

Big Ten Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Friday March 6, 2020

Lisa Bluder Kathleen Doyle Iowa Hawkeyes

Ohio State - 87, Iowa - 66

LISA BLUDER: I kind of want to apologize for our poor performance tonight. It really was pretty unexpected. I thought we had two good prep days before we came here, and obviously we didn't have to play late last night like Ohio State did, yet it looked like Ohio State had a lot more energy than we did today.

They shot the ball extremely well to begin this game and kind of just kept that momentum going, and we just could never get any run going, any momentum going.

But I'm proud of our season. I'm proud of what we've done. For us to be 23-7, finish third in the Big Ten, we had a good year. We'll prepare for the NCAA Tournament. We know we'll be in that, so we'll just prepare for that and then try to get better.

Q. You came out of the game twice but you came back in. What was that determination to keep getting back in?

KATHLEEN DOYLE: I mean, it's postseason play, I'm going to be on the floor as much as I possibly can. It was disappointing those things happened, but I just tried to be out there fighting with my teammates, so I just tried to get back out there as fast as I could.

Q. Kathleen, what was the difference this time around, especially just having to go against their offense?

KATHLEEN DOYLE: Yeah, we didn't play good defense. We needed to move harder in our zone and play with more energy and tenacity on defense, and we didn't do that. We didn't get the job done, and credit to Ohio State for shooting the ball well.

Q. Obviously this is fresh, but what do you take away from this game in terms of what you guys need to do differently moving forward, especially on the defensive end?

KATHLEEN DOYLE: Yeah, I think we just have to be locked in earlier. Like I said, bring more energy and tenacity and make people uncomfortable. They were



just kind of doing whatever they wanted on offense, and we need that to not happen.

Q. When you're in the midst of a run like that that they were on, I think it was a 19-0 run there in the first quarter, how hard is it mentally to slow things down and change the tide?

KATHLEEN DOYLE: Yeah, I mean, it's obviously hard, but that's the game of basketball. It's a game of runs, and whoever does a better job of withstanding each other's runs is going to prevail, so they did a better job of that tonight.

Q. As the leader of this team, kind of moving forward, how do you motivate the team and get them prepared for the NCAA Tournament?

KATHLEEN DOYLE: Yeah, I mean, it's do or die now, just like it was tonight. Now that we have that experience under our belt, I can tell you we definitely don't want to feel this way again. So we're going to hit it hard the next couple weeks preparing for the NCAA Tournament and try to make a deep run at it.

Q. Coach, in the midst of that run there in the first quarter, what did you see from Ohio State and what they were doing offensively to allow them so many looks?

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, I mean, we tried to call a couple time-outs and tried to stop the bleeding a little bit there, but that was pretty impressive shooting. I mean, if they shoot the ball that well -- that's really -- you asked what the difference was between at our place or here, to me it was that; they didn't make those kind of shots at our place. And they really -- when you're shooting that well from three-point range, it opens up the inside. Now the paint point becomes a lot easier.

They really stretched out our defense with the range of like Bell coming in, hitting those back-to-back threes.

Q. In a game like this with the performance that Ohio State had offensively, especially in the first quarter, the first half, how much of that for you is an anomaly versus something to be concerned about moving forward?

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, I think we have to watch the film and kind of figure that out. I know that our -- our offensive problems tonight I think were an anomaly. Our defense, I have to watch that. I just feel like we

missed a lot of shots that we usually make, a lot of bunnies inside, a lot of lay-ups, and that is a momentum killer when you miss those kind of shots that you know are supposed to be going in for you.

So I think that was a combination of those things, so I know the offense was an anomaly, but defensively I'm going to have to watch the film and figure things out.

Q. When did you know that your team was in trouble tonight?

LISA BLUDER: I mean, it wasn't a very good start at all, so it was rough. That was a rough first quarter.

Q. Moving forward, do you try to focus on this game or kind of just wipe it away from your team's memory and move on?

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, I think a little bit of both. I think you want to learn from it. As far as coaches, we want to learn from it, but as far as kids, I don't know that they're going to really get much out of this game as far as rehashing it and watching it over and over again except for destroy their confidence, and I don't want to do that going into postseason. I kind of want to remind them of the good things that they've done so far and try not to, like I say, show this film a whole lot for them, but us coaches certainly can learn.

Q. When it comes to seeding, what do you feel are the best attributes your team has accomplished this year, and do you feel like tonight might have cost you home court for the first two rounds?

LISA BLUDER: You know, I don't know. I hope they look at the body of work because we have I think five top-25 RPI wins. It's one of the top in the country.

No, we didn't play as well as we could tonight, as well as we should have tonight, but again, I hope we're not resting this on one game but instead on the 29 games that led up to this. 29 games leading up to this had us hosting. Is one game going to knock us out? I don't know, we'll have to wait and see. Now it definitely puts us on pins and needles, though, waiting, right?

Q. Obviously you want your team and you want your players to be focused on this game, this performance coming in. As a coach, is that something you think about coming into a game like this, is kind of what the longer-term implications are of a performance, win or lose?

LISA BLUDER: I think that you know that as a coach. I think you understand. I don't think you want to add pressure and dwell on it with your team. They're smart kids and they know stuff, but yeah, I don't think I want to hammer it home with them, either. There's a of pressure on kids anyway, coming in here playing -- Ohio State is a really good basketball team, a really

good basketball team.

We didn't lose to a bad team tonight. Am I disappointed the way that we played? Yes. Did we lose to an inferior opponent? I don't think so. I think they played really, really well tonight, and I think they will continue to play well in the postseason.