

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Lehigh vs Duke

Friday, March 21, 2025

Durham, North Carolina, USA

Cameron Indoor Stadium

Lehigh Mountain Hawks

Coach Addie Micir

Ella Stemmer

Media Conference

Duke 86, Lehigh 25

ADDIE MICR: All right, I think goes without saying not our best but what we said to the team is we would rather be in the arena. This is a team full of seniors and senior leadership that has absolutely set this culture and this program up for success in the future.

Moment might have been a little bit big right now, but one thing that we all made a promise to them is the next time we're back here we're going to make them really, really proud.

Q. Since you are senior captain and everything, what do you want the younger players from Lehigh and on your team to take from this experience?

ELLA STEMMER: That's a good question. I'm going to give it to Sue Troyan who said it best. She gave us a shoutout for making it here and told us to be proud of this. Honestly this should become a standard for our program.

Next year teams are going to come hunting us. We are going to have a target on our back. I remember coming in freshmen year the team before won the Patriot League, so I remember coming in and hearing that.

Just show up every day and do it for the teammates and enjoy the process. We said it the very first day and I'm going to encourage them to do the same.

Q. Was there one thing specifically Duke did really, really well to take you guys out of what you were trying to do?

ELLA STEMMER: I would say not particularly. I mean,



their pressure was pretty intense, but we expect that. I don't think it was anything that we couldn't handle necessarily.

It took us out of our flow a little bit, but I think honestly we just have to own that, and like I said to the team, the stage is not too big for us. We kind of take up our space, and I think we could have grown into ourselves a little bit.

We got to start somewhere, and then just set the stage for team after team.

Q. Despite the loss, what are some positives that you guys want to take from this season?

ELLA STEMMER: I think the way in which we carried ourselves each and every day was pretty special. We started the season choosing joy, I think without naming it that.

We really named ourselves as being resilient players, and I think the way in which we did that, choosing joy and effort each and every day, was really special.

I would encourage players to do the same. Find the fun in working hard and it'll take you far.

Q. What's the biggest takeaway you learned from Coach since you've been at Lehigh that you can use off the court in life in general?

ELLA STEMMER: There is a lot. Addie and I have talked a lot about not just lessons on the court. We've had a lot of conversations off the court. I think just she prides herself on being a competitive individual, but the way in which she carries herself is super composed in it really tough moments. I think I've taken a lot from that. We've had conversations on what life after Lehigh looks like and the legacy that you want to live.

But the way -- like I said, her composure is second to none and the way that she just chases greatness and allows everyone to be their best self and cultivates an environment where that's advocated for. I've appreciated that ever since she took the head coaching position and



believing in me and our girls and creating a system that allows each player to thrive in what they do on and off the court.

Q. Coach, how do you turn a loss like this I guess into a positive and sort of build on it?

ADDIE MICIR: Yeah, this doesn't define us. It doesn't. One thing, when we walked in the locker room, this is a team full of competitors. With tears in our eyes we had a good laugh. We had a real good laugh. You know, Duke brings pressure. They're a program that defines themselves on the defensive end, and I thought we competed really hard for a long time on the defensive end.

That was something that this program hadn't done yet. For years we had been an offensive team, and I thought this season we really took a step forward. So, again, we said to them, we'd rather be in the arena, right? Rather be in the arena, and we did all the work to get here.

So that's what matters. Exactly what Ella said, too. It matters because the lessons that they learn throughout the year, it doesn't get negated by the fact we came had and got our butts kicked. Flat out. Doesn't negate that at all.

The fact that she can sit here and say what Lehigh meant to her, that's what matters.

Q. Coach, what's the biggest advantage that you have seen individually and in your team since the beginning of the season to this point?

ADDIE MICIR: The biggest advantage has been our "we" culture. We've defined that from the beginning. It's not about the individual. It's about the whole group.

The way in which the senior class in general has bought into that. We had two seniors this year in Kaylee Van Eps and Remi Sisselman who started for us last year and saw limited minutes. When you watch them jumping up and down on our the bench all season, and when their number is called, whether it's for a half or for limit minutes for them coming in and making a play, that's us.

We said that to this whole group of seniors. They have completely bought into what we want to do. This game, throw it out the window. Duke is a great team. I don't think we brought our best effort. You know, for them to do what they did this season -- and their families. Their families bought into it too. They bought into the entire group.

That's something that I will be forever grateful for.

Q. What were you discussing with the team at halftime

to try and make those adjustments?

ADDIE MICIR: Yeah, talking to them at halftime was the same. I thought we did a really good job in the first half putting bodies around ball defensively and forcing turnovers. Offensively, you know, I thought we turned the ball over way too much. Also our passing wasn't on point.

So we talked about trying to catch a little bit closer to the rim and also not being afraid to pound the ball inside. I thought we got more inside touches in the second half. Duke is good and big and put some pressure on us and we weren't ready to handle it.

But this team will work. That's one thing we've always done is respond. So we know the blueprint for the spring and the summer to get ready for when this moment comes again.

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