

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

Fresno State Bulldogs

Coach Jaime White

Kylee Fox

Mia Jacobs

Postgame Press Conference

Wyoming - 57, Fresno State - 45

JAIME WHITE: We kind of knew what we were in for. I thought we had a good plan going in. I thought we started the game okay first quarter. But then at halftime we felt pretty solid about being able to respond. I thought our zone did a good job until it didn't.

Just hard to score in there. Fertig, she fills up the key. And I thought they've always been a good defensive team. And some of our shots just weren't falling tonight. I think we ran out of gas a little bit late.

Great season. Really proud of these two, especially. Easy to coach them. Easy to work with them. They've given absolutely everything to our program. And I really appreciate them.

And great players, players that have really helped us with our season this year. And nice to be here in the third game and looking forward to getting better next year.

Q. Mia, you had 20 points tonight, especially against, like Coach said, a big, physical, tough defense like Wyoming. What were you seeing, what was working for you?

MIA JACOBS: Just trying to see the defense was either sagging off or playing gaps and trying to attack the open side or trying to crash the boards and keep moving.

Q. Kylee, you had five points last night. You get seven pretty early tonight. What were you seeing early on?

KYLEE FOX: I thought I did a good job attacking well and



being aggressive early. And once I hit that lay in I knew I could hit the three.

Q. What makes Allyson Fertig such a hard guard?

MIA JACOBS: She keeps the ball up really high, long arms and legs. She uses her elbows to wrap around you. It's hard to guard even. If we're sending two she does a good job using her pivots and things like that too.

Q. After such a good shooting performance last night, how do you as a team respond from outside the arc dealing with a slower start?

KYLEE FOX: I thought we did a pretty good job defensively trying to get that going, like with a bunch of steals we had early help side. As our shots weren't falling, we knew we needed to get that energy defensively instead of trying to force it.

Q. How tough is it for you to game plan against someone like Allyson Fertig?

JAIME WHITE: You've got to have a couple of options. And to be honest, I thought our post player did a good job, Holly. You choose to front her, they got the lob. We went three-quarter, we came from the backside. The funniest thing is you've got 5'5" Taija back there, and she actually did a good job tying the ball up and getting a jump ball. But they do a good job.

And their team makes them better, right? I thought Pedersen really hurt us when we went back to man. She gets inside and is able to score over people. Couple people we weren't necessarily expecting knocked it down.

But that's how they won. That's why they're No. 2. In fact, they probably should be tied for first because they just -- everybody steps up.

She does a great job. I think they're tough. They work hard. And their defense is probably underrated. They are a really good defensive team. That's not just because Fertig is in the middle of the paint.

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Q. In that similar vein, only four players on the score sheet for you tonight. It was a little more varied last night. What kind of challenges does that present for you?

JAIME WHITE: Yeah, I think it was physical. I think Wyoming plays physical. I thought there were times when we got open shots. But then there was times when we really needed to get to the rim or finish at the rim.

I thought we had some layups and some looks at the rim, we just didn't finish them. I think you go in there and you're kind of wondering where she is. She's a good blocker, Fertig.

So I would have liked to see us get to the basket a little bit more, maybe get out in transition a little bit more.

Q. What makes you most proud of this team when you look back on the season you've had, especially in this tournament?

JAIME WHITE: I mean, every team has been through adversity. After the first couple of games, we lost Taija to an injury. And then so we didn't have her. So we didn't really have our starting point guard that we were planning on.

And Saga stepped in, was able to run the point. And Denae was able to run the point. And then Denae got hurt. It is basketball. And everybody has that on every team.

But everybody kept coming and playing and bringing it and staying together. Obviously Mia was a big part of that, of the offense, especially. But we just really couldn't have done it, like, Mariah had some big nights and was really able to score for us. Saga had some great moments.

Denae, we really missed her. She's actually our second-leading scorer up until she got hurt. That's just unfortunate. It's a bummer. But she's young. And hopefully we can keep the momentum going.

And we are one of the younger teams. I said that last night. But just not having the fifth-year seniors, not having a lot of seniors in general and/or kids that have been in our program, I think it does help when you've played together multiple years. That's my encouragement for everybody to just keep playing together and get better every year.

Q. You guys finished the season with a 19-15 record, sixth in the Mountain West, a deep playoff run. How would you see the season?

JAIME WHITE: We just needed one more for the big 20. Really proud of our kids. I thought our preseason was good. We had a mixture of everything. We played a UCLA, a USC. We had a gritty win against Tennessee Martin in Hawaii.

We had a lot of variety. And each game made us better. We did preseason exhibitions in our community. We just wanted to take every moment.

And we had eight new kids. So those new kids were integrated and integrated quickly. And just really proud of them.

It's hard to find a new home and mesh and get to know each other and buy into the program that you're at. And I really am proud and happy our players were able to do that.

Q. From your perspective, what's it like seeing the team just grow together this season?

JAIME WHITE: It's why we do our jobs. We love to develop. We love to win, but more than that, we love to help our student-athletes get through this weird time of their life and help them because we've done it. And hopefully we can help them and inspire them to be better people and obviously better basketball players.

Q. All week you've been talking about how having a first-round game is not a bad thing. Might even be an advantage for the second round or the quarterfinals. And you kind of proved that last night. But was playing a third game in three days a bridge too far?

JAIME WHITE: I thought we ran out of gas. And especially against a team as physical and really taxing to us that Wyoming was. Obviously it would have been nice to have another healthy guard in Denae and be able to get her in there.

But I thought the kids that played, they played hard. It was unfortunate that we kind of ran out of gas at the end. Maybe that was something to do with our shooting percentage and not being able to knock those shots down. You can't change that. You'd much rather be here today.

Great experience for them. And it's funny, I told them, you know, basketball fills you up one way or the other. Last night we were on top of the world. And today we're filled with sorrow and love and hope and respect for our seniors. So as long as you have it make you better, then I think we can't go wrong.

Q. I'm sure you're aware of the results from the earlier



game today, even though you were preparing for your own game. I wonder if you want to take the opportunity to give a plug for a two-bid Mountain West Conference to the NCAA Tournament.

JAIME WHITE: Well, yeah, absolutely. I mean, UNLV has been solid all year. And they have day in and day out come out and, I think, just been flawless.

It's a bummer that we don't have an opportunity -- hopefully we would -- but I think the league and our coaches are all doing everything they can to get more bids and maybe this is the year for that.

I know Lindy has done everything she can to put her team in a situation. She does a great job. Her team, very talented. And at the same time, I think -- Stacie's done a great job, too. And obviously Heather.

So great coaches in this league. And it's great to see them be so successful. So hopefully we do, or three or four, maybe four. Let's get four teams in.

Q. What was the biggest difference you saw from tonight compared to the first two games of the tournament?

JAIME WHITE: Honestly, scoring and multiple people being able to score and being able to run more of our offense. I thought Wyoming did a great job stifling some of that, just putting Mia in a position where she wasn't comfortable.

I didn't think we were able to shoot the 3 like we had. Gosh, I just wanted to start the game like we started our Colorado State game. But it was opposite. So I looked up there, it was 7-2, them; Colorado State game it was 7-2 us.

So mostly offensive. We really needed to score. And then obviously not just Fertig, but you have to guard Fertig and that changes how you guard everybody else. And they take advantage of it.

Q. A deep run like this with a young team, what does that do for your confidence going forward?

JAIME WHITE: It's exciting. It's so great to have those young kids and have them have such good energy and talent and hope.

We've seen them grow. I just told them we've seen them grow so much just since -- some of them for the last two years, but even since the summer. So hopefully we can continue that and keep working towards being back here.