

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

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

San Antonio, Texas, USA

Alamodome - Alamo

Stanford Cardinal

Ashten Prechtel

Elite 8 Postgame Media Conference



Stanford - 78, Louisville - 63

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the NCAA post-game press conference featuring the Stanford Cardinal. We'll begin starting with student-athlete Ashten Prechtel.

Q. Congrats on the win. You came off the bench, and you provided a huge spark for your team and kind of changed the energy of the game. What was your mindset coming into the game tonight, and just how special is this moment for you to advance to the Final Four with this group of women?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: It's so special. I mean, coming out of halftime in the locker room, we just wanted to start competing. We had a rough first half. So like as a team, our mindset was just to compete in the second half and to come out to play.

Q. Hi, Ashten. What did you guys say to each other at halftime? Did you guys have to talk to Ki at all? She looked like she was really pressing in the first half, and she seemed like a different player in the second half.

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: I mean, we just told Ki to keep shooting, and that's what she did. Coming out of the second half, we're like, we're going to play like we're down 20, and we're going to come out of this game, and we're going to be happy with how we played in the second half regardless of the outcome.

Q. Coach always talks about there being a conductor in Kiana and a soloist. How fun was it to be the soloist tonight?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: It felt good to come out in the second half and to play well. The win, it was just great to get the win tonight, and that's all you could ask for.

Q. And then with Kiana really stepping up in the second half, how important is it to have her being consistent?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: I mean, Kiana is a huge part to our team, and she's a huge leader and someone we all look up to. She's someone that we always trust to play well. When she's not playing well, we trust her to get back to it. That's what she did tonight, and we kept faith in her. She came out and was ready in the second half.

Q. Tara, we know, is always so steady. She doesn't panic. I'm sure she didn't rip into you guys at halftime or anything. Can you tell us what did happen in the locker room when she came in? Did she just remind you guys of how good you are and how deep you are and tell you to calm down basically?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: I mean, I'd say she ripped into us a little bit. Our defense wasn't great. They were hitting from three. So she basically the message coming out of halftime was that we needed to compete in the second half if we wanted to be in this game. I think we took that to heart.

Q. Ashten, you had a chance to get a good look on the bench what was going on and what Louisville was doing to be effective in that first half. Did you see like, hey, if I'm a big, but if I get outside, they're not going to think about guarding me in those threes?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: I mean, I -- I don't know if I like knew whether or not they were going to guard me yet. Most teams guard me differently from the rest of our posts, but I just knew, if I was open, I was going to take those shots, and I was going to just try to play and do my best.

Q. You had 16 points in the second half. Of course you didn't play in the first half. Could you feel the momentum change in the shots that you were making, the seven points in the third, and especially with that three-point shot to start the fourth quarter? Could you feel the team feeding off of you?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: For sure. I don't think it was just me. We all started playing better. We were hitting shots and getting stops on defense. I think collectively we did start to feel that momentum, and we tried to keep it going, and I think we were able to do that throughout the third and fourth quarters.

Q. So this may go down as one of the biggest moments in Stanford history, so while this is going on and everything was changing momentum-wise, what were you feeling? And did you realize how big of a moment this was?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: Yeah, like it's a huge deal to be able to go into the final four. So like playing in this game when we were down 12 at halftime, I hadn't thought about that it could be our last game before, and that's when I started to think about it. I didn't want that, like we don't want that. We want to stay here for the long haul. Yeah, I mean, that, I think, has pushed us, and that thought that we didn't want to go home, that we wanted to stay here in San Antonio was a big factor for us.

Q. How tough was it to sit in that first half and watch what was going down? Were you starting to get nervous?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: For sure. It was tough to not be able to play in the first half. I was nervous. Like I said earlier, we didn't want to go home. So coming out of halftime, it was -- there was urgency definitely to how we were going to play.

Q. In any sport, most teams, when they pull off a big comeback, the players will say or the coach, we never had a doubt. We knew we were going to do it. But I always think that perhaps people really do have doubts. Did you guys have doubts late second quarter, early third quarter?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: I don't think we ever -- I don't think we had doubts. I think that we were just more determined and that we wanted to come out as hard as we could in the second half.

There's a fire alarm going off right now, so I'm going to have to go.

THE MODERATOR: There's an interruption with the fire drill. I'll get back to you as soon as I have more information.

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: I think we're good for now.

THE MODERATOR: Let's go ahead and try to start

anyway. Steve, could you finish with your question.

Q. Ashten, I think you had finished. You were saying that you guys didn't really have doubts, correct?

ASHTEN PRECHTEL: Yeah. No, we just were determined to come out and to finish out the game as best as we could.

THE MODERATOR: We're going to have to end this press conference. We've been told we have to evacuate. I apologize for the inconvenience. For the safety of students and teams and employees, we have to evacuate the building.

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