

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

Colorado State Rams

Coach Ryun Williams

McKenna Hofschild

Destiny Thurman

Postgame Press Conference



know, when we get those stops, to go down and finish the play because it gives us momentum, and I think we had a few back-to-back and we just didn't finish them out.

I think if we did, this turnout would have been very different.

Q. Obviously, there is a size disadvantage, challenge, whatever you want to call it. How difficult is that when especially you're throwing doubles, a lot of people moving to have kind of team rebound effort and to try and prevent those offensive boards for them? What type of challenge does that present?

McKENNA HOFSCCHILD: Yeah, it's hard. You know, you've got to -- there's a lot of moving pieces, and all five got to be committed to getting stops, getting boards, and getting out.

They did have a size advantage, but, you know, that's not an excuse. We have to just be tough and give our all every single play.

I thought we fought tonight. I thought we fought for 40 minutes. It just didn't go our way. I wish we could have that one back, but we can't.

Q. You knew that they were going to come out and crash the boards pretty hard, but what were they doing that led to them outrebounding you guys so much?

DESTINY THURMAN: I think they were just being more physical and more tough than we were. I think they wanted the rebounds more than we did. That's what led to them getting a lot of offensive rebounds towards the end of that game.

Q. Obviously, you know, this concludes the Mountain West Tournament, but WNIT is still a factor after this. So how do you guys after this loss prepare for the next thing?

McKENNA HOFSCCHILD: Learn from it. I think this one is going to sting for a little bit, but we can't hold on to that for too long because we do have more basketball to be

Wyoming 65, Colorado State 56

THE MODERATOR: We'll continue with Colorado State. Joining Coach Ryun Williams will be Destiny Thurman and McKenna Hofschild.

We'll go ahead and have an opening remark from coach.

RYUN WILLIAMS: Yeah, I mean, Wyoming played a heck of a basketball game. Tough one to lose obviously, but they just flat out beat us. That's the bottom line.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for the student-athletes.

Q. McKenna, what were they doing to you defensively because I think midway through the third you were sitting at 2 points, 2 assists. What were they doing to kind of -- it seemed like they took away some of your aggressiveness?

McKENNA HOFSCCHILD: Yeah. They just had a good defensive scheme. I could have done a lot better, and I will take this one and learn from it.

But that's not acceptable. I need to be there for my team, and I will be.

Q. When you look at the hot start that you guys had, Destiny, and it seemed like the last three quarters, you guys just struggled when you get a defensive stop, you couldn't capitalize on offense or vice versa. Is that what you are going to look back on this game is just not stringing defense and offense together?

DESTINY THURMAN: Yeah. I think it's important, you



played.

I think we're all excited to get a new challenge and a team that we probably haven't seen before. I think that's exciting.

Just learning from not only this game, but this whole conference slate in general. I think there's a lot to take away, a lot of good, and then there's some we can grow from.

Just take this one on the chin, but be excited, and we're looking forward to what lies ahead.

Q. Destiny, were you guys flustered a little bit by the fact that you came out so hot in the first quarter and then I think you guys missed your first six shots of the second quarter. The momentum kind of turned there. Does that get in your head, your thinking a little bit as shooters?

DESTINY THURMAN: I think it did a little bit, but kind of goes back to stringing those stops together and converting. When we were getting those stops, we weren't going down and finishing on the other end, so I think that kind of impacted us a lot.

THE MODERATOR: All right, ladies. Thank you.

We'll go ahead and take additional questions for Coach Williams.

Q. What did you see out of your team offensively? I mean, you got off to such a great start and then things slowed down. What were you seeing from the bench?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Well, I think we did get off to a hot start, but a lot of those made baskets were jump shots. You know, what I saw is we weren't able to get to the rim. We weren't able to get in the paint and play to our strength.

So that's what I saw.

Then you're trying to find -- you're trying to find stops, but yet, you're trying to find scoring. And, so maybe our best defensive lineup is not -- maybe that's a struggle to score. We were trying to find "that" and we just -- the second quarter was huge, a nine-point quarter.

Again, the biggest thing is I didn't think we were very aggressive in that quarter. We didn't get much to the rim. That was the quarter that hurt us.

Q. The first two times Fertig touched the ball you turned it over. Defensive game plan is perfect at that

point. Things like that. Then she scores 10 in the second. Was it them doing anything differently, or did you get away from it? Was Fertig more aggressive and assertive down the --

RYUN WILLIAMS: She's very hard to handle. She's a very low post player and she moves you. We missed some assignments, you know, so when the ball is going in there, it shouldn't have been going in there. That's the whole thing.

When she touches that deep, she's going to make you pay, and she just puts so much pressure on you there. But, you know, you saw in that first quarter it wasn't going there much. When it did, it was a very tenacious double.

But you've got to stay consistent with that. You know, you've got -- it's got to be 40 minutes. When you make some mistakes, they make you pay.

A little 6-0 run, that's a big thing in a game like this, and we just weren't as consistent offensively as well. But they surely have the advantage on the interior.

Q. Just talking about the aggressiveness offensively, is some of that the size that maybe your players kind of convinced themselves that a jumper is maybe a smart choice and attacking the size?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Sometimes it is. I think when you get the right matchup, like, you don't want to take Fertig on at the rim. They play very physical at the rim as well.

So I think a young lady like Destiny, where she can kind of get them on skates maybe a little bit and just get into her strength.

But you saw a different McKenna in the second half. Much more aggressive. We got some stuff to the rim. I think it was a 17-point half for her.

You know, we just needed to be probably more aggressive and getting some stuff to the basket. Not that you are going to always, but you certainly draw. We weren't able to probably get the good looks from the three that we did. Maybe the first two times around. So that was a little frustrating.

Q. The players kind of talked about wanting to keep playing. Do you kind of expect postseason as a possibility and maybe a probability for this team?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Yeah. We've been a top -- I think we still have -- net top 100 team, right? 80-something, 90-something. Yeah.



So I hope so. This has been a fun group. They like to compete, and hopefully we get a chance to keep playing.

Q. Ryun, I know you are a team that you are prone to give up some offensive rebounds, but tonight, especially in the fourth quarter when you thought you were making a close, a couple those turned into threes, not twos, just in the blocks. How good are they at scrambling and making it confusing for your defense in those offensive rebounding situations?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Yeah, I mean, their motion is that. It's good motion. You know, when you get into rotation because the ball touches the paint or what have you, and you've got two on the ball, that's where it gets a little dicey.

That's where you just have got to -- your guards have to rebound down, and have you to chase down some long rebounds. I think we cut it to five maybe, and then a big dagger three, and then a bank shot, and that was -- those were the ones.

But I think those were off of second-chance points.

You're going to give up some. We realize that. But you've got to commit for 40 minutes there.

I thought we started out the game pretty good on the glass, but they wore us out there for sure.

Q. When you look at this team and what they've been able to do this season, what are you most proud of?

RYUN WILLIAMS: Yeah, they just kept getting better. They're just -- I'm proud of the teammates that they are to each other. I'm proud of the basketball that they played. They played a lot of good basketball. They're fun to coach. That's always -- right? That's always a good thing. They like coming to practice.

So, yeah, we enjoy being a team. That's why these stink, right? You want to keep playing, but that's also what sports is. I mean, you're going to lose sometimes. Not the most opportune time, obviously, to lose, but that's part of it.

So I like how they compete, and we had a lot of new faces this year. We had a few new faces, and I like how they became a team rather quickly. You know, that was pretty neat to see. Proud of that.

THE MODERATOR: That will do it. Thank you.

RYUN WILLIAMS: Thank you.