

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Regional 3 Final - TCU vs Texas

Monday, March 31, 2025

Birmingham, Alabama, USA

Legacy Arena

TCU Horned Frogs

Mark Campbell

Sedona Prince

Hailey Van Lith

Madison Conner

Agnes Emma-Nnoku

Elite Eight Postgame Media Conference

Texas 58, TCU 47

THE MODERATOR: Ready to begin. We will take opening comments from Mark Campbell.

MARK CAMPBELL: Well, they came in the locker room and we were having a really -- what makes this group so special was what was just unfolding in the locker room right now. The sisterhood that has been formed this past two years and really this year and the time and the stories we just shared in the locker room is what this whole thing is about.

They ask that we bring two players up here for media and there was no way I was bringing two players up here. These four players right here have taken this program on a ride that none of us could have imagined. They've poured their heart and soul into this program. I am forever grateful for each one of these young women and I wanted to make sure they got to come up here and be together one last time.

I want to give credit to Texas for playing a phenomenal game, and they made us uncomfortable, and kept us out of rhythm, really, for the whole game. So credit them and wish them nothing but the best as they head to Tampa.

This season and the journey we have been on, you guys, I can't even put it into words, how special it's been, how much fun it's been. So thank you guys and I will open it up



to questions.

Q. Hailey, after the game you were walking off the court with Mark. You guys hugged before you walked off the court. What did that mean? Put into words what he's meant to you in your last year.

HAILEY VAN LITH: Yeah, I mean, it is hard for me to put into words, but my relationship with Coach Mark has been just a joy for me. I'm sure I gave him a lot of headaches throughout the year, but, you know, he just accepted me for who I was. He took me at face value, and he thanked me for coming to the program, but, like, he took a risk on me.

He met me with full belief, and he had a vision of who he thought I could be, and at the beginning he probably was convincing me that I could be that person. I wasn't necessarily in a place where I even knew who I was anymore.

So he has just breathed life into me, and from a life perspective, he's taught me a lot of great lessons about, you know, how to have healthy relationships, and what it takes to have a healthy relationship, and how much better life can be if you just let people see who you are. And that's hard for me.

So for me to feel comfortable and safe doing that with him, that took a lot of work on his part that he did not have to do. He could have told me to screw off when I was giving him problems. So I'm forever grateful for him, and God put him in my life to transform it, and he certainly has done that.

I can't wait to be a TCU alum. I can't wait to come back and give back to this program and continue having my relationship with Coach. I think he will be around for the rest of my life. So that's the best part about this year.

Q. Agnes, Sedona and Madison you guys came to this program when they were 1-17. Now sitting at the Elite Eight what does it mean to bring this program up?

AGNES EMMA-NNOKU: I think that when Coach Mark



was recruiting us all, he obviously had a vision for what TCU could be and I think that's truly what drew me, and I can't speak for the others, but that's definitely what drew me into this school.

I think the love, the encouragement, the confidence he's poured into all of us has been a big reason why we went from that -- they went from 1-17 to our injury-ridden season to an Elite Eight. So honestly couldn't change it for the better.

SEDONA PRINCE: Yeah, I mean, we came in last year were definitely -- when I came in two years ago I didn't really know what to expect. I just wanted a chance, a second chance, something. I needed a second chance, genuinely. Anything. And Mark was such a special person in my career, and the way we crossed paths I knew it wasn't over. And it just felt like this is God. I knew it was God, and we just had belief because Mark believed. We believed in each other and believed in the system and what we could do, believed in our potential, and it paid off. I mean, this is incredible.

We're obviously heartbroken. This is so devastating for us to end this, but this program is -- this is it, right? TCU is a place to be, this culture is -- you can't put into words how special this team and these people are.

So, yeah, it's just special looking back at how everything has unfolded.

MADISON CONNER: Yeah, coming here we all definitely took a leap of faith in Mark and in ourselves. I think Mark is great leader and he has great people around him at all times and I think that's why we have flourished.

I know for a fact I have given him multiple headaches and multiple sleepless nights. I will take accountability for that, but he brushes it off and the next day he loves you and he's in there the next day telling you how you can be a better person and a better player, and he's transformed my basketball career.

He's taken a real, real big leap of faith on me and I couldn't be happier to be under him, and like Hailey said, to have him in my life for the rest of it. This program is just a start.

The Elite Eight, obviously we are all upset this journey has come to an end. None of us want to leave each other. We're are like, can I pack you in my suitcase? Where are we going.

Unfortunately, we can't do that but I think this program is just something that I will forever be grateful for.

Q. Hailey, can you speak to what was said in the locker room amongst you all? And Sedona, can you speak to what they were doing in the inside here going up against their bigs that made it tough for you tonight with only just one basket?

HAILEY VAN LITH: After the game, what was going on after the game? Yeah, I mean, a lot of it was just gratitude for each other. We've all been on unique journeys, and we've all meant different things to each other at different points in our lives, and, yeah, it was a ton of gratitude, a ton of love and a lot of people spoke.

It wasn't just us four, it wasn't just Coach Campbell, it was really awesome to hear. It broke your heart even more hearing each other talk because you realize tomorrow, like, we won't get to practice.

But I'm forever connected to these women and this coaching staff, and so I am just really honored to have them in my life and it was awesome to hear from everybody.

SEDONA PRINCE: Yeah, I mean, all credit to the Texas bigs. Taylor Jones is a heck of a player, and they scouted me very well, I'm sure and they played me very well. All respect to them. But, you know, to be honest I think today was a very full circle moment for me in a way that I wasn't expecting.

Just looking at the people that did so much damage to me at a young age was a lot and it was hard, and I thought that we had to win to prove it to them that they couldn't beat me. But being a part of this program and being here and succeeding and coming back and being able to play and after being told I would never walk again, and being on this team with these people, building this sisterhood, it doesn't matter.

I won, we won, and so, yeah, it's just -- I think I was in my head a lot, right? But it's God's glory no matter what and it taught me a lesson, and it definitely healed me in a lot of ways today.

Q. Madison and Hailey, what's the one thing you're going to miss the most about this group?

MADISON CONNER: The people. That's the hardest thing.

I think we've done so much basketball-wise that I don't think we really have regrets in that sense. I think we've all given our heart. We've all poured into this, and we came to an Elite Eight. Yeah, it sucks that we lost but there are eight teams left and we're one of them.

Obviously we wanted to go to the Final Four but we've done great on the basketball court.

But the people. We're all going to kind of go on our separate journeys and we don't know what that's going to be and it's tough stepping away from something, especially with people that you've built so many relationships with. We've been in the gym with each other since June. We see each and every single day. Most of the time we love on each other and sometimes we pick at each other a little bit and the relationships we formed. It's bittersweet and it's been awesome to be a part of it but it sucks that you have to kind of move on in your journey of life.

Q. Hailey, can you reflect on your journey the last five years and your dad has gone viral for celebrations. How much does your family and friends' support mean to you?

HAILEY VAN LITH: Yeah, my journey. It's hilarious because when I was like a sophomore I was like, who would every take their fifth year? Why would anyone want to be in college for five years? That's funny, because here I am, in college, fifth year.

But it's been, man, it's been certainly a journey. Nothing I expected. It was hard. It was a lot of nights of being, like, I feel like I'm -- God has put this thing on my heart to be great, but it's not working out right now. And a lot of times I had to look at myself in the mirror and just be like, what do you want, Hailey? Who are you? And I'm grateful for it. I'm grateful for the fact that He gave me a hard journey. Because I would not be the woman I am sitting up here without it.

And so I really praise God for the struggle and the suffering. I praise Him for the nights where I didn't want to be alive anymore. I praise Him for the nights that I was on medication because I couldn't sleep or eat. And it's painful to talk about it but it's really how beautiful life is.

So I'm sitting up here now with women that I love and a coach that I love and a team that I love and we aren't even sad about losing. We're sad that we aren't going to see each other probably next week.

So my journey has been crazy, I'm super grateful for it, wouldn't have had it any other way.

And my family, another reason I'm grateful for this group is because my family is a lot. I love them to death, they are my heartbeat. I live and die for my family but they are definitely a lot. They have just welcomed my family and loved them and built relationships with them and that's not

common. That's definitely not common in every program.

So it's a testament to the people that I play with, the people that coach me, but also, you know, my family -- my family kept me here when I was going through hard times, and they know that, they know what they mean to me. I know that I've grown in life and they have grown with me, when the text that I got from my dad today before the game it was "The sun is going to rise tomorrow no matter if you win or lose. So go out there and have fun." That's a lot of growth for him. That's a lot of growth for me to accept that text from him.

Love my family and I can't wait to go see them after this.

Q. Sedona and Hailey, have you do you reconcile not having the ending that you wanted or hoped for with the difficulties of tonight with knowing how far you've been able to take this program?

HAILEY VAN LITH: Yeah, I don't even know if we really had a whole lot of expectations. I mean, at the end of the day, we weren't ranked at the beginning of the year, you know, a lot of my teammates didn't get the recognition and the accolades they deserve. I only made third team, Sedona was only honorable mention and somehow we're in the Elite Eight knocking off people that had first teamers or second-teamers, Player of the Years in their conference. So holy crap, how did we get here? We weren't very good apparently to the public.

We're some dogs for fighting for that. When nobody expects you to do something, it's hard to find the grit to go out and do it. I wouldn't have had that game -- a dogfight is the way to go out and I thought we put up a fight. Texas played really well, congrats to them.

I wouldn't have went out any other way.

SEDONA PRINCE: Ditto, I don't think it's hit a lot of us, it's kind of unreal. But this season, these girls, these coaches, no matter what, it's been so essential and I think this year has impacted all of our lives so deeply. It's not what we wanted. We know we had a higher ceiling, but we went out with a dogfight and we gave it our all and we fought together, we stayed together the whole game. That's what we did all season.

We are a sisterhood, true sisterhood which is very, very hard to find in college athletics. I'm so proud of everybody, all of these girls. Underdogs since the beginning. They predicted us to get 4th in the Big 12 and we won the season and then we won the Tournament. That was amazing. The first time in TCU history. First time in Sweet 16 in TCU history, Elite Eight, this is a year of win and

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

achievements and putting the school on the map and building a community and family in Ft. Worth that has changed all of our lives.

So it's heartbreaking at the end of the day but, man, it's very, very special and bittersweet.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you ladies.

MADISON CONNER: I just want to say one thing, you're never going to get a funnier trio up here in interviews again.

Q. Mark, do you retire Hailey Van Lith's number and when Sedona said Texas was in her head, what were you seeing out there?

MARK CAMPBELL: Yeah, I don't -- it's hard for me to answer that. I don't know the criteria in regards to getting your jersey hung at TCU, but I have a hard time believing that anybody in any sport in one year can have a greater impact than what Hailey Van Lith has had at TCU. Obviously there's the basketball piece and a single season of scoring record, a single-season assist record, and was the leader of this group that won 34 games and took us to an Elite Eight.

So if it's up to me, yes. No question. But, again, I'm not the one that makes those decisions.

For Sedona, she has had a unique college career and a unique journey that hasn't been easy. It started at Texas, and it came full circle seven years later where her last college game was against Texas. So I think there is a lot that goes into that. Hailey had that with Louisville a couple games ago.

So each person processes that differently, and so I haven't got to decompress with Sedona and talk through that, but I'm sure there were a lot of emotions that were going through her head before the game and probably during. I know more than anything she wanted to win not because we were playing Texas but she wanted to win because she doesn't want the journey to end with this group.

Q. What's the one thing or what legacy do you hope these women left in Ft. Worth?

MARK CAMPBELL: Man, you guys got good questions. How were your tickets today by the way? All right.

Man, they left an incredible legacy. There are a lot of directions I can go with this question. One, they're the greatest team in TCU women's basketball history. That's the easy one. The legacy they left I think is, one, I think

they inspired a massive group of young girls in that community that you could chase your dreams at the highest level at TCU.

I know for a fact -- to see all these little girls wearing the jerseys of our players at the games and in the crowd and around the city, they have truly inspired that generation.

Then it's just neat. Each one of these kids came from different backgrounds, from different programs, from all around our country, and just shows when you come together and you lose yourself in the journey, and you set your ego aside, just incredible things you can accomplish. And it's a testament to these four, but it's testament to those 15 young women in that locker room.

You guys it has been so fun for me to be on this ride with this group of people. They're incredible.

Q. You guys have been the story of college basketball for the last week in the midst of March Madness. What does that mean obviously for not just TCU but for women's basketball as a whole?

MARK CAMPBELL: It's incredible. This group, both years we've been here, somehow we keep going viral over and over again. This stretch of March Madness we've gone viral because of the winning and the platform that you have with March Madness and this unique group of individuals, and what they've accomplished. They have been kinda the Cinderella story on the men or women's side because of where we started. We were unranked. We were picked fourth in the Big 12. Everybody during March loves the Cinderella story and I think we kinda became that.

So that's been really fun, and it just shows you guys I think our program -- another thing of this legacy, I think our program, I know this for a fact, is one of the best programs in the country. We had one of the best teams in the country. And we're going to continue to build on that. They have laid a foundation that's going to attract the next crop of incredible basketball players with the right DNA that fit this and want to be a part of this.

This is just the beginning for our program and our school of what we're going to create. It truly is. This is only the second year. We're just getting started.

Q. Coach, Hailey talked a lot about how much she has learned from you and how much you've helped her. I'm curious how much you've learned from her this year and the ways that you talked on the court, a lot of times kids come in for a year and it's hard to see the impact long term, but how has she impacted your program that you might see years down the line?



MARK CAMPBELL: That was a lot of questions in there.

Hailey's impacted me, man, not many people -- not many humans could go through what she's gone through and keep fighting and keep going and keep grinding. To watch her, it's inspiring. To watch Hailey show up and do her process and her grind and her training habits. It was inspiring to her teammates, it was inspiring to our staff. You literally -- not just her, but we're talking about her. You want to give your best when you see someone approach their craft the way that she does. And that's been from day one, when she showed up on campus and started doing her three-a-days to get ready for Paris and get ready for the Olympics.

Then just the journey of -- way bigger than basketball. Basketball is a vehicle that we get to use to impact lives. Hailey came into the program -- you only get these kids for about nine months, when they're the one-year portal kid and to peel back the layers and to really get to know 'em, it's hard to do. To make it work, me and Hailey have literally been attached at the hip. She came in with a wall, and rightfully so kinda kept her distance for different reasons. Just as we went through that journey together, that wall slowly came down and she opened up and became vulnerable and we were able to challenge each other and have honest conversations.

That journey with her and getting to -- helping her, which it's all her, but for her allowing me to go on that journey with her and walk through her struggles that she has had is one of the reasons the season that she had has unfolded. I truly don't -- when her teammates get to see someone with her platform open up and allow me to coach her, challenge her, love her, encourage her, it kinda breaks down walls for everybody. And we kinda have a group of those four young women that were all on their own journey and had different struggles and different insecurities and you guys it's why this thing became such a tight-knit family.

This thing is a freaking sisterhood. There were so many tears and laughter that were in that locker room after this game.

As a coach that means -- as a staff that means we've done our job well.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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