

**March 4, 2012**



Double Overtime

Purdue – 74  
Nebraska – 70

An Interview With:

## **PURDUE**

### **COACH SHARON VERSYP KK HOUSER BRITTANY RAYBURN**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Purdue head coach Sharon Versyp and student-athletes KK Houser and Brittany Rayburn.

Coach, an opening statement.

COACH VERSYP: What an amazing championship run. Nebraska takes us five overtimes. They beat us in three overtimes. Takes us two to beat them.

Just an incredible basketball game. The wills of both teams. And the biggest thing, they knocked down free throws like no tomorrow. But we did a great job on the boards and our defense is exceptionally solid.

We made the free throw when we needed it at the end of the game to seal it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. Brittany, to finally get a championship during your time at Purdue?**

BRITTANY RAYBURN: It's a great feeling. We said coming into this year with six seniors and underclassmen that played their butts off every day, it's just something that we came into this, we've been through a lot of adversity with this team, near-death experiences and many injuries to fight through.

But we played through this and we came together as a team and it's a great feeling.

**Q. KK, what kind of role did you have to assume today when they were taking care of Brittany a little bit and Moses a little bit?**

KK HOUSER: I had to set my team up, and we executed our plays. We were getting Brittany and Courtney open.

The first half we didn't execute, but the second half I thought we did a lot better job and we executed our plays. We're getting the people open that we need to.

**Q. Brittany, you talked all season about this being a team. Today you and Courtney struggled from the field, but you get big contributions from KK and Chantel and obviously others. Just did sort of that theme for the whole season really pay off today?**

BRITTANY RAYBURN: Oh, yes, I think that's what makes us the victors of this tournament. We have a deep team. Anybody any day can go off.

We're all very unselfish people. I mean, when somebody's on, we get it back to them. KK was on, and we needed it. And obviously it shows what great of an all-around team we have.

**Q. Brittany, can you talk about the job KK did defensively, five steals, what she did to determine the game a little bit?**

BRITTANY RAYBURN: She determined the game in every game we played. She's constantly guarding their best offensive player. Whenever we put her on somebody, she locks them down and she makes it her job to help this team in any way she can, whether it's lockdown D or getting points, and she did an amazing job of that this entire tournament.

**Q. KK, was this a bit of a redemption game for you, two-part, from the first Nebraska game but also last night's game when you had some turnovers? I mean, you didn't have a turnover tonight in 39 minutes.**

KK HOUSER: Really, I just gotta let the games go. The games I have high turnovers, I

don't think about them the next day. If I dwell on it, it's just going to get worse.

I came in today thinking we have six seniors that I have to play for, we deserve this. So I just played hard today. I thought nothing of my turnovers.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies. Questions for Coach.

**Q. Sharon, just with KK, her floor game, obviously her defense was a big spark, but how she bounced back so quickly after yesterday?**

COACH VERSYP: I think it was a huge key. We just talked. It's her turn. We've had different players -- we've all played great, defense, team defense. Sharing the basketball.

But certain players stepped up each game, and said you're going to be the one that steps up and carries us through today. And she absolutely did that. And KK's gotten stronger. Her leadership skills continue to get better and she doesn't carry one game to the next.

**Q. Coach, I'm looking for something, some sexy way to define team, because I see 10 different players with rebounds, nine different players scored. Seven different players had assists and eight different players had at least 18 minutes. Is this team unique in that way; you have so many people that they just plug in and fit in wherever?**

COACH VERSYP: It's been the history of our program this year. We've been very successful. Again, we keep talking about adversity and resilience and players that haven't been able to play so someone else has to step up. And when we're at our best, we have players stepping up and doing things left and right to help each other.

I think that's huge. And we're a true team. Like we talk -- we don't talk about individuals. You don't just see one face everywhere on our program. It's about the whole team.

**Q. Can you just talk about executing late in the game you did yesterday, obviously the game winner here and then just overtime the mentality of your team late in the games and their ability to overcome?**

COACH VERSYP: Biggest thing was we had one bad turnover, but other than that we needed to stay poised and make sure we got a shot. And it just comes back to being in tough games. We've been in a lot of close games. We

pulled the majority of them out. The Michigan State when it went into overtime, we had a chance. We didn't get the shot. And then obviously when Nebraska beat us.

So those kind of stick in your mind, so we want to make sure we finish.

**Q. When Moore kind of lobbed up that 3-pointer with about three seconds left, what were you guys trying to do defensively? What was your plan there?**

COACH VERSYP: The very last one?

**Q. In the second overtime.**

COACH VERSYP: When we were ahead by 4?

**Q. Yeah. When Moore tried to tie it.**

COACH VERSYP: Well, what we did we switched every single screen. We switched, switched, they were trying to go to Moore, trying to go to Hooper. And KK switched. Chelsea switched. KK switched. Just stayed on that one side of the floor and we just had our hands straight up.

She had to launch it and we secured the rebound.

**Q. The way Chantel took advantage of her athleticism today, and Connie said they really didn't have a matchup for her, and just how she took that game to the level where she was able to get the 10 boards and really impact the game down low?**

COACH VERSYP: Chantel said that very last rebound: Coach, I felt like I was flying. I'm like: You were. And when she comes through there, I think her wrists were way above obviously the rim.

But she's very athletic, explosive. Didn't feel like she finished very well. Fighting for 10, maybe two layups.

We believe in Chantel, and she's a big reason why we keep growing and getting better. She's taking her outside shots, she can score down low. She doesn't have those weaknesses like she's had in the past.

**Q. Can you just talk about the two plays at the end of regulation when Moses was blocking and the overtime when KK missed and sort of what you were looking for? I know**

**the second one you didn't have Brittany in there. Sort of go through what you were hoping for on both those plays.**

COACH VERSYP: First with Courtney, we were just going to have her attack the basket. If she didn't have anything, we were going to set a double screen and get Brittany on the back side.

Courtney ended up taking it, rather maybe attacking and getting it to Brittany, but there's a couple of seconds left. So we ended up having three on her, so we were trying to get around her, so it was more developing for her shot or Brittany.

The other one we were supposed to execute a plan and it blew up. KK got it and she obviously attacked and had an opportunity.

**Q. What kind of momentum does this build going into the NCAAs?**

COACH VERSYP: Great. When you can win three games in three days, you're just exceptionally excited. We put this goal down to be Big Ten champs, whether it's regular season or tournament champs, when we're in Europe sitting next to some water and enjoying that trip.

And I'm just so proud of this group. I just couldn't be more proud.

And now they can just really flourish this and take it. Now we have the NCAA hosting at home. So hopefully we'll get a good seed.

**Q. From the first time you played them, and they hit some threes late, did you learn anything from that game or did you just play defense on the perimeter in late-game situations better today?**

COACH VERSYP: We just played better defense in late-game situations, because we were switching, we played different defense than we did the first time. They weren't knocking down 3s, and then Hooper nailed it, and Moore. It's like here we go again.

But our defense is the key, and I think Chelsea Jones with her height caused a lot of problems. We were trying to get Hooper to put the ball on the floor and try to get some charges.

But I just thought we defended better. And then they started taking it to the hole when we had the mismatch of Moore against Chelsea, and our help side needed to come over.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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