

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Monday, March 10, 2025

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

UNLV Lady Rebels

Coach Lindy La Rocque

Amarachi Kimpson

Alyssa Brown

Postgame Press Conference



ALYSSA BROWN: I think our mindset was to keep responding. They were going to hit shots. They were hot early and we knew that. If they were going to score we knew we had to come down take care of the ball, get a shot, something that we were really looking for.

Q. For either player, we know KJ didn't have the best shooting night, but the past two games teams have tried to take her away in terms of being a passer. How has that affected the offense for you guys?

AMARACHI KIMPSON: Definitely she's a big part of our offense, especially facilitating, but we just have to keep the mindset and put confidence in her that she can still keep it up. But we have to have our back and stepping it up for her too.

Q. Going off that, Kiara did have a slower start to this game but it felt like once she started hitting those shots down the stretch you all got fired up. It felt like the turning point for that. Just how much fuel does she give you guys when she's able to finally lock in and turn it on?

ALYSSA BROWN: Like you said, she started hitting shots later in the game that we really needed. We knew early on, she was missing some uncharacteristic shots, ones that she usually hits. We have full confidence in her always. We weren't really deflated by it.

We told her to keep shooting and she did. And she started to hit some big shots for us.

Q. What was the message that Coach was relaying to you that inspired you to just kind of shift that momentum?

AMARACHI KIMPSON: Honestly, our toughness. That was a big word today. And she really got into us, like, third and fourth quarter. And it really gave us the fire to come back and gain the lead.

ALYSSA BROWN: I'm sure you heard her from the stands today. We had to play with some toughness. That's what

UNLV - 80, Boise State - 70

LINDY LA ROCQUE: Tremendous credit to Boise State. Gordy is someone that I really admire and how he's coached for a really long time. If I can win as many games as he has in his career, then I will be very happy. He does a tremendous job. His team played so inspired and frankly they played very, very well.

I say that all because then it makes me extremely proud of our group. The resilience, the toughness, the togetherness that it took to pull out this win was tremendous. A lot of things did not go our way today from missed layups to just plays that we normally make, just to step off defensively, got outrebounded. You can kind of go down the line.

But frankly, we had more points. We found a way to win, and I think that's the heart of this team all year long is they find a way.

I had to challenge them late in the game. We hadn't been in this position. And frankly I thought they looked nervous. I had to change it and take that from them. They responded and they went out there and made plays.

Q. Amarachi, a career high 29. What was working for you?

AMARACHI KIMPSON: Honestly, I just come with the energy every game whatever my team needs that's what I'm coming with. I guess it was points today. Career high, good for me.

Q. What was the key in the last four minutes or so to hold Boise State without a field goal?



it came down to. It came down to it didn't matter if you had missed five, six shots before. If your number was called to make a layup or free throw, that's what it took.

Q. How difficult was it to kind of keep your, I guess, focus when the team is hitting 69 percent in that first quarter? It's like, are they ever going to miss a basket?

AMARACHI KIMPSON: Oh, man. I was thinking the same thing. But anyways, I mean, we really have had games like that where it is high scoring in the beginning. So we really just have to keep our calm, be poised. We know that we're going to get it back.

ALYSSA BROWN: I think the biggest thing was just talking in our inner circle. We talked to each other on the court a lot. On those free throws, we took time to get together, talk about it and make sure we were still locked in. It's a game of runs.

Q. You talked about not being in a position like this before but losing a regular-season finale ahead of the Mountain West championship is kind of the way this run started for this group. Kind of how much if at all did you kind of venture back to that? I understand there may not be members on this team with this group. But how much do you tinker with that in terms of this is where this journey began; we can probably do it again?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: That takes a lot of thought to put all those things together that you do. I just try to get the team to win the game today. Obviously I try to rely on my own personal experience of past games that we've played and feel what the team needs.

And so then it's my job to respond emotionally, probably, more than anything to get out of them what they know they want to do but for whatever reason they can't find it themselves.

So I think relying on some of the last, the past experiences is more for me than anything.

Q. That was a pretty fast-paced game, I think especially in the first half. I was wondering, were you happy with that given that they had played a game less than 24 hours ago? And were you thinking, hey, by the fourth quarter, this pace will favor us?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: Along with some of you, I was thinking hopefully they'd miss a shot.

But from a pace standpoint, that's what we wanted. That's

why early some of you are like why didn't I call a timeout in the first quarter because the pace is what we want, we just weren't making the plays. Frankly it was more defensively than anything, giving up 25 points in that first quarter.

So we average over 75 points a game. So scoring 80 is right where we want to be.

Defensively, we've been a lot better in holding people in the 50s. But I'm not interested in slowing the game down, especially like that. I think then it puts so much pressure, even more than I think what we already felt on each possession. Then the shots get even harder.

Our best baskets and most open looks today were in transition. So we were tired as heck. They played a game yesterday and they looked more fresh than we did. But I was screaming that we've got to push the ball.

Q. Earlier you said, I think in your opening remarks, that you missed some shots, you weren't the most efficient team today. But you won the game. You had more points. I want to bring that up for a moment because if for any reason you should end up not winning this tournament -- that could have happened today, right -- you will be one of the nation's biggest bubble teams given the current net ranking. And the net ranking uses this adjusted net efficiency factor. I'm sure you're familiar with it. I'm wondering, do you like that? Do you think that it makes sense for this pre-eminent tool that the NCAA uses, the NET, to be based on efficiency rather than just winning or losing the game?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: Well, there's lots of thoughts there. First off, I would say I agree with you, I think we're very worthy of a tournament bid regardless of the outcome of this tournament. What the NCAA uses as tools and metrics to decide those outcomes are beyond me. I have personal opinions but they don't matter and I don't have a solution. So then it's like why does my opinion also matter.

The NET is a very interesting metric. It has, like, what 37 different things calculated in it. You can go through pick the ones you like and don't like. I think efficiency is important, but maybe not important as wins and losses.

Q. Obviously when it comes to this tournament you have faced all of these teams multiple times throughout the season, in past years as well. You talk about that in your preparation for these games. But from what we saw today, I feel like, could you just kind of emphasis how regardless of how many times you've faced these teams, it's not going to get any easier even with the scouting report that you do have?

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

LINDY LA ROCQUE: Yeah, well, I think you guys saw it today, we're doing something that's really hard, which is winning a lot of basketball games. It's really hard to do. And then you get in a tournament style like this where you've got to win to play the next one and it makes it even harder.

I know from years past we made it look easy especially this first-round game, frankly, where the last three years we've won the first round by an average of 25, 30 points. And that wasn't the case this year. And deservingly so because Boise State played great.

And, again, it's a testament to our league. They're the 8 seed. That team's a very good team, very good -- veteran, well-coached.

This is really hard. I'm not surprised by this game. Did I love of it? No. You know? But I'm not surprised at all.

Q. It was mentioned just inspiring, keeping the confidence in Kiara Jackson during the struggles. And what were your conversations like with her during that time getting her going? And how can you keep her confident moving forward after a game like today?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: I trust Kiara with our program, with the ball in her hands. This is her program. She can go 0-for and she's going to be out there. She's going to be out there.

And, again, it's just using some emotional intelligence and IQ to try to give her what she needs. Honestly I gave her a little bit of space because I know she's going to make the play. I know. I trust her. She trusts me.

After the game, I'm, like, you good? She's like, I'm good, I said I'm glad you got it out of your system because I'm going to you, you're my dog. And I'm going to you whether you like it or not. I know her team feels the same way. It would be more weird if we took her out.

Q. I wanted to ask for some context. They were talking about you yelling at them and "toughness" being a huge word. Even you saw when McKinna Brackens made that last layup, you were shaking her, yelling in her face. Can you talk about the message was you were giving to the team and what that was like, the exchanges?

LINDY LA ROCQUE: They looked a little lethargic, to be honest, in our huddle, in our huddles. And I wasn't going to let myself sleep tonight if I didn't try to change it.

They feed off of me and my energy and what I'm giving them. Sometimes that means, you know, ripping them a new one a little bit and letting them feel that.

And then also like by doing that, infusing the confidence in them, it's, like, so what? So what McKinna? You missed six layups. Then you finally made one. And we needed that one. And you made it. So, so what?

That was a little bit of a message to all of them. And that's toughness because it would be -- oh, put me on the bench; I'm not playing well. It don't work like that. It doesn't work like that.

So that was the message to her, like, so what? You're out there and we need you. And you made that one and we needed it. You've probably heard the rest.

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