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NCAA 2013 BASKETBALL
CHAMPIONSHIP
DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
FIRST/SECOND ROUNDS
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, HOST

Penn State – 85
Cal Poly – 55

An interview with:

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started with questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Maggie, the shot you hit at the end of the first half and what kind of momentum did that give you guys heading in the second half?

MAGGIE LUCAS: I was just coming down the floor, I didn't think I had a good -- I just don't want to force it right before the half so I just held it out and waited until I could get a shot at the buzzer. But when I took it, I didn't think it was like the best shot I could have made, but it went, so, yeah, it was just really good.

Q. (No microphone.)

MAGGIE LUCAS: It was more momentum. But I thought the biggest thing was just coming out defensively in the second half. I thought that's what really got our momentum going.

Q. Describe how physical a style of play y'all have. This was two games for you without getting a foul after you fouled out in the game before that. So just talk about how do you play as physical as you're able to do without getting a foul twice in a row?

MAGGIE LUCAS: She's very, very, smart. Yeah, the refs don't see it.

(Laughter.)

MIA NICKERSON: I think you just have to like, know when to get the foul and no when not to. Just be smart. I've been playing college basketball for five years now, so I had the experience to just let them get a lay up and try and get it back on the offensive end, or try not let them get the ball and things like that. It's going to be physical, I love playing physical, so you just have to be smart about it.

Q. Talk about the job that you and the bigs did down low, especially on the boards using your size in the second half, especially?

MAGGIE LUCAS: I thought we did a great job. I thought that we kind of took the game over.

Especially on defense, when they shot it, we got the defensive boards, along with the guards to kind of change the momentum a little bit of the game. It was just one and done for them. And then our offense, we were able to attack and get second chances. I thought we did pretty good for all of us that were in there.

Q. Maggie, it seemed like it took a really long time for your offense to get on track. Was that first game jitters, Cal Poly doing something, or were you guys out of sync for awhile? Thoughts about that?

MAGGIE LUCAS: It might have been a little bit of jitters. But we were able to get in rhythm and like said before, it comes from our defense. When we're able to get out in transition and get post

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pancakes and layups and stuff like that, that's going to get us moving. I thought once we addressed our defense more, that's when our offensive flow really got going.

Q. Talk about what the challenge was like guarding Schlemer underneath the basket?

MAGGIE LUCAS: She's a great player. She has a great touch around the basket. Even better than what film shows. So it's difficult to guard up against her, but she didn't have the ball at one possession, then that hurt their offense, I felt like, so we just tried to do the best that we could, just play physical with her. We knew she was going to get her shots and make basket, but we wanted to just give them one shot and be ready to do that and so I think we did a pretty decent job.

Q. Since you don't know who you're going to play, could you talk about maybe playing LSU or playing Green Bay.

MIA NICKERSON: We don't really have film yet, but I know they're both very talented teams. So we got to go in mentally pretty much the same, but just ready to do whatever coach tells us. Whatever the game is going to be.

COACH WASHINGTON: They don't know anything about who we're going to play yet.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll excuse the student-athletes and take questions for coach.

Q. Faith referred to your girls as big mamas out there. I don't know if you heard that before. But how does having so many big players, just in your practice preparation, those things you can do and could you tell me, is everybody knows about the physical style of play on the men's side in the Big-10. What about on the women's side, do you pride yourself on being maybe the most physical team in the Big-10?

COACH WASHINGTON: I think to play in the Big-10 we have so many good coaches in the Big-10 and we have so many good players. And certainly when we play night in and night out in the Big-10, it's physical. It's fast, there's a lot of different and a lot of very offensive styles that you have to prepare against.

So we want to be a team that can play a lot of different styles and we can play against small quick teams, we can play against bigger physical teams. So having the depth that we have in our post really is a plus for us I think.

Q. Talk about how you thought your team rebounded tonight, especially Talia, she had big boards for you tonight?

COACH WASHINGTON: I thought Talia was big for us. Huge. She had a fantastic day. I thought she did a really good job defending Schlemer. She got her points, but the thing we wanted to do was just make her work and make her work really hard to get touches and to get quality shots.

I thought early in the game she got a lot of her baskets off offensive rebounds when we had to help, when our rotation, help rotation was there and she got free and made some offensive rebounds.

But Talia came in the game, I thought she was big, I thought she was aggressive defending her and the rebounds that she got were key for us getting out in transition and getting some easy baskets.

Q. What do you think the shot at the end of the half did for you guys?

COACH WASHINGTON: It might have gave them a lift, but it was short lived after I walked into the locker room and talked about the other 19 minutes and 55 seconds of the half.

So I'm not sure it was a big lift, but Maggie's right, it was our defense, we did a better job defensively the second half in con I think at that the ball and contesting shots and making them take tough shots and we just didn't -- in the first half we didn't do quite as good job as we needed to. But starting the second half, our effort was a lot better.

Q. You guys didn't manage the first 10 minutes well, maybe that layoff was a little bit too long for you guys. But talk about the way your defense stepped up from that point on and really got the ball rolling for you guys.

COACH WASHINGTON: I thought we were a little bit more aggressive defensively. And really Cal Poly, they're small and quick. Sometimes you watch teams on film and you can't, one thing you can't gauge on film is how quick people are and you can't gauge on film how strong people are.

So I thought it took us a few minutes to adjust to their little guards shiftiness and their speed with which they played with. They played hard and we knew they would do that, they played hard, they played aggressive, so it took us a little bit of time to adjust to their speed and their quickness and how they wanted to play. But I thought once we adjusted and we did a better job of keeping them in front of us, things seemed to work out better for us on the defensive end.

Q. So you must know something about LSU or Green Bay. You played LSU before of course. Talk about playing either one of them?

COACH WASHINGTON: It's certainly a contrast in styles. LSU is a team that's playing a lot more zone and they have got Theresa, who is playing some fantastic ball right now, inside/outside threat. She can put it on the floor, she can do a lot of things.

They're a very good rebounding team. And they got good speed and quickness on the perimeter, close to what we have seen in Big-10 play in terms of personnel and bigs, traditional bigs. But they play the matchup zone and the matchup zone is difficult to prepare for. We don't see it on a nightly basis.

In contrast, Green Bay is a team that they spread you out, penetrate and kick. A little bit more similar to Cal Poly, the team we played tonight. But they're a fantastic 3-point shooting team and they're a very good team defensive team, even though they're undersized in comparison to BCS level schools, they do a fantastic job of being aggressive, fighting for the ball, their help side defense is outstanding, and they're an outstanding team.

And I know Kevin from having been in the Big-10 and the way that he likes to play, he's able to motivate them and move pieces around. You just have two contrasting styles and I'm excited to watch this game and to see how it unfolds.

Q. Talk about the confidence, shooting 47 percent, four players finishing in double figures, especially with what happened against Michigan state in the Big-10 tourney.

COACH WASHINGTON: Well, first of all, Michigan State, we don't even think about that, we don't talk about that. That game is so far behind. So in terms of where you put this game, it's one game and we put it behind us and we move on to the next team.

Just because you shoot well against one team doesn't mean you're going to get the same shots the next night. So we don't celebrate and we don't put our hat in what happened tonight, we have to focus on the next opponent, because

they're going to be different opportunities and they're going to be different challenges that we have to focus on.

So it comes down to discipline and determination, being determined to be disciplined, to execute the game plan, whatever that's going to be, and as long as we focus on that and focus on the next game, I think we'll be in good shape.

Q. Sometimes the box score can be a little misleading, but in this case all your big girls combined for like 33 rebounds, out rebounding them. Is this one of those games where the stats do tell the story in terms of your size advantage and how you asserted it?

Coach Washington: I think so. I think rebounding was a key for us. The way that they exerted their influence and their impact on the game on the boards was big for us, especially in the second half. Giving us second chance opportunities but also rebounding the ball and allowing us to go in transition, that certainly was big.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you.

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