

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Florida State vs LSU

Monday, March 24, 2025

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

Pete Maravich Assembly Center

Florida State Seminoles

Coach Brooke Wyckoff

Makayla Timpson

Ta'Niya Latson

Media Conference



TA'NIYA LATSON: Me being happy. Regardless of the situation, I know I had my teammates's back and they had mine. That's who I am; I'm a happy person.

Q. How proud are you of what you were able to accomplish this season? I asked Brooke if she would still consider this season as a success regardless of the result. She said yes. Same kind of answer for you?

TA'NIYA LATSON: Definitely, I'm very proud of my teammates and my coaches and myself. Yeah, it was a beautiful season. I feel like we grew from past seasons and we made a run.

Q. Ta'Niya, what do you learn from a game like this? How do you take that moving forward?

TA'NIYA LATSON: I learned to not turn over the ball so much. Play with more poise. And just keep getting my teammates involved. Keep getting in the lab, working on my shot. I was 2-for-10. That's something I need to work on. Just being a better leader.

Q. KK, you guys fought until the very end of this became. Really a testament to this team and the program. What kind of example do you hope that shows from the game tonight?

MAKAYLA TIMPSON: I just hope it shows who we are as a team. We was together throughout our whole season, and we want other girls who come into this program do the same thing we did. We put our program back where it needed to be.

We had a better season than last year, and that's the goal for every team, to have a better season than you did the year before. I'm just so proud of my teammates.

Q. How difficult was this crowd to contend with tonight?

TA'NIYA LATSON: They had a really good crowd. But it's not something that we're not used to. We're used to

LSU - 101, Florida State - 71

BROOKE WYCKOFF: Obviously congrats to LSU, and they played a really great second half. But I'm proud of our team, what we did to get here, what we did to put ourselves in a position to be here.

I'm proud of these two to my left. Just over and over again the way that they've just carried this team, giving their all every single possession, just individually. But just the way they've led this team.

I think we have a team that really truly cares about each other. They are a true team. That's what I'm the most proud of.

Obviously hate to end a season like this, but I never want it to overshadow all the success, all the ways we've grown and just how proud I am of all the phenomenal players on this team.

Q. KK, can you put into words what the last four years have meant to you here at FSU?

MAKAYLA TIMPSON: I would just say an incredible opportunity for me, coming from a small town, being able to shine bright at this university, it just meant a lot. And I'm just blessed and I'm grateful for my whole years at the university.

Q. Ta'Niya, you had a big smile on your face for a lot of this game. Was it soaking up the atmosphere, the fact that you're in the round of 32? Where did that smile come from?



playing in hostile environments. They had a good crowd. Kudos to them.

Q. Ta'Niya, can you just talk about what Makayla has meant to you over the last several years as a teammate?

TA'NIYA LATSON: She's meant a lot. She's like a sister to me. I'll cherish every moment we've had together. We hang out a lot outside the court -- me, her and O. I'll miss them a lot. They were like sisters to me. I'm going to cherish this for a lifetime.

Q. KK, for a lot of seniors this is the end of the road, but you guys have grown tremendously throughout these past four years. What's it been like growing with this core group?

MAKAYLA TIMPSON: I would say it's just special. My coaches believed in me. My teammates believed in me to the highest level. That's where I set myself to be. As a person, I try to do everything I can for each and every one of them on the team and also the coaching staff.

Just being that reliable person I can be. And I have a lot of confidence just because of them. I'm just so grateful for them.

Q. Coach, how proud are you of what you guys were able to do, especially in that first half? Like I said to Ta'Niya, you had a big smile on your face. Seemed like you were enjoying much of what they were doing in that first half?

BROOKE WYCKOFF: Yeah. I said it to them throughout the second half and after the game -- I just want them to believe in themselves the way that we believe in them.

And that's why it was so fun -- obviously it was fun that we were in the game and we were competing so well in that first half. But I just loved seeing our players, feel that and understand and see, that I'm competing out here. Yes, we can do this, to have the belief, to play at that level, to understand that that is who they are.

They deserve to be here. They deserve -- this isn't just, like, oh, we're happy to be here, and, yay, we made it to the second round. It's, no, you guys are in this game because you're good.

That's what I love to see, was them playing that hard, playing against a phenomenal team and competing and feeling like, yeah, we're in this.

So in the second half, when LSU came out and made that

phenomenal run in the third quarter, I just wanted them to keep believing -- okay, LSU is playing amazing right now, they're hitting shots, we're making a couple of mistakes defensively. Ball's not going in for us, but that doesn't change who you are as a player.

That doesn't change the belief that you should have in yourself, in each other, in what we believe.

That's what I'm taking for this game. That's what I'm hoping they take, is just to get a glimpse of how good they are and can be and to never ever doubt any of that, no matter.

Q. Your seniors made multiple contributions on the floor and in the record books, but what will you remember them most by?

BROOKE WYCKOFF: Who they are. You can see and you guys who have covered us all year, they're such phenomenal people. It's great to have talent, and, gosh, are they talented. It's really nice to have talent.

But there's always going to be hard days. There's always going to be frustrations, adversity, all the things that come with sports and just in life. You want to be doing stuff, the hard stuff with great people, the people you want to be around.

That's what these kids are; they are people I want to be around every day. They're people that show up every single day ready to go, believing and ready to work hard and with a smile on their face.

So add that to talented kids and kids that you're seeing growing year over year, I mean, it's such a joy. Again, it doesn't mean it's not hard. Like, it's not all sunshine and rainbows and all of that. But that's what means the most to me is who they are. And you can just see it in how our team has come together and how they're talking.

Q. How does the successful run like this and such a great season, carry momentum for you and the team moving into next year?

BROOKE WYCKOFF: I really believe that -- I've seen it firsthand as a coach and as a player -- that you have to -- it's nice to just make a magical run; you've never been there before. And, yay, we're going to the Final Four, never done it before.

You have to build. You have to build. This group had never won a first-round game. Now the kids that will be here next year, they've now felt that. They know what it's like to win a first-round game, to go to the second round.



And now we'll be in a position to win a second-round game.

You have to build. So that's what they did over these three years, these kids that, okay -- KK's freshman year, we were in a First Four game. We weren't even in a first-round game. We lose that.

Next two years, we go to the first round, we lose those games. This year they know what it looks like, what it takes. Now we build. Now we're in the second round.

We've been to three Elite Eights at Florida State. And that's what it was. It was the success before those runs to the Elite Eight that we built on experience, the experience that -- kids that have been there.

So that's what I'm thankful for. It's like, okay, I wish we could have won this game for sure. But I'm definitely just -- I feel so great about what we've experienced and how we can build on those kids that will be back next year.

Q. After halftime, I know Smith and Morrow were already playing well, and then when Williams and Johnson come back in, the way they played. Could you describe how that influenced the way the game changed a little?

BROOKE WYCKOFF: Yeah, they did a great job. I mean, they came back in focused, and just obviously both of those two had to sit a little bit because of foul trouble in the first half. This is a team that is a really great team. Again, a team that's been there.

They're going to their fourth Sweet 16 in a row, whatever it is, they've been there. They know what it takes. They're really good players. They came out of halftime on a mission. We couldn't get a couple stops, and then the ball wouldn't go in for us. Good teams are going to prey on that and they're going to keep going, keep going.

We just couldn't find a way to break the run, really. But that's what good players do, good teams do, and they played phenomenal. I mean 29 assists and 52 points in the paint. That's a team that's really scary moving forward. Again, we'll learn from it.

Q. What did you say to your team in that huddle on the court before you walked over to the pep band, and could you also talk about the moment you all had with your pep band?

BROOKE WYCKOFF: I said just what I was talking about earlier to the team. I believe in them so much. They're here because they're phenomenal players. So I never ever want to see them not believe in themselves.

Not that they didn't believe in themselves out there, but just that's a tough environment. I want them always, no matter, to just believe in themselves and to let them know how much I believe in them, how proud I was of them, how much I love them. All the things that I really truly feel.

And then our pep band and our cheerleaders, Florida State is a family. It really is. I know that sounds cliché, but it is such a family atmosphere, and those kids, those students in the band, the cheerleaders, they put in so much work. They have been on the road with us. They travel. They give their all, not just in this tournament, but all season long. So we have a really special -- we always go to them after every home game and do the fight song, and so it was just great to have that moment with them, be able to do that and really thank them because they're a special part of what we do.

Q. You mentioned the importance of building. How would you like to see Ta'Niya build on her already great season next year?

BROOKE WYCKOFF: Ta'Niya, she's always been a phenomenal scorer, but she is the one that wants to continue to improve in all the other categories.

It's really hard to take that much of a load offensively and know that to score all those points, to play at the pace she plays at, it takes a lot out of you. So her determination to be a great defender, which she is, to rebound -- today she had seven rebounds, three offensive, doing all of those things, I know she just wants to keep improving. She's never satisfied. She really took a step this year, statistically, in rebounding, in steals, just her attention to the defensive end.

That's what I know she wants. She does not see a limit on what she can do. 30 points tonight in only 30 minutes, it's pretty freakin' good. But she's not satisfied, as she said.

I know that we'll continue to see her build in all those areas as well. Statistically, she can do it.

Q. In that first half, with how you guys played with the situation being round of 32 and with the atmosphere, was that among the most fun you've had as the coach of this team?

BROOKE WYCKOFF: Yeah, there's been so many fun moments. Having a big crowd is awesome. I love that for the game of women's basketball. It's anytime, even if it's not our own crowd, anytime that there's that much excitement around this sport. I've been a part of a lot of those moments. It is fun. And I felt great because, as

Ta'Niya said, we have been in those environments all year. We've done really well in those environments.

Yeah, I was enjoying the moment. Just so proud of our kids. Yeah, it's a fun thing to be part of women's basketball right now. It really is. There's passion from these players and there's passion from the fans. So I loved it, and I want to just continue to see that grow.

Q. You had transfers come in and become integral parts of this lineup. What does that say about not even the culture of this team, but the portal and the opportunities that present there?

BROOKE WYCKOFF: Yeah, I mean, it's the reality we live in now, the transfer portal. You have just more player movement now than ever at the college level. It can be difficult, of course, but it's also a really great opportunity that, when you're able to fill places on your roster with things that you need, but, yes, it takes work, not just to bring a great player in, but for those kids to really gel and to really -- we had four transfers come in that were ready from day one to be a great teammate, to get to know their teammates, to work on our chemistry, to work on our culture. That's rare.

It's not easy to go get great players out of the portal. It takes a lot of work. Once they're there, though, the work is not done. That's another reason why I'm just so proud of this group because of the eight returners that accepted and accepting the four new ones and how the four new ones just really worked to make this a team quickly.

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