

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Alabama vs Maryland

Monday, March 24, 2025
College Park, Maryland, USA
XFINITY Center

Maryland Terrapins Coach Brenda Frese Sarah Te-Biasu Shyanne Sellers

Media Conference

Maryland 111, Alabama 108

THE MODERATOR: We will begin with a brief statement from Coach Frese on the game.

BRENDA FRESE: Yeah, wow. First of all I just can't say enough about our fans. You know, 5:00 tip where we live is a pretty tough time and they definitely, like they've been all season long for us, gave us such a boost, especially when it went into overtime and then double overtime. I told them overtime is our time.

Can't say, you know, just so proud of this group. You know that it's going to be a heavyweight fight. Both teams you saw the competitive spirit, the mindset to want to go on to the next round. I thought we came out with a great mindset. We punched first, then Alabama responded with the character that they have. Really no team deserved to lose this game tonight. Both teams were so good. You saw what our seniors did. Shy and Sarah, KK and Allie. You can go through the list. I thought every player had an impactful moment for us, whether it was on the offensive and defensive end and now we're excited to be representing both now us and men's basketball going to the Sweet 16.

THE MODERATOR: At this time, we'll take questions for Sarah and Shyanne.

Q. (Inaudible) the final moments, overtime, getting the step-back threes... your trademark down the end of the season. What were you thinking? What were you guys discussing amongst yourselves and what does it mean to come out of this deficit and win in double



overtime?

SARAH TE-BIASU: It feels good. It was really a fight. We went double overtime but we just kept playing for each other the whole game. I know I think it was like the third and fourth quarter it was a little bit tough for us but we never gave up and we just kept fighting. That's all we did. It was really good, yeah.

Q. Shy, Can you talk about your confidence at the free throw line? You were nine for nine there today. How much do you pride yourself in that and how will you able to execute so well down the stretch?

SHYANNE SELLERS: Yeah, I mean, they're easy money shots. You got to be able to step up and hit them. We practice free throws all the time, so I know I can step up with confidence and knock them down, so, yeah.

Q. You've been playing at such a high level recently. It just feels like every single time this team needs a big three, you're hitting one off the dribble contested. Can you tell us what that feels like for those of us that haven't experienced playing basketball at such a ridiculous level?

SARAH TE-BIASU: I have a lot of faith, always, like, before games I always pray a lot. I thank God for this game. It's really a blessing but my teammates, they always keep telling me keep shooting, especially Shy always tells me to keep shooting and be confidence every time and Coach Brenda, she always tells me to be confident in every shot you take and so it's probably confidence I would say.

Q. For Shy, you go to the free-throw line the last time. It's your last shot here, biggest shots of your career. Any of that going through your mind?

SHYANNE SELLERS: Not really. Honestly, I just want to knock them down. Uh didn't want to give them any hope. I wanted them to have to make a three if they wanted to send it into another overtime. Didn't want to give them an easy way out.



Q. You played at such a long stretch with four fouls. How much did that weigh on your mind when you were defending and having to be aggressive at times?

SHYANNE SELLERS: Yeah, I was trying to be disciplined. I knew my team needed me to stay in the game and honestly it just comes back to all them having my back. There is definitely times where I was scrambling in and out of rotations and they all had my back. I think that speaks volumes about this team of that's just who we are.

Q. Shyanne, I have two questions: One, can you just describe the impact. Coach said everybody made an impact, which is true, but Mir really performed well, double-digit rebounds for her. That's the first question and the second question is at what moment when y'all were down 17, was there a play, a defensive strategy or anything? Adjustment -- because y'all went from 17 down to 9 going into the fourth quarter.

SHYANNE SELLERS: First off with Mir. That's just who Mir is. She's going to do the little things. She's going to go in and get a rebound if we haven't gotten one. She's going to crash offensive rebounds. She's going to try to guard the best defender -- I mean, best offensive player. That's just who Mir is. She's a team player and I love her every second of it because she makes us better and it's huge for us.

And then I forgot -- oh, 17. Got it. It wasn't really a specific play. It was a specific time-out. I remember we were just talking about score, stop, score. Score, stop, score. Get a stop, get it within ten going into the fourth and we're right there and that's exactly what we did and we executed.

Q. For Shy, down 17 you were on the bench with four fouls. How do you keep yourself up knowing that this could be the end of your career if you guys don't come back and you're down by so much and you can't really help because you're on the bench? How do you keep yourself motivated to keep going and keep Faith, basically?

SHYANNE SELLERS: Pour into other people. You pour into your teammates. I know I was frustrated when I got my fourth foul. Pouring it into them really helped me get out of it and, yeah, you just hope that your team can make a run and that's exactly what they did but honestly I kind of knew they would, so.

Q. Sarah, I think you played pretty close to every minute in that game. How did you -- what did you draw from to keep going and what was it like to be carried off the floor by your teammates?

SARAH TE-BIASU: I think I really wanted to win so I was like just trying to play the best that I can every possession and defense, all that, just trying to play hard and just work hard. I just wanted to win. That's the mentality, everybody on the team, we wanted to win and we just never gave up.

Q. Thoughts about being carried off the court by your teammates?

SARAH TE-BIASU: What does that mean?

Q. Were you carried off?

SARAH TE-BIASU: Oh, sorry. (Laughter) Yeah. No, they just did it. I don't even know why they do that, but. (Laughter) But it felt good. It was helpful. I was a little bit tired but it was good, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Anything else for Sarah and Shy?

Q. For either one of you, obviously as competitors, when you play against another team, compete at a high level, you have somebody like Sarah finish with 45 points, in that moment, what was the strategy there against her or at what point do you let her score and then focus on everybody else? Obviously as a competitor, how special was her performance? Just having to defend that or see that the entire game.

SHYANNE SELLERS: I told her after the game I thought she was phenomenal. I didn't think she needed to shed a single tear. She was excellent and I think she put everyone on notice of exactly who she is. Obviously we probably should have done a little bit better but we contained everybody else so that was huge but she has no reason to hang her head. She's a phenomenal player and a great person, too.

Q. For both Shy and Sarah, when your 80 and sitting on your rocking chair, what will you, when you think back to this game, what will you be thinking about?

SHYANNE SELLERS: ... for so long. My back gonna crack and everything.

SARAH TE-BIASU: It was fun. Really fun.

SHYANNE SELLERS: Good, classy answer.

SARAH TE-BIASU: Even though it was like a tide game and everything, it was it was really fun. We had fun and it's a blessing to be part of that.

SHYANNE SELLERS: You're so classy. (Laughter)

THE MODERATOR: We have time for one more if anybody else has one. If not, we'll let Sarah and Shyanne get going.

We have a question for Coach Frese up here.

Q. Just as you guys were going through those overtimes, what is the kind of message that you're keeping, preaching to them. I saw you waving to the crowd and during each time out, kind of giving a message. Was there a theme of what you were saying as you kind of kept going?

BRENDA FRESE: You just continue to true to instill as much energy and positivity, confidence. Went in there the first time, overtime is our time. I knew they were tired, but just needing to dig in even further. These guys played really, really heavy minutes and then especially to come from 17 down, what that took to come back into this fold, so. And again, I just can't say enough about our crowd. This is why you try to earn that right to host and have that energy because we absolutely needed it with both the double overtimes.

Q. What was your sentiment of the team going into the fourth? You guys had closed the gap a little bit. It was a nine-point game going into the fourth. What did you say to your team going into the fourth to close that gap?

BRENDA FRESE: A couple things. When Shy went out, even when we went big and brought Amari in. I thought she did some great things. I got to make sure I mention that. I thought she was really ready and impacted us in a great way, but that fourth quarter just, you know, again, just cutting down those possessions where we needed stops to scores and doing it one possession at a time and doing it together. Nobody had to do it on their own. When you look at the box and you look how it was spread, they really trusted each other on the offensive end as well as on the defensive end.

Q. Alabama did lose two starters in that fourth quarter due to fouls. How did that change the way you defended Barker and could key in on her a little.

BRENDA FRESE: Yeah, the foul trouble was huge. They were able to get KK out for us and once they were in foul trouble, we were able to dig off of a little bit because they were trying to pick on Sarah and we were able to take some of the post players, when they had to go to two bigs and really be able to help and we were trying to double Sarah, number 3, she's just off of every ball screen, we were trying to get it out of her hands, but man, what a winner. What a competitor. She did everything she could

to will her team to that one. It was an impressive performance.

Q. Coach, you just touched on it a little bit, but could you talk more about what you got from your role players, specifically Mir? She had I feel like a role player's dream getting every rebound and guarding so well. 78 for Sellers, Smikle, and Te-Biasu, but the role players did so much. Can you just kind of expand on that?

BRENDA FRESE: They really did. I would say these last two games for Mir, defensively, the ability to lock down for us and she did, even though Sarah had 45 points, Mir made her work and earn those 45 points. She really had to work for them. Even to the point like Amari making a shot, huge. Saylor making a free throw. Every one of those points chipped away and just moving through and defensively as well. It was massive to be able to have those minutes.

Q. Allie Kubek was the only player in a double overtime game to score a double-double. She's been awesome every NCAA Tournament game she's played. Can you talk about her impact in big games in March?

BRENDA FRESE: Yeah, I don't know what it is. I'm here for it. It's been really special to be able to see and see it from last year to, you know, I just think the body of work for Allie over time, it's like she learns to develop that trust in herself and the confidence and, again, she was huge. Look at her stat line. When you talk about 19-12, five assists as a post. No turnovers. 49 minutes, like, I just -- and banging down low defensively. So many things. I actually had forgotten that she played that many minutes and when she got tired I was kind of challenging her and she was just huge. Can't say enough.

Q. You sort of mentioned it at the outset, both the men and the women going to the Sweet 16 and that's the first time that's ever actually happened in the same year. How special has the last 24 hours been for Maryland basketball?

BRENDA FRESE: You look at how both teams won and that's the pride of who we are to represent our athletic department, our university, our state and the biggest stage nationally. Two teams that have been really resilient all year. You look at the men and you were just hoping it was going to break last night for them and some of the buzzer-beater shots that have gone on with them and they stayed the course and stayed resilient. I'll say the same thing for this group. Through all the juvenile courts and adversity that we faced for this group could have folded at any point that stretch of Texas and UCLA and those

opponents and I think that's what's so special, the journey that you get to have with this team and to be able to watch it unfold tonight.

Q. You had two opportunities to foul up three. One time it came back to bite you, one time it didn't. Are you not a proponent of that? Do you ever consider that strategy lawsuit in the game?

BRENDA FRESE: We've considered it. It hasn't really been who we are, so, you know. I think you can second-guess yourself any time with that, but proud that it worked in our favor.

Q. In the non-championship game, national championship category, where does this rank in your career for wins?

BRENDA FRESE: Yeah, I think Rose had shared the last double overtime game was 2008 that I've been involved... right up there. I guess when you've been in it as long as I have, but this one, absolutely. I'm going to remember for a really long time with this group and just everything that they've had to be through this season.

THE MODERATOR: Anything more for Coach? We'll let Coach get going. Thanks for joining us and good luck in the next round.

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