

Penn State Women's Basketball
Carolyn Kieger Postgame Press Conference
vs. Rider University – November 10, 2019

Opening Statement

A: Thanks everyone for being here. I, first of all, want to thank all of the veterans that were here today. I know it's Military Appreciation Day and we absolutely appreciate everything that they've done and for coming out to our game. I wish we would have had a better performance for them, but we are absolutely appreciative of them and their service. Secondly, I want to give my props to Rider. They absolutely deserve that win. They out-played us, they out-hearted us, they out-hustled us. They absolutely had more juice than us and that's on me as a coach to fix. But I'm very disappointed in our energy and our efforts. We got a lot of stuff that we need to work on and we need to fix and we have a lot of bad habits that we need to break. But I will say this, there's pieces and this is not going to define us. It's not going to stop us. It's going to be a learning experience and we will definitely learn from this. We will watch the film and we will grow. I know we have a young team and these are absolutely great lessons for the future."

Q: Coach, when the game started it seemed like you guys were in high-pressure, full-court defense, and then you backed off of it. What did you see in the beginning that made you think you shouldn't run that, and what made you change it?

A: That was our game plan going in, to pressure full-court, and to blitz ball screens, trap ball screens, and be aggressive as we can, but it's hard to do when you're doing it at 50% effort. We had to back up because the team wasn't doing it to our full head of steam. When you're trying to press or trying to trap and you're not doing it with all effort, you're going to get scored on, which is what was happening to us. In the second-half when we decided to play, and we decided to get up there and press and do what we were supposed to do I thought our team did a great job making that run, but at that point it was too little, too late.

Q: Coach, correct me if you disagree with this, but I thought you were getting good quality shots for the most part. In general, how much is shot making going to play into this team reaching its ceiling this season?

A: Great point. We have to learn how to shoot a higher percentage. That's something we're struggling with right now obviously from the three-point line, even in the paint. We need to get the post more touches. Lauren Ebo needs to touch the ball more inside, so does Alisia Smith. We have to get more easy buckets inside, and we have to play inside-outside. The biggest thing I'm concerned with right now is our assist to turnover ratio. We need our young guards to learn quickly how to set people up, and how to get in there and penetrate and pitch and draw two and dump off and find the open man. They're working through it. It is going to be a work in progress but as Lauren [Ebo] said we have to learn quick. We have to learn faster than we are right now and that's our job as a staff to fix and watch film and show them and put them in positions where they are going to be successful. I think the hard part for them too is they're learning a new offense, they're learning a new coach, there's a lot of newness for them right now, and that's not an excuse by any means but I think it is the reason and that is what we have to work through.

Q: Coach, what do you think led to the lack of effort that you pointed to tonight?

A: I don't know. That's the million-dollar question. If I can figure that out I think we're going to be a much better team, and trust me I will. We're going to get that down, but that's two slow starts in a row now. That comes with leadership and I think that where our team needs to understand. I think our staff has a lot of energy and our team needs to learn to use that as fuel and have it be contagious. Right now I think we're shell-shocked and we need to learn what I mean by bringing the juice every day and bringing that contagious energy and that effort and once we learn that I think you're going to see a different team, I'm just hoping it happens faster than that because I'm not a very patient person.