

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - San Diego State vs LSU

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

Pete Maravich Assembly Center

LSU Tigers

Kim Mulkey

Media Conference

Q. Two teams that play very similar brand of basketball, defensively like to score the basketball. What do you expect to see tomorrow night?

KIM MULKEY: I would expect you're going to see a lot of scoring, and hopefully the team that plays just a little bit of defense wins because I'm a defensive coach.

So you've got a lot of powerful players on both teams. They can all score the ball, and what are they, third in the country in scoring? And we're like sixth. That's a lot of shots.

Q. What does Florida State do well offensively?

KIM MULKEY: Get the ball to Latson and then you converge on her, and then she throws it to somebody else and makes them look great.

They are balanced. You know, they have four kids that score in double figures. They score in the 80s. You'd think the three ball is what makes them go, and they do score about eight a game.

But it's their dribble penetration that creates a lot of things. They are so long. They are athletic. They are a handful, and if you think about their schedule, they beat Notre Dame on the road. Stanford, I think beat them but they beat Georgia Tech on the road.

They beat three ranked teams in the ACC on the road. So that tells you that they are very confident and very talented.

Q. So last night you got the opportunity to watch a little bit of the FSU game. Is there anything that you can speak to about how hard Latson is to defend and what makes her so great?



KIM MULKEY: She gets to the foul line nine times a game. Not only does she score the ball, she usually is trying to get in ones and get you in foul trouble.

I think she got to the foul line 14 or is a times last night. So it's not just scoring the ball. She gets shots off. She leans into you and tries to draw fouls. So we'll have multiple people that have the assignment to guard her.

Q. FSU is a team that thrives on second-chance points for offensive rebounding. How important is it going to be to rebound collectively tomorrow night?

KIM MULKEY: I think you better go look at our rebounding. I think we are just a little bit better than they are in that category. And I hope that that is an advantage for us. Certainly they rebounded, but if I looked at the stats correctly, that might be a little area that if we can keep them off the offensive boards and rebound the ball, help Morrow.

I want to say they outrebound their opponents by one every game. Ours is about 12. That's an area that doesn't concern me as much as trying to figure out how to stop those kids from scoring the ball because they can all flat-out score.

Q. Do you have any sort of relationship with Coach Brooke Wyckoff?

KIM MULKEY: I do not. Been a great admirer of hers when she played. I know a little bit of her history of cancer, battling cancer, and I know that she was under Sue when Sue Semrau was a coach there.

She's doing an excellent job to finish fourth, or tied for fourth in the ACC. Tells you that they are good because those three that finished above them are big-time programs, and I think all of them got to host.

Q. Smith and Jersey yesterday, and then you also went big with Aalyah. What did you see from them, and what's their importance in this game in particular?

KIM MULKEY: We were the bigger team yesterday. So



they all had an opportunity to have a presence in the paint, whether that was blocking shots, being the ball or demanding the ball. I still don't think we demand the ball good enough or hard enough from those three.

But it was good to see Aalyah have some success. She's the biggest body I have in there, and I thought she not only battled in there, I thought she finished. She finished in there.

They are going to have their hands full tomorrow because Timpson can get up and down the floor. She's an athlete. She can get you up in the air. They are built about the same, Sa'Myah is. Morrow may have to guard her some if I go small. You just got to battle.

Q. Flau'jae said she felt like a lot of the players are figuring out their role. Do you feel like this team is clicking at the right time?

KIM MULKEY: I hope so. I thought our bench yesterday was special. And I don't just mean Gilbert, because that's who you think of when you think of our bench. But she was 0-for-9. It was the things they did from the scouting report that if it was switching on a certain staggered screen, they listened and they did things.

I thought we played with a lot of excitement, and probably a lot of that, probably all of it, is because it's the NCAA playoffs. It's having Flau'jae out there who brings a joyfulness about her that spreads to everybody else. If you can play like that, you never know what can happen.

Q. Do you have a key to an LSU victory?

KIM MULKEY: We do. But you're from Tallahassee, so I don't want Florida State to know. Nice try. (Laughter).

Q. You mentioned multiple people have the assignment of guarding Latson. Who will those people be?

KIM MULKEY: Well, transition defense, I can't dictate to you who it will be but it's going to be somebody on the perimeter. When she has the ball in her hands it could be Poa; it could be Flau'jae depending on who is the game. It could be Shay. It could be Mikaylah. Mjiracle is our defensive stopper. So I can't just tell you specifically who is going to end up on her.

Dead-ball situations, certainly it will be me looking at who is in the game and go, you make sure you stay with her right here. But they all know their assignment, and she's such a tremendous player. She is going to get her points. She shoots it 20 times a game. She's going to get her points.

What you have to do is try your best to contain her where she doesn't hit 50 on you, and then don't let the unexpected player have an all-world game.

They are just so talented that you just really have to know, you can focus on her, but you really have to be very cognizant of those others that score in double figures.

Q. Mjiracle seems like she's come into her own and is so poised. What do you attribute that to?

KIM MULKEY: I hate it for Mikaylah when we started because she had the stress reaction in her foot that set her back for six weeks; and we're moving on and she tried to play catchup. And when you try to play catchup, you try to do things quickly, and it snowballs and you'll have a turnover.

She has just worked her way methodically back to this point. She is a defensive -- she just does good things defensively. She's very solid and sound. She never changes her expression. She never gets too high and never gets too down on her sever. She's got the size that she can guard the big perimeter player. I will move her inside if necessary and go small like I do Mikaylah. I haven't done much of that but I could. She is always around the basketball. You'll see her cut and bail a teammate out. She's got some basketball savvy about her.

Q. Moving away from all the FSU stuff, tournament record with six games over a hundred points. Anything you can attribute that trend to?

KIM MULKEY: Are you talking about people around the country scoring hundreds or what we did last night? Or maybe just matchups were lopsided.

I do know, this I was talking to a friend and we talk about parity in the game but if you look there was no upsets. Am I right? So really, is there much parity? I don't know. That was, you know, a comment that was made to me, and it was so late last night, I didn't even know when I woke up this morning who had won some of the games.

But that comment makes you wonder, is there really that much parity any more if you don't have any upsets. I don't know. I don't know the answer.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports