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An Interview With:

**COACH COQUESE WASHINGTON
ARIEL EDWARDS
DARA TAYLOR**

Q For either of you, what do you think it was in the first half that allowed them to thrive from outside the arc?

DARA TAYLOR: I think our defensive intensity was low to start the game. They came out strong and came out hot, executed. We weren't bumping and we weren't quick enough in the zone, and they had a lot of open looks.

ARIEL EDWARDS: I agree with her.

Q When you guys were warming up, a couple of times you were kind of encouraging everybody to be a little more emotional. Did you guys feel like you were maybe a little flat early on?

ARIEL EDWARDS: Definitely. They came out and they started the game great. Our energy was low. We didn't come out the way we needed to, and they took advantage of it.

Q Dara?

DARA TAYLOR: Yeah, I agree. I think a bunch of us hadn't been in this position before and we just weren't ready to start the game. They were completely ready and locked and loaded. We didn't answer their energy.

Q Ariel had a big day with 29 and 10. Especially in the second half she was playing very well. What would you say about her fight personally with numbers like that today?

COACH WASHINGTON: I thought she did a good job of being aggressive and taking what was available for her.

Q Talk about your decision to stay in that zone until the second media timeout. Did you think about dropping it after four minutes, or were you hoping they were going

to cool off, I guess, the first 10, 12 minutes of the game?

COACH WASHINGTON: Well, you know, they're a tough match-up for us man-to-man. You know, as you could see, we gave up, I don't know what, 96, 97, however many, 99 points. You know, they're a tough match-up for us man-to-man, and when they're making the outside shots like they did at the start of the game, it makes it tough for us.

So you know, we didn't want to go man-to-man early because of their dribble penetration.

Q I mean, how frustrating is it when you you've got a strategy when you look at all of the numbers that makes perfect sense and the other team is just doing things you're not expecting them to do?

COACH WASHINGTON: Well, I thought they did a good job of getting really good ball movement against the zone and getting open shots, and we didn't adjust quick enough defensively to prevent them from getting open looks. You know, when you play zone, you know you're going to give up threes, three-point shots. You just want to give up certain three-point shots. And we just didn't rotate quick enough or aggressively enough in the zone to prevent them from getting wide open looks. And they did a really good job of attacking gaps and making the extra pass to get three-point looks.

Q Coach, is there anything you can take away from today's game that you would use in the first round in the NCAA, especially early in the game?

COACH WASHINGTON: Well, I think it's a little too early to say there's some takeaways. You know, I'd like to watch the tape and you know, digest the game a little bit before you know, I start making grand pronouncements of what you can take away from the game. But yeah, the good thing is we've got a little bit of

time off to regroup and get ready for the NCAA
Tournament where we know we're going to
play some quality opponents.

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