

Penn State Women's Basketball
Head Coach Carolyn Kieger Postgame Press Conference
vs. Iowa - January 30, 2020

Opening Statement

I want to start out by saying I'm extremely proud of our underclassmen tonight for the fight they had in that fourth quarter. Shay Hagans had nine rebounds and led our team in deflections. I just thought they poured their heart out in the fourth quarter, which is the team we need to be moving forward. I want to say I've had so much respect for Iowa, not only this year but in years past. They share the basketball, they do things the right way, they develop their kids, and Lisa [Bluder] has done a great job with their program and we got to get there. We got to get to that level of intensity. We got to get to that level of sharing the basketball, and we're taking strides and we're getting better every day, but that fight that we had in the fourth quarter needs to be the team that we are moving forward.

Q: After every game you talk about some form of the competition level and effort. Where do you think that stands tonight?

A: I mean it's inconsistent. Obviously, I think that is right now, that is the battle that we're facing every day. We're trying to win the moment - we keep talking about that - whether it's a weight room session or huddle timeout, a halftime, an out-of-bounds situation, we're trying to win that moment and just compete and find little wins along the way. I think the fourth quarter showed that we had fight and that we won that fourth quarter, but unfortunately there's four quarters, and it all adds up to that one win or loss and we got to learn how to be consistent.

Q: Coach, the team is in a six-game losing streak after tonight. How do you keep the morale of the team up and keep them ready to go every practice despite being in this?

A: That's all about learning and growing, and if we keep learning and we keep improving they're not losses, they're learning moments for us. As much as it hurts, it is hard right now, but this is going to pay dividends next year, I honestly believe that. I've been through a rebuilding before, I know how to do it, I know how it works and you cannot snap your fingers and think that all of the sudden you're going to become a great basketball team or great basketball program. It takes time, it takes effort, it takes a very high standard, and I'm absolutely not lowering my standard one bit. However, it's all about teaching, it's all about growing, and I know next year when we're running these kind of ball games, I guarantee you're going to see a way different team, and even towards the end of the season I would say. We're fighting to get better, we're fighting to improve so when that Big Ten Tournament comes around we're ready to go.

Q: Coach, Shay [Hagans] mentioned 'Mamba mentality.' This the first game since Kobe Bryant's tragic passing. You guys had a beautiful pregame ceremony for them. How have you as a team dealt with that news and what do you want your team to know about Kobe's legacy, what do you want them to remember?

A: I mean, obviously, it's tragic event, not only for Kobe but the other eight people who lost their lives. Every single day, we call it our pride time or our family time, we spend 15 minutes just talking about stuff outside of basketball and so, since that happened every single day it's been about Kobe. It's been about his mentality, it's been about what he's done for the game, what he's done for the women's game, and what he's meant to the sport, not only as a competitor but as a person. Obviously, his legacy is going to live on but what he's done for the game, what he's done as a competitor, not only for basketball but for sport. He's, you know, in our players' lifetime, he's the fiercest competitor they've ever seen. So, to use that, to talk about that, and talk about that 'Mamba mentality' and being the best version of yourself

every day is obviously an eye opener. You have to live life to the fullest, we'll keep teaching his lessons and I know his legacy will live on for a very long time.