

Penn State Women's Basketball
Head Coach Carolyn Kieger Postgame Press Conference
vs. Northwestern - February 2, 2020

Opening Statement

First of all, I want to make this about the alumni. It's an amazing group that came back today. I know it absolutely inspired me to work harder for them. We were able to celebrate the 2000 Final Four team. They came in and they fired our team up before the game and it was one of the most special moments I've been a part of. It's amazing. I told my team if that doesn't fire you up, I don't know what will. We have a legacy here as a Lady Lion and we have to uphold it, and I know I will do my best and work my hardest every single day to get it back to there. Obviously, we're not there yet, but we're relentlessly recruiting, and we're on the path and anyone who chooses to stay in our program must work hard every single day, must be tough, and they must be Lady Lions every single day.

Q: Coach, you've talked about before how it's a rebuilding process and you've been through one before at Marquette. Is there anything that you can draw from your rebuild at Marquette and how it might be different in this kind of way this time round, or if it's similar?

A: It's all about culture. It's all about culture, and the first half we had it, the second half we didn't. And you just got to keep instilling it every day. Obviously, they're not just going to become radically better basketball players overnight, but they can fix the culture overnight. We can do that. I think that's what is so frustrating as a staff is that we are pouring our heart and soul into changing this culture and it's not happening as fast as we want it to, but that doesn't mean there's not a shift, but it all starts and ends with culture.

Q: Coach, as a competitor, how hard is it as this kind of losing is going on - but you know that this kind of culture has to change - how hard is this, not only for you but as a team you know just not get the kind of results you want right away but know it is all part of a process?

A: We keep trying to remind ourselves that you know it's about teaching, it's about life lessons, it's about making them better women. And, obviously, I'd consider myself one of the most competitive people I've ever met so this is extremely hard. It's hard when you don't get the wins that you want. But at the end of the day, like I said this before, we don't deserve wins right now. You know, we have to work harder. We have to put the time in, and we have to put the summers in. We have to put the extra skill work in and we have to do every little thing that it takes to get that W. You're just not going to show up, put the jersey on and going to win just because you want to, but that's part of being a relentless competitor. If we're learning, we're growing. Every time we play another team, we played Northwestern already, the next time we play them we have to get better. We didn't in that second half. We did in the first half, but now we've got to put four quarters together and we're just simply not doing that.

Q: To build on that, when you lead at that break, you're up by one against a top-25 team. And then the third quarter has been a struggle for you guys the past couple of weeks or so. So, just how frustrating is it as a coach knowing that your team has that potential but just can't quite put it together for four quarters?

A: That's the thing about being a coach, you can't get frustrated. You've got to keep teaching. You've got to keep growing. And we told them right now, we're not giving up on them. As a staff, we're not throwing in the towel. We're going to scout. We're going to watch film. We're going to do everything we can. We're going to play and practice. We're going to get in the gym and we're going to skill work with them. And that skill work is going to pay off in the

long run. It's going to pay off next year. You know, it might not show up in tomorrow's game or the next game, but I guarantee it will show up in 365 days from now.