

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Regional Semifinal: Oregon vs Louisville

Sunday, March 28, 2021

San Antonio, Texas, USA

Alamodome - Alamo

## Louisville Cardinals

## Dana Evans

### Sweet 16 Postgame Media Conference



Louisville 60, Oregon 42

THE MODERATOR: We're excited to be joined by Dana. Congratulations on an outstanding game. Start us out with an opening comment about the game.

DANA EVANS: I thought we came out today ready to play. I thought the intensity was a lot better. We picked the ball up early. The defensive pressure was everything. We were able to hold a good Oregon team to 14 points in the first half. That started with defense.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Can you talk about how good it felt to have the game you had today. Did the nerves kind of increase as you go round by round throughout this tournament?**

DANA EVANS: Well, I would say no. I'm a senior now. This is what I'm ready for and I'm prepared for it. I'm excited. Obviously we got a good Stanford team that we'll face Tuesday. I know our coaches will have us ready.

Nerves, not really now that I'm a senior.

**Q. You looked like you had a lot of fun today early on, long before a teammate was throwing you a sweet behind-the-back pass. You talked the other day about needing to help your team in every way, if you couldn't score early, weren't hitting. Did you think about that today? You missed your first four or five shots. Were you thinking, Hey, I just need to have fun?**

DANA EVANS: Yes. My dad and Coach Walz always talk to me about smiling throughout the game, having fun,

letting the game come to me. I think I started a lot with that today.

I didn't focus on my shot. I focused on defense and getting my teammates going. That just opened everything up for me.

**Q. On the broadcast they mentioned Asia Durr called you sometime before the game. I know you two are really close. What did that mean to you to hear from her? What did she say to kind of keep your spirits up?**

DANA EVANS: Well, Asia, she's just a great person all around. She wants to see everyone do well. She sent me a text. She knew I've been struggling, not really playing like myself. She sent me a nice text just telling me to relax. Let the game come to me, not overthink it. She told me to do a lot of form shooting and just let the game come to me.

I took her words and it worked.

**Q. You did not score in the first quarter. Elizabeth got that rebound, I think an offensive rebound. It seemed like kind of an easier bucket that just got you going. When that first one finally went in, did you feel a sense of relief, a little pressure off?**

DANA EVANS: Yes, I did. I did. Finally seeing the ball go through for the first time in the second quarter got me pretty much going. Getting something easy around the basket instead of settling for threes kind of helped me get going.

**Q. You mentioned the defensive intensity tonight. What do you think made the biggest difference for you all on that end of the floor, not only with that but on the rebounding as well?**

DANA EVANS: Well, I would say we came out with a sense of urgency. We didn't want to get down 18 points, like we did last game. We just couldn't let that happen to a good Oregon team. We just made sure that we kept our foot on the gas. We defended. We wanted to make them start their offense higher than they wanted to because they had two bigs that were bigger than our bigs. We just

wanted to make it hard for them to get entry passes and pressure the ball, so they couldn't get a lot of easy high-lows and a lot of easy looks early.

**Q. Did you feel like it was kind of a matter of time before your slump ended? Having it occur in a game of this magnitude, how much better does that feel, satisfying?**

DANA EVANS: Yeah, I knew it would end the right time, when I needed it to. My teammates, they didn't need me to do what I did tonight the other games. Everybody has been stepping up. I think everything happens for a reason. My teammates were able to get their confidence and get going. Now that I feel like I'm back to my normal self, I feel like we're going to be just fine.

**Q. What is it like being the only ACC team left in the tournament?**

DANA EVANS: Well, I'll give credit to our conference. I think we have a really tough conference. I don't think we get enough credit because a really tough Georgia Tech team and a NC State team were able to make it to the Sweet 16, which is big.

It just shows how good our conference is, I would say.

**Q. You tied a career high with 29 points. They cut it down to six points early in the fourth quarter. You had seven points right there off the bat, including two behind the arc. Talk about that stretch.**

DANA EVANS: Well, I missed a free throw. Mykasa got the rebound, which is something she do a lot for this team. Then I was able to hit my second three. Without Mykasa getting that rebound, that wouldn't have happened.

It starts with everything little thing that Mykasa does, whether it's diving on the floor for a ball, getting offensive rebounds. She just makes it happen for us, she gets us easy looks.

**Q. Obviously the broadcast ESPN, they were mentioning Oregon had some tall players, you guys had a lot of speed. How did you take advantage with your offense today against Oregon's tall players?**

DANA EVANS: Well, I would just say we pushed the ball. We sped the tempo up. We just got the ball movement, get a lot of ball movement, keep getting in reverse, attack off the bounce, try to get everyone open shots. I think we had a good night shooting the ball, I would say. We were just taking good shots.

**Q. There's a lot of talk about offense. Defensively you guys have gotten better every game of the tournament, holding teams to a really low score. How big is that considering the teams you got coming up, your ability to generate turnovers? Is this team playing its best defense right now?**

DANA EVANS: I think we are playing our best defense right now. I think it's starting to come together. We're able to help each other, get in the passing lanes, pressure the ball. We know at this time of year you can't make many mistakes. You got to play defense. That's what wins championships.

So we just got to stay focused on the defensive end and the offense will come.

**Q. You talked about needing to trust what you're able to do. How hard is that at this stage, if you will? How good does it feel, you said you knew it was going to come, but for it to come now before you go to the Elite 8?**

DANA EVANS: I think it was perfect timing. Like I said, I think God does everything for a reason. I will never question Him. I just keep believing and trusting Him, trusting in my coaches and teammates. We got this far because of our coaches and because of this team. I think we have a really talented team.

Yeah, we still got some more games to play.

**Q. Probably since September you talked about the goals you've had this year. You want to win a national championship. For you to have a game like this, get this team back to its third Elite 8 in the last four NCAA tournaments, what does that mean to you?**

DANA EVANS: It means a lot. I would just say my teammates trust me a lot. They don't put a lot of pressure on me. They always have my back no matter what I'm doing out there. They always make sure they tell me what I need to correct or what I need to do. I listen to them.

Just having great teammates like that just makes me excited to lead this team.

**Q. You talked about you still have more games left to play. How do you turn the page so quickly, after especially a dominating performance like this?**

DANA EVANS: Well, I would just say today, it's already been done. We got to move on. We got to focus on this next game. We got a tough Stanford team, well-coached Stanford team we have to get ready for, prepare for. What

happened today is in the past now. We just got to get ready for this next one.

**Q. We've talked about Mykasa, a lot of things she has done. That play at the end of the game is probably going to end up on SportsCenter. Did you think there was any chance where she was that ball was coming to you?**

DANA EVANS: Honestly, I knew she was about to do something. I just didn't know exactly what it was going to be. She doesn't seem to surprise any of us, the things she do for us. Her basketball IQ is extremely high, so I think it will be on SportsCenter.

**Q. You played Stanford in the Sweet 16 in 2018. How much have you paid attention to them this season or have you been mostly consumed with what you are doing? Do you have any thoughts about facing them?**

DANA EVANS: Like I said, they're a really good, good team. They're coached by a really good coach. So we just got to prepare and we got to focus like we've been doing in the past, just prepare for them as much as we would do any other team.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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