

March 6, 2009



BigTen
CONFERENCE
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
TOURNAMENT
INDIANAPOLIS

Iowa – 79
Minnesota – 64

An interview with:



THE MODERATOR: We'll open up with an opening statement from Coach Pam Borton, then go to the student-athletes for questions.

COACH BORTON: You've got to give Iowa a lot of credit for playing a great basketball game today. Four people in double figures. Wendy Ausdemore had an unbelievable game. And you gotta give them credit for playing well.

I was very proud of our kids and the heart and hustle until the very end of the game. And Iowa was a better team today than we were.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. For Ashley or Brittany, talk about Iowa's offensive execution. They seemed to have it going today, shot 50% for the game. What particular difficulties did they show you today?

ASHLEY ELLIS-MILAN: You know, I think Iowa, throughout the whole Big Ten season, they have unbelievable offensive sets and they have unbelievable kids who can shoot.

And Wendy Ausdemore did an unbelievable job tonight for the Iowa basketball team. And not only do they play offense, but they rebound. Kachine was unbelievable. I thought she went out there and she was tenacious on the board and didn't give up.

I thought their offensive execution is great. They can hit a shot anywhere on the floor. And I thought they did well, very well.

BRITTANY McCOY: I feel like the same way. We knew they're a great offensive team. And we set a goal for ourselves to keep them under 60 points this game, because we knew if we kept them down, we had a chance to win.

I felt we executed well on defense. But like Ashley said, Ausdemore went off and had a great game. Kachine Alexander had a great game. And a lot of times we were there on shooters and there on the catch and they were still able to get the ball in the basket.

Q. Brittany, it seemed pretty obvious that you were really determined to be aggressive to start this game off. You were driving to the hoop and such. I thought offensively you guys executed pretty well today overall. Did you feel the same?

BRITTANY McCOY: I thought we executed really well on offense. Personally, I feel like whenever we play Iowa I have the ability to get in maybe more than when we play other teams.

I don't know, I just feel like a lot of times I have mismatches on the perimeter and I like to exploit that. We had people hitting big shots for us. I was able to distribute the ball. I felt we had good ball movement on offense. We were getting the ball inside. So we executed well but they executed better.

Q. Brittany or Ashley, how do you think this loss affects your NCAA tournament chances?

ASHLEY ELLIS-MILAN: I think it affects us a lot. We needed to come out tonight and win and we didn't. And it affects our bid for the NCAA tournament, and we're just going to have to see what happens and go from there.

BRITTANY McCOY: I feel the same way. We know whether we end up in the NCAA

ASAP sports
...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at asapsports.com

Minnesota - 03.06.09

tournament or NIT, we do have a couple more weeks of basketball. We're just going to put our heart and souls into it. We're just going to keep working hard and get as far as we can.

Q. Can you talk about ending the Big Ten season against the rival Iowa and kind of what the rivalry has been to you guys, Ashley and Brittany?

ASHLEY ELLIS-MILAN: The rivalry between Iowa and Minnesota is, it's heavy. We get ready for these games between Minnesota and Iowa and Minnesota and Wisconsin. Those are big games for us.

And we beat them at our house. And we lost to them there. I thought today both teams gave their best effort. And the better team won tonight. So I give it to Iowa.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies, thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. Pam, there was a four-minute stretch there in the second half where you finally got some defensive stops. But you couldn't make any hay with it. Did you feel like that was the lost opportunity there?

COACH BORTON: I think it was. I think there was a period in the first half as well when I thought both teams were executing very well. I think it was about the 12 and a half minute mark to the eight and a half minute mark where they scored nine straight points. And that's kind of where they pulled away in the first half.

Second half we did get some stops. I think we missed a couple free throws in that area as well that I felt like we could have, we just couldn't get any closer than eight or 10 points in the second half. And I thought we had our opportunities, and we wanted to take advantage of the times that they did miss shots and the times that we were able to get some turnovers and we did not.

Q. Coach, just looking at your season, got off to a really good start. The last four or five games struggled a little bit. Can you talk a little bit about maybe what's changed for you guys?

COACH BORTON: Well, I'm not sure what's changed. I think it's just been the last week. I thought we were having a great season up until last week when we played three games in one week, and lost two games that we probably shouldn't have lost. And we had a great game at Michigan State. So I thought we played a lot better

today than what we did in a couple of games last week.

But we don't want to erase everything that we've done those first four, five months before that. So I think it's just been our consistency. It's been our consistency all year with we had three players in double figures. If we were able to have that all year, we would have been fine with who is going to show up and do what on this team. So I just think it's just been a lack of consistency on our team.

Q. You had talked going into this game that you thought you needed to win to get an NCAA bid. Are you pretty much in your mind kind of convinced that maybe NIT might be the route you go, or are you still going to be sitting on pins and needles?

COACH BORTON: I think we'll be sitting on pins and needles. A win today would have been a lock for us, with 20 wins and beating all the top teams in the conference other than Purdue, once or twice. I think we still have a shot. The Big Ten is a very strong conference. We finished in fifth place, and we'll wait and see.

Q. Coach, I think Iowa started shooting for the game 10 for 13 at 3-point range. Is that hard to overcome when somebody comes out that hot?

COACH BORTON: It's very typical of Iowa. I think they came out at our place and it was 20 to 6 in just a matter of minutes, it felt like. And we knew we had to weather the storm and hope that they were going to miss some shots and really kind of step up our defense a little bit.

But every time that we did, Ausdemore would come down and hit a big shot, or Alexander would get an offensive board. And I thought those two players played very, very well today.

Q. You got it within 10. You made a stop. Then you had a wide open 3-pointer on the other end. Do you feel if that had gone, maybe you could have gotten over the hump, do you think maybe that moment was the crucial moment in the second half?

COACH BORTON: You know, you never know against a team like Iowa. I just felt we needed to take advantage of every offensive opportunity we had. With as many weapons as they have, they have four or five people in double figures. JoAnn Hamlin coming off the bench that

had 21 against us at their place. And they just have so much balance, and they're so efficient offensively, that when one person's down, there's one or two people who step up on that end.

Q. Coach, could you talk about Ausdemore? Shot the ball well, talk about her game.

COACH BORTON: I thought she played very well. I thought she hit some big shots. And there was one shot that we had two people on her. I think it was a shot clock, the shot clock was going down. I'm like that was the icing on the cake. That just told you what kind of game she was having right there.

And she's a great player. And with her playing the 4 position, the power forward position, sometimes it creates a mismatch. A freshman guarding a senior with her experience I thought exploited Jackie Voigt quite a bit on the perimeter, but I thought she played a great game.

Q. Can you talk about just JoAnn Hamlin and kind of what she means to Iowa? She wasn't there in the victory you had against them. And what difference does she make?

COACH BORTON: I thought she made more of a difference when we played them the first time. She gives them more depth at the post. She's a tough kid inside and gives Skouby a breather coming off the bench.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports