

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

Sunday, November 20, 2016

Lisa Bluder Women's Basketball

COACH BLUDER: First, I want to congratulate South Dakota State. I thought they played a really good game. We knew coming in this was going to be our toughest opponent of the year, and obviously right from the bat, they kind of took it at us.

I thought our second half was much better. I thought we did a much better job taking care of the ball the second half. I think our defense improved the second half. Offensively, we crashed and we just weren't crashing in the first half and we did a much better job in all those areas the second half.

But obviously, you've got to play four quarters and we didn't do that today. South Dakota State, again, great basketball team, and we just were out of rhythm. We didn't run our offense well. It was the first time we really played behind and we looked like it. We acted like it. We acted like we panicked, instead of just sticking true to our offense and what was working for us.

Q. What got you back into rhythm in the fourth? Seems like that was your best offensive quarter.

COACH BLUDER: Some of the defensive things we were doing to mix things up defensively, and it gave us some defense to offense, which was great, because we were having a hard time scoring against their core defense.

Q. What does it say, the fact that you scheduled South Dakota State to be on your schedule, what does that say about this program and the strength of schedule you'll have when the time comes?

COACH BLUDER: Yeah, but you've got to win them. That's the thing is you can schedule them, and that's terrific, but you also have to win some. And we let an opportunity really slip through our fingers today, and that's really what kind of hurts is that this one could hurt us at the end of the year.

But we have some great opponents coming up and we can't dwell on this one. We have got to move forward. We're playing No. 9 UCLA, No. 1 Notre Dame coming up here. So definitely we have a tough schedule, but the problem is, is it's not one thing just to play a tough



schedule. You do have to win some.

Q. You were down nine with seven minutes to go. What does that say about coming back and tying it right there?

COACH BLUDER: Yeah, I thought we did a good job of handling that situation. But I think we waited a little bit too long to intensify our defense and to execute on offense.

Q. With that said, you rallied against a team that starting lineup, all juniors, seniors, experience, so for your younger players, what does this experience do for them?

COACH BLUDER: Yeah, and I think you saw an experienced team kind of beat up on an inexperienced team today.

I thought our freshmen kind of struggled being that situation, and I know that they are better than what they showed today. They will learn from this and be more prepared the next time.

Q. What was going on with the defense, running through the lane -- they seemed to get the shots they wanted in the first half.

COACH BLUDER: I thought in the first half they got about anything they wanted, quite honestly. I was really discouraged with our defense in the first half. It was basic on-ball defense, too.

We've got to be able to contain a drive better than that; help side's got to be better than that. They got 20 paint points in the first half. Now the second half, they only got, I think ten. So a lot better job in the second half with that.

Q. What do you think of the shots you guys had in the first half -- or was that part of the problem that they just didn't go in?

COACH BLUDER: Well, I thought the second half we had some good shots that did not go in. I thought we had some really, you know, rim shots, that especially in those last four minutes, we're running down, getting some good one-on-one post rim shots -- not post shots, but rim layups, and just couldn't put them in.

But the first half, I was not happy with our shot selection. I don't think we made South Dakota State

work on defense. I thought we were taking shots that we just don't usually take, and that was a little bit of inexperience, kind of getting rattled and thinking, you've got to bring them back in one shot. We know it's a long game you and don't do that.