

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Sunday, March 10, 2024

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

San Jose State Spartans

APRIL PHILLIPS

SYDNI SUMMERS

SABRINA MA

Postgame Press Conference

San Diego State 72, San Jose State 51

THE MODERATOR: Ready to begin with San Jose State. We have student-athletes, Sydni Summers, Sabrina Ma, Coach April Phillips.

Coach, we'll start with you and get some thoughts on tonight's game.

APRIL PHILLIPS: My initial thought is that we turned the ball over too many times obviously with 20 turnovers and them capitalizing with 27 points off of our turnovers.

We just didn't get the offensive presence that we have been a little bit accustomed to getting here lately. I think their pressure took us out of it a little bit and disabled our guards to get it inside some.

That's March for you. I think our young team, we just struggled to find a groove from start to finish. I will say that we had some players that really competed, poured their hearts out on that court, and I hope for our freshmen and our returners that they understand what March feels like.

I'm just really proud of our team overall. We've dealt with a ton of adversity over the course of the season and not one time did they fall apart or bat an eye about being moved around to different positions. So thankful for them.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Just what did you like about the way that you were able to spread the ball a little more towards the end of the game and kind of limit those mistakes?

SYDNI SUMMERS: I felt like we were able to execute



more and being able to spread the ball and get the ball inside, which created the teammate -- the girls to collapse, got us open shots. I feel like we could have done that more in the first half, but we were -- we came out a little slow in the first half, and we weren't all focused all the way.

I feel like next year we're definitely -- we got the hang of the groove, like, the conference, so I feel like next year we're going to be good for sure.

Q. How big of a -- I guess how big is it when San Diego State goes on an eight-point run to start the game, how does that kind of affect your confidence and how you try to settle into the game?

SABRINA MA: I think for us, we struggled to find a defensive -- just like a strong defensive presence early in the game. We really tried to stick together and just move on to the next play. That's a really big thing that we've tried to implement this year, yeah.

SYDNI SUMMERS: Repeat that one more time. How did you report it?

Q. Yeah, just what --

THE MODERATOR: 8-0 run to start the game.

Q. Yeah, the 8 of 0 run to start the game, how does that affect how you're trying to settle in?

SYDNI SUMMERS: I feel like as a whole, it startled us because we came out ready. We came out ready to jump on them how we did the second time that we played them at home, so it kind of startled us and got us off track.

Like Sab said, we were just trying to get that next play mentality, which is what we've been trying to do all year. Sometimes it just sticks, and then we let our defense become -- we let our offense trickle over to our defense. When we're not scoring on offense, we start lacking on defense.

So I feel like it could have been -- we could have just had more of a come together moment and be, like, guys, we got this, but some things don't happen sometimes.



THE MODERATOR: We'll dismiss the student-athletes at this time. Thank you, ladies. Questions for Coach.

Q. What did you like about the way that you guys were able to kind of limit those mistakes down the stretch and kind of settle in, play a little bit better than you did in the first half?

APRIL PHILLIPS: I think we got more stops. I don't know that I ever felt like we really settled in particularly on the offensive end. We tried to do some different things defensively because we just weren't defending well man-to-man, so we tried some triangle and two, box and one, some trapping just to try to mix it up and create momentum for us.

I don't think we ever got into a real flow offensively for the way that it is that we can typically get up the floor and transition and run our lanes and get the ball in inside and play inside-out. I don't think we ever really got into that groove if I'm being honest.

Q. At halftime, what is the message to your team given the fact you're down 19 and you kind of have some things to improve on and work on?

APRIL PHILLIPS: Yeah, I thought at the half the messaging was that just San Diego State, to their credit, they've got upper classmen that know what March means, and they just jumped on us, and I thought they played more aggressive than we did.

We really wanted to try to prevent low block injuries, and we sat behind, and 90% of the time, it turned into a score or foul or both. So at the half, we just talked about the heart aspect of it because really that's what it was.

They were crashing the boards harder. They were posting, digging in, sealing us harder than obviously we were working to get around and prevent some of those things.

It was just the conversation of, hey, how bad do you want this? 20 minutes is a long time, a lot of basketball to play. We've come back from more. Anything is possible. We just never really clicked it over to really get going.

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