

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

Thursday, February 9, 2017

Lisa Bluder Women's Basketball

COACH BLUDER: I don't know how you record a big sigh of relief, but that's kind of, you know, how I feel right now. I'm very thankful for this win. I'm very thankful for the women just how hard they focused and came through in these two practices to prepare for this game.

We knew how important this game was, and you know, starting three freshmen and one sophomore, one senior out there, they were amazing. I thought Ally really led them well tonight. She has a double-double. She does a great job.

Five people in double figures, I love that. Free throws, obviously, we shot the ball really well from free throws and max performance at the free throw line was pretty amazing at crunch time.

Just a lot of players really stepped up big. Bre's three to start the overtime, and then Ally comes down and makes a three, that was big, really good momentum; and ten of the 12 free throws in over time. Just really proud of the way a young team responded in this pressure situation.

Q. How big were Chase's minutes tonight?

COACH BLUDER: They were big. Chase has her season-high points. She gets some good rebounds for us. She played defense for us and to think that we won this game without Tania and Megan was in foul trouble; you consider that, it makes it more meaningful I think.

Q. First game without Tania -- offense was pretty great with Makenzie.

COACH BLUDER: Yeah, I mean, I thought that they flowed really, really well. You know, we kind of run an offense and not so many sets, and I think that was beneficial today, because they do the same things no matter what position they are playing. And so I think, you know, not having to learn everything real quick, especially for Makenzie, she has not played point guard in a long time and she had to play some tonight, really she did a great job with that.

Q. You mentioned in the beginning, but just elaborate on how clutch of a win this was with so



many young players stepping up?

COACH BLUDER: Yeah, you know, we were extremely young to begin this game. I do think both seniors for both teams really took over. I thought Ally had a great second half, and I think Tori had a great fourth quarter in overtime. So it's kind of interesting that we are young, but I thought Ally really did provide some great experience for us out there.

I'm really proud, this freshman class is really talented, and I'm really -- it bodes well for the future but I don't want to look to the future. I don't want to look to -- you know, Sunday, and just keep building their confidence, because they are so good. And just let them, you know, keep making some freshmen mistakes and not getting too wigged out about it; but just trying to enjoy the opportunity to be out there with them every day in practice because they come every day wanting to get better in practice, and that's exactly what you have to do.

Q. You spotted them a few points early. What were the keys to chipping away at that?

COACH BLUDER: 13-1, wasn't it? Yeah, it was not a very pretty start of this game. You know, I called the time-out and I got on them pretty good in there but they responded. I mean, I think we came out and outscored them like 13-6 or something, and so made it respectable at the end of the first quarter, so again they responded to that.

And you don't know, you don't know how freshmen are going to take that when you're kind of getting on them and gut-checking them, and they did it. They handled it. You know, they went out -- it was still early. That's the good thing, is when things like that happen in the first quarter, you still have time.

Q. What went into starting Bre tonight, defense, or practices?

COACH BLUDER: Both, both of those things actually.

Q. What's a win like this do confidence, without Tania, coming back from the 13-point deficit you mentioned, and then you fell back, the overtime.

COACH BLUDER: Yeah, it's tremendous. For one thing, we only play Michigan State once, and any head-to-head ties or anything like that, this is a very meaningful win. Puts us tied with them right now in the

conference. It keeps us just in contention, and you know, for doing something in postseason, and that's really big.

But more than anything, it does give us confidence that we can, you know, play well without that Tania. We hate it, we don't want it, but we can do it. And even when, again, Megan was sitting on the bench for a long time in foul trouble, as well.

Q. Sunday, Ohio State, I think it's the second team in a row you're playing that's coming off of a week to prepare for you.

COACH BLUDER: Didn't realize that. Thanks for that good news (laughter). Appreciate that.

Obviously we have another great scorer in Kelsey Mitchell and you know we are kind of used to that. Tori tonight, we had Katelynn the week before. So it's kind of like, you know, at least we have these three in a row where you have to really identify that one person you've really got to glue to.

Hopefully we can contain her a little bit. She's terrific. I quite honestly will start watching Ohio State tonight. I haven't seen them play all year until tonight. So I don't know a whole lot about them.