

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Regional Final: Louisville vs Stanford

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

San Antonio, Texas, USA

Alamodome - Alamo

Louisville Cardinals

Dana Evans

Elite 8 Postgame Media Conference



Stanford - 78, Louisville - 63

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us for the post-game press conference featuring University of Louisville. We're joined by student-athlete Dana Evans.

Q. Good evening, Dana. I guess, if you could just talk about the third quarter defense that Stanford displayed that kind of shut you all down and how frustrating was that for you?

DANA EVANS: I would say we did miss some open shots. I give them credit, they played good defense. We had some shots that we just didn't capitalize on, some layups we just didn't make, some things just didn't fall in that third quarter like they were in the first half.

Q. Dana, the fourth quarter, like you said, nothing fell. The first half was almost like perfect for you guys. Was there a whole lot of difference other than things fell authorize them and they didn't fall for you in the second half? Was there a whole lot of other difference?

DANA EVANS: The difference was No. 11 coming in the game. She came in, and she was 6'6", 3 for 3 from three, and she had four assists. So she came in, and she changed the game for them. It was some assignments we didn't capitalize on, some things we didn't talk on, communicate on, like we were in the first half.

I feel like they came out third quarter with just urgency, and we just didn't match that intensity.

Q. I don't know if you can put into words, I know it's soon after the loss, but just what your time in Louisville has meant and what being able to lead this team back to this Elite Eight. I know you wanted to go

further, but just what this has meant to you?

DANA EVANS: My four years here were a roller coaster. My first two years were great. My freshman year, I went to the Final Four. Sophomore year we fell short in the Elite Eight. Junior year, we didn't have a postseason. I feel like my senior year was everything I asked for except for a National Championship.

I've had a lot of highs and lows here, a lot of times where I kind of wanted to try something else, but I never gave up. My parents always taught me to never give up and continue to fight. And Coach Walz pushed me. My whole career here, he's still pushing me as a senior.

I would just say I grew as a person, as a player. I worked on so many different parts of my game, the mental part of my game. Vanessa Shannon was definitely helped me grow in that aspect. So coming here, I've learned a lot about myself, and I've become a better person. So it's helped me.

Q. At the end of the third quarter, they had made their big run, and it seemed like you guys still had the lead. It seemed at that point like you had kind of taken the punch. Did you feel like at that point pretty confident that you could come out, and it was going to go down to the wire in the fourth quarter from there?

DANA EVANS: Yeah, we did get their best shot. I just tried to keep everyone calm and everyone poised. We knew they were going to go on a run. They were a great team. We needed to be prepared and we were able to bounce back, but I don't think we were able to bounce back from that run, and they just kept expanding on it.

Q. Sorry for the tough loss tonight. What is the future going to bring for you after four years of Louisville? Are you going to move on to play the pros or take some time to think about that?

DANA EVANS: Yeah, I'm going to go on and play and enter my name into the WNBA Draft.

Q. Dana, you made a three to put U of L up 14 early in

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the third quarter, and they went on a run 17-2, scored on eight straight possessions. What happened during that stretch? Did you feel like their rebounding advantage may have come into play?

DANA EVANS: Yeah, they definitely was crashing the offensive glass hard, and we weren't able to come up with those rebounds. We got them to miss first shots, but we didn't rebound the ball, and that kind of just expanded their lead.

Q. Dana, you said something a minute ago about the future for you. Obviously, you left -- where this program was when you came in is totally different than where it is now. It was the same way with Asia, same with Shoni, same with Myisha. Where do you expect them to go moving forward as you leave the program and leave the players behind?

DANA EVANS: I have really high expectations for them. They'll have a great team next year. A lot of people were saying Louisville was just one player, and I don't think that's true at all. Last I checked, I wasn't playing good in the ACC Tournament. We came up short one point, and I didn't have Dana games the first two games here, but we still found a way to win.

I think the team will be great. I think Coach Walz will have them ready for the season. They're hard workers. I think they'll be back in the gym and ready to get things going for next year.

Q. Dana, kind of off that, what did you see -- that ACC Tournament looked like a changing moment for a lot of players on this team. What did you see from them that gives you confidence over the last couple weeks that you think that they'd be able to kind of lead this program to continue the success they've had?

DANA EVANS: There's a lot of players I could name. I'm going to start first with Ahlana Smith. She came in, gave us great minutes, a huge steal, a huge pullup. I think she's going to be great for them next year. She has the confidence.

Haley, that speaks for itself. She's been playing really well. They're going to have her back. She'll have more experience.

Kianna Smith, that's a girl I know will be back in the gym getting ready for next year. Hard worker, great player. Mykasa Robinson, everyone knows she'll put the work in and get better and continue to grow as a player. Olivia Cochran, she had a great freshman year. She's going to continue to get better and develop on her name. Norika

Konno is -- everybody had continue to work on their game, but I think they're great players, and they're going to find ways to get better and help contribute to the team next year.

Q. Dana, you mentioned some games that weren't Dana games. This was a Dana game, and I know it's hard to think about after a loss, and there's nothing you can do, but to walk out having played the way you played and fought, do you think this team pretty much gave everything it had and just may not have played their best but effort was all there?

DANA EVANS: The effort was there. The effort was never the question with this team. We fought. We did. They came out. We started hitting shots in the second half. That's what made it harder for us to go on a run. This team is -- this was a great team.

I had a great senior year. Some things didn't go our way, but I want to thank those girls. I want to thank our staff and everybody that's helped us get to this point because this wasn't an easy year.

I could only imagine coming here as a freshman and having to go through a COVID year. It was different for everyone, but I think we adjusted well. I think we fought hard. We adjusted to a lot of things being changed. It is what it is.

Q. Dana, you guys played so hard in the first half to be able to get that 12-point lead. Did you guys kind of maybe hit a little wall in that third quarter as far as it didn't look like you guys had the same amount of legs in some of those shots?

DANA EVANS: No, they just made shots. I thought we did the same. They got a lot of offensive rebounds and put-backs, but we still played hard. We still played with energy. The difference was them making shots.

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