

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Women's Final Four

Friday, April 2, 2021

San Antonio, Texas, USA

South Carolina Gamecocks

Zia Cooke

Postgame Media Conference

Stanford 66, South Carolina 65

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please, for Zia.

Q. I know tonight didn't end the way you wanted it to. What has this team and journey meant to you?

ZIA COOKE: It meant a lot. Mainly just because I know how hard we work. We were right there. It's tough.

But I know we going to come back stronger and harder next year.

Q. You see both of those shots go up in the final seconds. Any doubt in your mind one of them was going down?

ZIA COOKE: Yes, I definitely thought Brea had a good look. We got a good steal. It was in our hands, but we just came up short.

Q. Thinking back to the last play, how long is that going to stick with you? How much is that going to motivate you guys going into next year?

ZIA COOKE: I mean, it's going to stick because it was a big game. Final Four. It's a dream to be here. So it's just going to motivate us. Like Coach said, we're going to work on the little things, what we can do better to get here next year and come out with the victory.

Q. What have you learned about yourself overcoming adversity this season?

ZIA COOKE: I've learned a lot. With COVID, just things aren't normal, so I've learned a lot.

Q. I know the season just ended, but what is the one thing you can take from yourself into next season to



make yourself a better player? What one big thing do you need to work on?

ZIA COOKE: Right now I can't tell you. I just want to come in as a better player, a better teammate, do everything I can to help my teammates out. I just want to be a better me.

Q. Before that final quarter, seems like you showed a lot of mental toughness getting yourselves back in that game. How proud are you of the fight you showed?

ZIA COOKE: I wasn't surprised or anything like that because that's what we do. We're a hard-working team. Everyone wants to win. We had it in our eyes. We wanted it. We just came up short.

Q. Knowing how much of this team is coming back next season, what is the biggest thing y'all learned in your first exposure to the tournament that's going to help you get over the hump next year?

ZIA COOKE: It's a lot of games. We have to make sure we keep ourselves healthy, drink a lot of water, do the little things to keep our bodies right so we can go out there and play.

Q. You seemed to get good looks shooting the ball tonight. What are some takeaways that you probably wish you could have had back from tonight's game?

ZIA COOKE: The turnovers. I had a few missed boxouts. I gave up a few three-point shots, yup.

Q. About 1:30 to play, that was a turnover where it seemed like it may have hit the Stanford player. What did you see on that play?

ZIA COOKE: It hit her foot. They didn't call the jump ball. That was it.

Q. I just wanted to ask, what did you say to Aliyah? Did you have a chance to talk to her after the missed shot at the end? Do you plan on saying anything to her?



ZIA COOKE: I plan on saying something to all my teammates. Just keep them encouraged.

THE MODERATOR: Zia, thank you for your time this evening.

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