

March 30, 2014



An interview with:

**COACH WASHINGTON
ARIEL EDWARDS
TALIA EAST**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Penn State head coach Coquese Washington and student-athletes, Talia East and Ariel Edwards. Coach Washington has chosen not to make an opening statement, so we'll take questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Ariel, will you talk about the run that Stanford had in the first half? I think it ended up being 14-0. You guys were up at that point and things turned really quickly. What happened there?

ARIEL EDWARDS: They got out in transition a good amount. Chiney was running the floor very well, and they found her a lot in transition and they did a good job of crashing the offensive boards. Yeah, they did a very good job of that.

Q. Talia, how was it playing against Chiney? Was she what you expected?

TALIA EAST: She's a great player, I think. She did a good job with what her teammates gave her. I mean, my main goal was to make it physical and difficult for her, and I think I did that. She made some tough shots, but I was just trying to make it difficult for her.

Q. You guys were able to start out the game getting some things going inside, and it seemed to dry up a little bit. Did they change something defensively that made it harder for you guys to get going?

TALIA EAST: I'm not sure if they started doubling a little bit, but the paint got a little bit crowded.

Q. Ariel, can you talk a little bit about being aggressive, especially toward the end of the first half and in the second half trying to get your offense going?

ARIEL EDWARDS: Well, my coaches kept telling me that they needed me to be aggressive this game. After I got a little bit of the jitters out, I felt like I settled in a little bit and was able to be more aggressive. My teammates definitely helped me out. They found me when I was open and they played great today, so all the credit goes to them.

Q. Talia, had you seen Maggie get frustrated like that at any time this season?

TALIA EAST: I don't think she was necessarily frustrated. We all kind of -- I think it was jitters. We all were a little bit jittery, but I don't think she was necessarily frustrated.

Q. Ariel, will you talk a little bit in the second half trying to get back in the game? You guys couldn't get it under double digits. Was it a matter of just not being able to put enough shots together to get some momentum and stops at the other end?

ARIEL EDWARDS: I would say shots more than defensive end. They did a great job of executing their game plan and running their offense all the way through. We were trading baskets for a while, and we know that's not the recipe to win a game. So that's what I would say.

Q. Talia, can you just talk about what you guys, what the game plan was to disrupt their triangle offense? It looked like you guys were doing a lot of bumping in the second half and the refs didn't help you. But it looked like you wanted to be physical with them in terms of your cutting.

TALIA EAST: That was part of it, to be physical and kind of disrupt them a little bit. But sometimes calls don't go your way and that's okay. That's the way it works. But they did a good job of executing their game plan. It didn't really fluster them at all. They came out and played well.

Q. Ariel, Talia, talk about how difficult it was to come in and play on Stanford's home court and try to take the crowd out of it?

TALIA EAST: I think Stanford, you know, it wasn't -- I don't think the crowd was swaying any point in the game. They were loud, but we've experienced things like that throughout playing in the Big Ten.

ARIEL EDWARDS: This is definitely a difficult place to play. We knew they were going to use that energy from the crowd and come out hard and they did. They used that energy throughout the whole game. As I said before, they played very well today, and all the credit goes to them.

Q. Talia, you guys talked a lot about defense before the game. How tough was it to come out and give up 44 in the first half?

TALIA EAST: I mean, I agree with what Ariel said, we were trading baskets. You know, I think both teams getting the jitters out in the beginning of the game and they kind of got a stretch in the beginning of the first half, but you can't do that. We tweaked some things in the second half, but it was a hard deficit to come back from.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies, thank you very much. We'll open it up for questions for Coach Washington.

Q. Coach, will you talk about the defensive job that you thought they did on Maggie, and how much it had to do with what they did defensively, and how much had to do with Maggie?

COACH WASHINGTON: I thought they did an outstanding job on her. She didn't get very many clean, open looks. She put the ball on the floor. They ran secondary and tough defenders at her. Then they just made her take tough shots all night.

Q. Coach, aside from the defense on Maggie, what went wrong for your team? If you could sum up.

COACH WASHINGTON: I thought offensively we didn't exhibit enough patience.

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Once we got down a little bit, I thought we shot too quickly and we didn't really make them work enough on the defensive end of the floor. That allowed them to get out in transition a little bit to get some easy baskets and go on a couple of the runs that they went on.

Q. Coach, did Mikaela Ruef show you anything on both ends of the floor that maybe were a step up from what you'd seen on tape from this woman?

COACH WASHINGTON: I wouldn't say she showed anything that was a step up. But I thought she played well off of Ogwumike today. She was very aggressive. I mean, she's always aggressive on the backboard, but she was really aggressive on the offensive end in terms of looking for a shot. As we knew coming into the game, she's a fantastic passer, and she did some things that way. I just thought she was pretty aggressive.

Q. You probably saw what you were expecting from Ogwumike, but how much did the other kids in their lineup hurt you guys today?

COACH WASHINGTON: Well, I thought we let Orrange get loose too much. She's a really good, 15-foot jump shooter, and I thought she got in the paint a little bit too much for our liking. Some of that was because of transition. Some of that was some defensive breakdowns in our help rotation. But coming to the game, we knew that. That's why they're an outstanding team and they've won 30-plus games. It's not just Chiney Ogwumike; they've got other players that are capable of stepping up and making big plays. I thought Orrange did that. I thought Mikaela did that. I thought Thompson hit some big and timely shots. When you've got contributions coming from a number of different people it's tough to stop a run and make a run of your own.

Q. Is Ogwumike the best player you've played against all year? Do you like her as a player?

COACH WASHINGTON: I love her as a player. But we've played against quite a few good teams this year, and we've played against some really good players. I'll leave that up to other people to rank where she is. I know she's outstanding and she's an All American for a reason.

Q. Coach, can you talk about that first half Stanford run. You went on a 7-0 run and they answered immediately, and obviously pushed it out even further? What was going on? You guys went to the zone?

COACH WASHINGTON: Yeah, we had a couple of defensive breakdowns. They got two breakaway lay-ups, got some uncontested shots and then they hit the three in the corner. I think those plays were somewhat deflating. You know, we seemed to never really recover from those three plays in particular. I think they got a lot of confidence once they went on that run. Or I think they settled down and settled into the game and played with a lot of confidence from then on out.

Q. What did you think of Edwards play in this ballgame?

COACH WASHINGTON: I think she played like she's been playing the last ten, 12 games of the season. When she's really aggressive and attacking the basket, you know, and her mid-range game. You know, she's a tough cover, and I thought she played really well on the offensive end and gave us some big shots.

Q. You won't get out of here without us asking about playing on Stanford's home floor. What impact do you think it had on what you did and what they did?

COACH WASHINGTON: I'm not in favor of it. I think it's an extremely difficult task to act. I'm glad the NCAA has gone back to neutral sites in the regional next year moving forward. I think that's important for our game. But that's the path that we had at hand today, and I think it's on one hand a good experience for our kids to come out and play in Maples Pavilion and play on this campus and have this kind of game. But in terms of the competitive equity for the NCAA Tournament, I'm glad we're going back to neutral sites for the regionals.

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