, they're just different. We aren't used to that. We play a lot of early games, a lot of 6 p.m. tips and that sort. But we're going to get back, get some rest tonight, we'll let the kids sleep in. I think the big thing is we played Wyoming twice here in and this will be the third time in seems like maybe 12 days or maybe a month for sure. So the prep is we know what Wyoming's going to do, Wyoming knows what we're going to do. It's who is going to execute the best. But it's kind of get the kids back, we'll get some rest, reset, regroup, reenergize, get hungry again and come out here and hopefully play as well as we did tonight.

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