

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Sunday, March 9, 2025

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

Nevada Wolf Pack

Coach Amanda Levens

Audrey Roden

Lexie Givens

Postgame Press Conference

Boise State - 54, Nevada - 48

AMANDA LEVENS: I thought it was back and forth and could have probably gone either way. I thought they made a few more plays, obviously scored better in the fourth quarter and there's a huge free throw discrepancy. So that was tough.

Q. For both of you guys, some slow starts to both halves for both teams tonight. What's needed in those moments to get something going on offense, get a rhythm and kind of build those leads that you did?

LEXIE GIVENS: I think just continuing to execute our plays and know what we're looking for down the stretch.

AUDREY RODEN: Yeah, not trying to force anything early, just letting the flow of the game come to you. And when you try to force things early, that's when the turnovers come.

Q. Lexie, what was your mindset going into this one knowing you'd have to be a big force inside against a big Boise State team, and just being good on the boards on both sides of the ball?

LEXIE GIVENS: Just to have poise, be aggressive and just play my game.

Q. Lexie, you had a double-double tonight, 10 rebounds, 13 points. I'm sure that's a small consolation compared to not winning the game, but how did you feel about your own performance tonight?

LEXIE GIVENS: I felt like it was good. My teammates, I'm extremely proud of the way we played. I think I can only



play the way I do because of them. So I'm just extremely grateful to have those ladies beside me.

Q. Why do you think it was so difficult to get to the line in some crucial moments today?

AUDREY RODEN: I think they were just letting us play. Honestly, I don't think that's a bad thing, but we just need to be able to finish through contact and through high contests.

LEXIE GIVENS: I agree with that statement. I also think that we also could have maneuvered better when going up because since we know we're not going to get the call, just knowing that the contact will be there when we go up, still finishing through it.

Q. Given you have a short rotation right now was there any pressure to play perfect and try not to foul and sometimes the fouls were called?

LEXIE GIVENS: I think it was always in the back of your mind, but when I got out there, at least, it just felt like there was 10 people on the bench. We were subbing in and out. It didn't really make a difference.

I feel like when we played, it didn't show as if we were only playing with seven.

AUDREY RODEN: I agree. I think we're used to a smaller rotation since we've been practicing with it. We've had to play a couple games with eight. Today we had seven.

But we're used to the small rotation the last couple of weeks. I don't think it was going to affect us too much.

Q. Just that turnover there late with 29 seconds left, how costly was that when you guys had an opportunity down a possession?

LEXIE GIVENS: I don't think it's that costly because there's not just one possession in the game that determines whether we win or lose. There were plays before that could have swung it left or right and there's



plays after that.

Q. Your last games with Nevada. I guess how will you remember your career playing with the silver and blue?

LEXIE GIVENS: I'll remember how thankful I am for everyone and everyone I've played with along my journey, and just all the years of coaching from Amanda and the rest of the coaching staff and everything they've taught me and everything I've learned from Nevada.

AUDREY RODEN: I think just the connections and the people I've met and just coming in every day working hard with my friends by my side.

Q. This was a close game, tough competitive game, one-possession lead at the under-5-minute timeout. Seemed to me like it was almost a duel between Lexie and Tatum on their side. What were you wanting to do in those final five minutes?

AMANDA LEVENS: Just execute and try to create a good shot every time down the floor. And I thought some possessions we did; some possessions we didn't.

It's kind of been our Achilles' heel all year. We have struggled to score and knowing who can get the ball in those situations and really make something happen for us.

I thought our fouling in the last five minutes, I thought they didn't make a field goal in the third quarter and they made four in the fourth quarter. Everything else was free throws.

I thought some of them were just undisciplined fouls by us where we just needed to give space and make them make shots because they weren't making shots.

From a coaching perspective that's frustrating because that's something we really want to do well on defense, and I thought we gave them too many opportunities at the free-throw line.

Q. Some big second-chance buckets, especially in the third quarter. I think you scored 13 points off turnovers off of 12 turnovers. What did you like about your team's ability to do the dirty work?

AMANDA LEVENS: I think that's who we want to be. We want to make teams play ugly. We want to force turnovers. We want to get second-chance opportunities, especially this season we haven't shot the ball well. We don't shoot the 3 well.

Being relentless and going after second and third

opportunities, that's kind of the way we need to play. Although we don't -- we haven't always played that way all season long, I feel like when our team has bought into that and knows who we are we do a good job and we can be right there with anybody. They did a good job of that today.

Q. Seems like your group came out with just a different sense of urgency from the jump today. Did it feel that way to you?

AMANDA LEVENS: Yeah, absolutely, because the last few weeks of the season were pretty rough. When we had some people go down, we just hadn't played well at all.

I thought today -- having the whole week of practice was nice. Like, getting back comfortable, these are the seven that can play, working on things like that with that group in practice. I thought it really refocused us. And I thought we came out and played super hard today.

We were extremely focused. Just the challenges that we've had of being able to score, they're just still there unfortunately.

But I thought the effort, the focus and the energy and the belief that they could win, that was all there. We just didn't do enough.

Q. Just how important was it for your girls to stay locked in even when the shots weren't necessarily falling but to still be able to respond on defense?

AMANDA LEVENS: Yeah, I was really proud of that. I thought for four quarters we battled. Especially with the rebounding, we don't have -- you look at our size compared to their size, and to me, like, just a lot of heart and a lot of effort to make those kind of things happen.

Q. When you're down the one possession there, Lexie said she felt like it wasn't necessarily a big turning point in the game there. But, I guess, what was going through your mind when that happened and what were you hoping to draw up?

AMANDA LEVENS: Well, it's just heartbreaking because you don't know if you would have scored. That's the hard part. And so maybe we execute the play and we don't get a bucket but we will never find out. So it was just tough.

We've got to be able to get the ball in in that situation and execute that pass and then go find out if we can score that or not. So we needed to execute there and we didn't.

Q. How much does it hurt ending the season on this



note, given the toughness that your girls showed today?

AMANDA LEVENS: Like I mentioned, since San Diego State, honestly, it's been really rough just with the injuries that we've had and trying to figure this out. And it's not something I've experienced in my coaching career until this year.

I've seen other teams, it was mainly during COVID, trying to play with seven, trying to play with eight. But I've never been on this side of it. So I think that was a challenge.

But despite that, we talked about not letting that be an excuse and not letting that be a reason for our team.

I was, like, if you think about it, in a game if we have 15 players available, maybe in that game we're only playing seven because of the match-up, and just trying to get them to shift their mindset with that.

But obviously nobody likes losing. So, yes, we're proud of the effort, but still lost the game. That's disappointing.

Q. Some of your younger players, Imbie and Kendra had big buckets. How encouraging is that given the offseason and they'll be back next year?

AMANDA LEVENS: If Kendra could have played the whole season -- she missed the preseason with a broken hand, I think her being able to train consistently I think she's going to be a really good player for us. She just needs repetition and she needs to be able to play through mistakes.

Once she got back healthy with us she didn't have that luxury. You know what I mean? It was like Lexie had it going and Imbie had it going so her window of error was pretty small.

With Imbie, I think she showed a lot of bright spots this season but I think there's a lot of things she can continue to work on. She's a great person and hungry to get better too.

And I thought Dymo, too. I thought she really made huge jumps in her sophomore year, especially with her shooting. She really struggled shooting from the perimeter, and now she's someone who's confident with her pull-up and her 3s. And I think that's something positive to build on.

And we have some redshirts waiting that didn't play this year that we are really excited about that have a lot of experience in our system and I think will really help us improve next year.

Q. Just giving me injuries, but at the beginning of the season, what did you think this group was capable of and where do you feel like kind of that went?

AMANDA LEVENS: Yeah, bringing so many people back -- I think we had six of our top eight scorers come back. Then Kennedy doesn't play and Kiki (phonetic) doesn't play and Izzy is kind of injured throughout the year. I think what we had hoped for and what happened were two different things.

It's really disappointing to have such a bad season, to be honest, in terms of wins and losses.

But I'll tell you, off the court, this is one of the greatest groups I've ever coached. They get along. There's no drama. They care about each other. They care about the right things.

But I think from a basketball standpoint, we have to keep recruiting players to help elevate us and players that are really hungry to come in and really care about winning.

So just overall, it's tough, and we lost a lot of close games this year, and a year ago we won a lot of close games. So being on the other side of it, it's tough because I think we had a lot of high hopes and we were not able to meet those.

Q. You kind of mentioned it a little bit, and obviously it's really early, but are there just a couple of things that come top of mind that, you know, you guys have to get better at next year?

AMANDA LEVENS: We've got to be able to shoot the ball, especially from 3. We didn't shoot over 30 percent as a team this year. Only had two players on our roster shoot over 30 percent. You can't win if you don't make shots.

I feel whoever we recruit, we can get them to defend. We can get them to understand our defensive system of trying to be disruptive and take away people's strengths, but we've got to recruit better scoring. That's something we're really going to try to bring in this spring. We have a good freshman class coming in that we're excited about.

Q. For Audrey and Lexie, playing their last game here, could you touch on that, what they meant to this program, starting and ending?

AMANDA LEVENS: Funny, I've known Audrey since she was a freshman in high school, a little kid. Watching her grow and develop has been really cool to be a small part of that journey and seeing her find her passion with American

Sign Language and what she wants to do beyond basketball, I think that's really -- it's really cool.

And obviously Lexie, watching her transform into a very meek, shy freshman that wouldn't talk to anybody, to becoming a leader of young women and probably a pro if she wants to go play overseas, as long as she wants she's going to have that opportunity.

I think for her, she should feel so proud of herself. She had one Division I offer. Now she can go get paid to play basketball. That's pretty awesome.

We'll miss both of them a lot, but they've been awesome, not only in our program, but in our community. We have a lot of people that look up to them that they've impacted in a positive way.

Q. About today's game, when Audrey is on the bench, when she was in foul trouble there and fouled out, how does that change what you guys were able to do today?

AMANDA LEVENS: I thought to win this game we really needed her to kind of have a big game. For her, when she gets in foul trouble, it really disrupts her rhythm.

I thought in the first half she was scoring well, doing good things for us. Then having to pull her in and out with the fouls, I just think that made it hard for her to get back in the flow of the game.

We definitely missed her. When she's good, we're much better.

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