

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

UNLV Lady Rebels

Coach Lindy La Rocque

Amarachi Kimpson

Alyssa Brown

Postgame Press Conference



go-around with these girls, so I want to get to the championship win and realize what it takes to get there.

Q. A.B., I don't think anybody had both former Player of the Years combining for seven points on 3 of 13 from the field, but how does that kind of motivate everybody else to kind of understand, hey, tonight can be my night to kind of take the leap forward and take the offensive load off of Desi?

ALYSSA BROWN: I think we all know what we're capable of as a team. We're a super deep squad. We know it can be anyone's night. We just try to do what the offense gives us.

Q. We've continued to see Amarachi deliver in these moments. How does the team continue to feed off of her and what she brings to the team?

ALYSSA BROWN: We watch her and Kiara Jackson go after each other in practice every day. We have full trust in her. We know she's a great playmaker. We like to feed off each other, so when she's making plays, it opens stuff up in the post for us and just makes offense a lot of fun.

Q. Amarachi, it's hard to keep a great scorer from scoring. The last three times you have played McKenna Hofschild, she's had 34 points on 27 field goal attempts, 13 points on 17 field goal attempts, and then 9 points on 12 field goal attempts tonight. How much of guarding her is kind of a concerted effort from everybody?

AMARACHI KIMPSON: Yeah, definitely. We've got to build a wall when it comes to her. She's a great player, can score at all three levels. So we really -- it's a team effort to stop one person, but it's also the people around her. So we just have to help each other throughout our whole defense.

Q. Amarachi, late in the game they went to you for a couple of iso possessions. You drove one and scored and then got a couple of free-throws. What's your approach on plays like that, and just what were you thinking?

UNLV 62, Colorado State 52

THE MODERATOR: We're ready to begin with UNLV. We have student-athletes Amarachi Kimpson, Alyssa Brown, Coach Lindy La Rocque. Some thoughts on today's game, Coach.

LINDY LA ROCQUE: Obviously really proud of our team for getting the win. Our goal is to get to championship Wednesday, and we're playing in the game.

Just a great women's basketball game. I think every time we play Colorado State, that's what we get. They're such great competitors. We have great competitors. They're very well-coached. McKenna Hofschild is one of the best players in the country. They have great pieces around her.

Give them a lot of credit. I don't know if both of our defenses were that good today to just be totally terrible on offense I think for both of us, but that's what the game took, and obviously both teams responded. They've had a phenomenal year, and I hope they keep playing.

But just really proud of our group, obviously the two here next to me, but everyone in our locker room. We had huge contributions from everyone, and it takes that grit and perseverance and composure to gut out a win like this so that you can play three in three days.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Amarachi, what does it mean to be able to step up in the game and lead the way and send your team to the championship?

AMARACHI KIMPSON: It means a lot to me. It's my first



AMARACHI KIMPSON: It's great that Coach puts a lot of confidence in me to make those plays. Of course, it's not the first time we're running it. So, I mean, it's great to work on it in practice and then come to the game. And she has full confidence in me taking it, so it's great.

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

Q. Coach, how would you describe this game in terms -- or I guess compare it to the other games from this year in terms of how much of a grind it was, and how do you prepare your team to kind of approach it from that angle?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: It was just that. It was a grind. It was a March basketball, you know, just -- it was hard. A lot of different things felt hard because you're playing a great team, and you just kind of find ways to win, find ways to win one possession, to win one more rebound.

Again, that's what it takes this time of year. So there is no major surprise. Again, of course, we would love to score 100 points and do that, but you're not going to do that every time. Especially the later in the year it's going to get harder and harder to do that.

Proud of our group for finding a way.

Q. It seemed like you went with a different approach in the fourth quarter, trying to get more isolation with multiple players. Were you trying to slow down the game a little bit, or was that just what you felt more confident in at the time?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: Well, we have a continuity offense that is similar to them that we run. I think that's just how the game goes in the fourth quarter especially. You want to try to get more scripted shots. I think they did the same things. They ran some more specific plays for specific shots.

We were trying to do the same. Getting the right matchups, getting people the ball in the right place that we know what we're going to get, and then it's a little bit easier to live and die by those shots.

I think, again, in a tight game like that we end up winning by ten, but it was a two-, four-point game, so every possession matters. As the coach I'm not like some offensive court coordinator, but I think the team executes better when we know what we're really looking for, and then you can go to the second or third option.

Q. Secondly, do you feel like you have some defensive flexibility with Kiara and Amarachi, being able to both take on McKenna and kind of keep her from getting to the lane?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: Yeah, I mean, I think that's huge. Again, obviously McKenna is going to have the ball in her hands a ton, and she's going to wear you down. The fact that we've got two great defenders that can kind of take turns, and there's only one of her, so I think that obviously helps us.

And they're a little bit different. Kiara is a little bit longer. Amarachi is a little stronger. It might feel different to her too. We liked kind of switching back and forth a little bit.

Q. Depending on what CSU does, this could have been McKenna's final game. As an opposing coach, you've seen her for so long. What are your thoughts on what she's brought to the league and the legacy she'll leave behind?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: I think, no doubt, her and Desi are two of the best to ever play in the league. I put them in the same kind of sentence because they've played so many battles together.

I think she's a great competitor. Obviously a very skilled player. She's probably had the odds stacked against her a lot being a smaller player, but she's found a way to keep grinding.

I just really respect her, how she carries herself, how she operates her team. I hope she keeps playing because she's a great basketball player.

Q. You kind of already talked about it, not the best shooting night for you guys tonight, but do you feel like it's kind of a pick your poison type thing when teams decide to double Desi down low, considering you guys entered tonight's game I believe with three players that shoot over 40 percent from deep?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: Desi didn't have her best night. Again, I think I credit them. They were doubling. They were being physical, kind of pushing her off her spot.

I thought she settled for some shots that we would like her to try a different move or take another dribble, but we're not going to stop going to her because she can make so many other things happen. They do have to send a double. She has four assists.

Even on the kick-outs that we maybe didn't make the shot, that's a great shot for us. I can live with that. Not every

one went in, but then it gives us another chance to rebound. Desi is down there to rebound.

I thought we shot a lot of threes, especially early. The first half both teams I thought shot a lot of threes, and we kind of looked at the box score, and both teams are like, We have to get to the basket.

Desi is our anchor. So we're not going to stop going to her, even if she's having a little bit of an off night, just because she makes so many other things happen by attracting other defense. Because they're not going to stop doubling or being physical.

Q. In the closing minutes of play, Amarachi Kimpson had a lot of good drives to the basket. What were your thoughts on her closing minutes of the game?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: She's a really tough player to stop one-on-one. That's kind of what I think because I see it in practice. She kind of has a way of just finding, sneaking her way to the rim and she has great hang time and athleticism.

I have all the trust and faith in her, if she's not going to get a shot up, she's going to make the right play if they come run two people at her.

Coming back to the question of it was a little bit of we wanted to use more clock, and I don't want to make a ton of passes and risk them jumping a lane or something silly. So I'm just, like, have her stand out there, and then go try to get a basket.

It was a situation where if she scored, great; if she didn't, it was okay. Again, we would have an opportunity to rebound, or at least we use the clock.

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