

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Kansas State vs Kentucky

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Lexington, Kentucky, USA

Memorial Coliseum

Kentucky Wildcats Georgia Amooore Dazia Lawrence

Media Conference



similarities in the way that you guys play?

GEORGIA AMOORE: If you look at the statistics, it says that we're kind of one and the same assist-wise. But I think it's impressive how she's able to lob to her bigs. The depth that they have inside, it enables a lot of opportunities for her to put that pass perfectly in a scenario where their bigs have to do nothing but pretty much catch, turn around, and shoot. So she's really good at that.

Q. When you guys look at the game yesterday and going into Sunday, how do you rebuild that momentum that you started the game with coming into K-State?

GEORGIA AMOORE: I think that it was interesting, yesterday's game, because obviously, like you said, we applied pressure first half, and second half we definitely took it off. I'm not quite sure why because SEC season we didn't do that. I'm not sure if it's because we thought we had a lead and once we got that lead that it was okay to take a step back. Which it's March, so it's not.

So I think that going into tomorrow's game, hopefully we've been woken up. Hopefully a lesson has been learned. But we have to do nothing but just revert to what we've been doing for the past three, four months.

That's why we were so successful in the SEC, because we would have a good first half, build ourselves a comfortable lead, and then have an attempt at what we like to call a third quarter blitz, which we didn't do yesterday.

But going into K-State, we know that every single quarter, every single run, it's so important for us to keep applying that pressure on offense and defense.

DAZIA LAWRENCE: Yeah, like G said, I think we learned a lot just from the second half of that game yesterday and just seeing that -- just knowing that we can't let it get that close again because next time it may not turn out the way that we want it to.

So just, again, locking in on how we played in that first half and playing that way for 40 minutes tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us for the press conference. Questions for our student-athletes.

Q. We just heard from K-State talking about the impressive guard matchups that we're going to see tomorrow. Can you talk about, are there similarities between the guard play that you'll see tomorrow in terms you faced in SEC play, or is this kind of a new scenario for you?

DAZIA LAWRENCE: I think there's a lot of similarities. They can shoot the three really well, and they have a couple of guards that can attack the basket, which a lot of guards in the SEC does. I think they can shoot the three at a very high volume, and they have a lot of great guards, and so do we.

So I feel like it's going to be a pretty great matchup for guard play tomorrow.

GEORGIA AMOORE: I would say the biggest takeaway from their guards, obviously, when you have a big as impressive as Lee is, you have to be consistent in, number one, getting her the ball, but, number two, getting the shots off that enables you when you have someone like that.

They're so consistent, and I think they're genuine three-level scorers. So it's not like we can just focus on Lee or Sundell, if she's creating. We have to be so focused on every single matchup. I don't think there is a weak leak out there on the court when they play.

Q. You mentioned Serena Sundell, and I think she's a little bit different in the way that she plays compared to you. What have you seen from her game that's different from the way you play, and are there any



Q. Georgia, I know we see it across college basketball, but to win in March you do need really good guard play and really strong point guards. How much has that position grown, in your opinion, from, I guess, when you've started college to now?

GEORGIA AMOORE: You mean like all around?

Q. Yeah.

GEORGIA AMOORE: Obviously every great teams need a great point guard. You carry a lot of responsibilities on your shoulders. Not only are you an extension of the coach, you have to be able to score, put your teammates in position to score, read the game, read the temper, be able to tell everyone what you're seeing, be able to articulate what you're seeing. And I think that's where the greats really separate themselves.

And it definitely helps when you have such great role models in that position. You look at the Nancy Lieberman list every single year, and there's -- everyone on that list is very notable. So I think it's a glorified position because it has to be. It's a great position to play. It's the hardest position to play. No bias there. It truly is.

But everyone that plays it, you know, they know their responsibilities that you have to take on. So I think it's definitely grown. It's definitely progressed. And it's just so important to have a really versatile point guard.

Q. I know you guys are both guards, but obviously the matchup tomorrow we have not talked about Ayoka Lee. How do you guys as a team come back together and guard a player like that?

GEORGIA AMOORE: Yeah, she's the type of player that you have to change your game plan for. Like maybe we're going to do some things that we quite not really have done throughout the year, adapt to it because she's such a force in the interior.

And, you know, the SEC was great. I'm not quite sure I can remember a time where we played someone like that in the SEC. In all honesty. It's a very different style of play. But she's very effective. She's efficient.

So I think just trying to make it as -- like, we're got going to stop her. You're not going to stop a player as good as that. So you just have to make here life as difficult as possible.

DAZIA LAWRENCE: Yeah, just playing team defense, I think that's going to help us a lot, playing together and just communicating a lot. Playing for each other on defense tomorrow. We cannot be stagnant or just be in one place

tomorrow. We're just going to have to help each other in all aspects. If we do that, we'll be in a pretty great position to win.

Q. You mentioned you haven't faced anybody in the SEC maybe like Lee. So Raegan Beers, is she at all similar to Yokie? How would you compare those two?

GEORGIA AMOORE: I mean, you can see they're similar, but the way we're looking at it, it's kind of different.

I do think Lee is a little bit taller. The way that she shoots her shot is a little bit higher. She has a very high release point, whereas Raegan likes to get into your body, create contact and finish.

This is from a guard standpoint. So bigs out there, correct me if I'm wrong.

Lee is very good at catching it, using her height to an advantage. It's effortless how she creates position. It doesn't look like she's in there forcing too much. She's just so strong and just so solid the whole way.

So it's -- you can say it's the same, but I think it's a little different.

DAZIA LAWRENCE: I agree with what G said.

Q. I'm from North Carolina, so I knew where you grew up in Greenville. Tell us a little bit about learning to play on a carpeted court and then The Dungeon in Greenville, which is a pretty legendary place, that if you can play there, you can play anywhere.

DAZIA LAWRENCE: Yeah, so just growing up, I did play on a carpeted court. If you look at my knees, I have a lot of just carpet burn because that's where I grew up. The gym was carpet at the time.

And I loved it. Every chance I got, I would go -- it would probably be me and my cousin at the time would probably be the only girls in there, just going up and down, playing with the guys.

So I look back at the moment like, wow, I really grew up playing on carpet.

And then The Dungeon, it's still a gym in Greenville, North Carolina, and when you walk in there, it's literally the dungeon. You're not playing on wood. You're playing on literal cement. Whatever the temperature is outside, it's probably warmer outside than it is in The Dungeon. Every time I go there in the summer, I tell them I need extra fans. I need doors open. I need water.

So but, yeah, a lot of great players have come through The Dungeon. If it wasn't for The Dungeon and growing up just playing where I did, I wouldn't be as tough and aggressive and just that dog mentality I have today. Just my journey in basketball has made me the player that I am today.

Q. Yesterday you both talked a lot about the importance of experience, the importance of depth. But throughout the season, we have seen great games from people who don't have that DI experience, someone like Amelia Hassett, Clara Silva. What can you two say to inspire that confidence to make sure everyone shows up ready to roll for 40 minutes?

GEORGIA AMOORE: At this point in the season, we've played however many games we have, and we don't really have to do anything different. Like, obviously the anticipation gets higher, the stakes get higher, the talk surrounding the games gets higher. It's March. It's what it's for. It's what you come here for. But it doesn't mean that you have to change.

We've played some great games in the season that could have been this type of caliber game. So what's to say that we should change that mindset now. Like, we're perfectly capable. We've played those games. We don't have to change the way we are right now, and we don't have to succumb to all the other stuff that's happening around.

DAZIA LAWRENCE: Also just staying present and just showing up as the best version of yourself. The message has been you don't have to be a superhero, just be yourself and be your best self.

So I think if we can really tune into that and just understand I just have to be myself, I just have to show up as myself and be great at that, then I think that will help all of us with our confidence going forward in the tournament.

Q. So you guys come out aggressive yesterday, and you two are the senior leaders on this team. How do you carry that over for 40 minutes against Kansas State tomorrow?

GEORGIA AMOORE: You just got to do what you've got to do. That's what we've been doing all season. We know that we're the veterans. We know there's a little bit different expectations placed upon us, but it's nothing that we haven't handled all year round.

And I think there's just a subconscious understanding that every single game Dazia and I have to be great. We can't be good. We have to be great.

And that helps carry a team like we have because, you know, as previously mentioned, we have someone that came from a JUCO school or people that just haven't been in this position, a Clara Silva who is fresh from Europe and fresh from playing against 17-, 18-year-olds. As long as we set the standard and we're confident and we exude confidence, then it's going to help uplift the other players, and it doesn't matter for how long for.

DAZIA LAWRENCE: Yeah, I agree. I think just leading by example and just pouring into our teammates and not just encouraging them, there's a lot of leaders that when they get it -- like, when your teammates make a mistake, you just pound on them and get on them.

But I think me and G do a really great job of uplifting, reminding our teammates next play mentality. We all make mistakes.

G does a really good job of not holding any other our heads. So I just try to follow that. We just have to be uplifting to our teammates. We have to remind them who they are. We pour into them, and they pour back into us. So if me and G and show up and be the great players that we are, everybody else will follow.

Q. When you're on the court, you both look like you're having fun, and you play with a passion and a joy. At what point in a game do you feel like this is my day, I'm feeling it?

GEORGIA AMOORE: Sometimes if it doesn't feel like your day, you have to make it feel like your day. When I know it's -- I'm not going to say that every single day I feel so great, but I make myself think it sometimes.

I think it's that positive mindset, and you can really shift whatever you're feeling. Maybe I missed a couple of shots. Okay, and? I can't remember someone who went perfect all year round.

So I think it's just the perspective of everything that helps me. I'm sure Dazia can say the same. Like, this is really our last go-around. We're on this stage. And to have fun with it.

Sometimes in clutch situations or a game like yesterday where it was a couple of seconds and we're only up one, two, I want my teammates to be able to look at me and be like, oh, G seems fine. Like, okay, we're good.

Like as soon as you have that panic or that negative energy, it's very easy to spread. And Coach Brooks has been big on energy vampires. You never want to have that one person you look at them and you're like, oh, we lost

her, or, oh, she's not feeling it today.

DAZIA LAWRENCE: Yeah, just showing up as our best selves. It's easy to have fun with G on the court. She makes it fun. And just feeding off each other's energy.

I know yesterday like I gave her a pass for three, and I'm running back down the court with the three. It's the trust we have in each other. We have so much fun on the court. And i just know if we're showing that, everybody else will follow and just have fun, just as much fun as we're having.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much.

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