

NCAA Women's 1st and 2nd Rounds: Stanford

Monday, March 19, 2018
Stanford, California



Karl Smesko

Lisa Zderadicka

China Dow

Florida Gulf Coast Eagles

Stanford 90, Florida Gulf Coast 70

KARL SMESKO: I thought Stanford was excellent today. Their offensive ball movement and efficiency and execution was outstanding. It was better than our defense today.

I thought a big part of the game was the first quarter. We had more defensive breakdowns in the first quarter than we had the whole game against Missouri. Can't really explain why. Just happened. And then you big that kind of a hole, you're kind much pressing to get back in the game the entire time. You just can't build that kind of hole against a team this good.

But I was proud of our team's effort and that they kept competing, got it in the fourth quarter and knocked it down to ten. But then give Stanford credit. They answered with a big run as soon as we got it down to ten.

Great effort by Stanford. They look like a team that has a real good chance of getting to the Final Four, and they have been great to us here, everybody at the University, and we really appreciate it.

Q. China, you had a great performance at Stanford. I wanted to ask you how much their height affected your team's play in this game?

CHINA DOW: It affected us a lot as far as going to the lane. They was way bigger than Mizou.

So our drives wasn't opened, but we could have cut in penetration and do the right things when they did come over. That's why we practiced and practiced. But it was very effective. And what he said, you know, I wish I would have grew overnight, but didn't work out that way. Their height was very effective.

Q. You found your shot after halftime. How encouraging was that, and also, what kind of looks were you getting in the first half?

CHINA DOW: I mean, I had many open looks in the first half. It wasn't wasn't falling. But if you know him, if you know our program; if you miss, just keep shooting because that's what we're taught. Like don't just get down on yourself. Just keep shooting. That's what I kept doing and fell in the second half, so it worked out.

Q. Is it too soon to look at 431 threes, and say, wow, that was pretty special?

CHINA DOW: If you take a look at my percentage last year, my percentage this year is really amazing for me. You know, I was working on my shot over the summer and it came through. So it's good.

Q. Lisa, you guys kept coming back. What was the sense in the huddles when there were time-outs called and stuff? What were you saying to each other? There's never any quit but tonight was really impressive the way you kept battling back against really tall odds.

LISA ZDERADICKA: We knew if we lose, we're out. So we just knew we had to give it our all and just try to keep fighting and make a run and try to cut it closer.

Q. Could you speak about the 431 threes? That was your team identity and your hashtag and it's an NCAA record and kind of a special mark.

LISA ZDERADICKA: Yeah, I mean, we work on our shot a lot, and all season, we work on our threes and work hard to get open for good shots and we always try to take the open shots. So that's just the way we play. We knocked a lot of threes down this season, which helped us.

Q. What were they doing on their offensive side and on your defensive side that made it so troublesome for you guys to be able to get the rebounds? They ended up with more offensive than you guys had defensive.

KARL SMESKO: We weren't sending many people to the boards. That's why it was frustrating in the first quarter when we were giving up shots in conversion. That shouldn't happen when you have so many people back. So those were just communication errors and really cost us.

As for, you know, giving up so many offensive rebound, once you have defensive breakdowns and you're in scramble mode, it's really hard to get your block-outs.

We had so many instances where, you know, we screwed up something we were guarding and somebody would have to help, somebody would have to recover, and meanwhile, you know, somebody's going to the backboard and getting a second shot opportunity.

So that was another area where you know, we knew we weren't going to win boards, but we had to do a better job of holding them to like ten or 11 offensive rebounds instead of 16.

Q. China, you're one of five very important seniors, perhaps most important one, but all of them very, very important to this program. What was the mood like in the locker room afterwards? Pretty emotional in there?

CHINA DOW: Yeah, it was. You know, it's just playing for the last time, playing your last senior game. I think Nazr gave us -- like she's going to miss us and stuff, but it's more than just basketball when it comes to your teammates. We're basically like family. I spend more time with them, basically more than I spend time with my friends. Like they are my friends and family.

So it's beyond basketball, so it was very emotional, and it's my last college game. It's just like, dang, like if I could have another year, I'd take it, even though it would ruffle him but it works out, we get along. But it's more than basketball. It's very emotional. You have T-Grad, she's six years, so it's very emotional for her. It's like, I'm going to miss them. We all like just keep your head held high and regardless if any of them need anything from me, I always got their back.

Q. Obviously a huge size disadvantage tonight, but they are not just tall. They are very, very skilled.

KARL SMESKO: Yeah, they are a talented team. Smith had an amazing game against us, her picking and popping and knocking down threes and being able to go inside and post up. She was outstanding tonight.

But they have got a lot of really talented players in there playing really well right now. You know, we needed a day where instead of 9-of-17 from three, they were 4-of-17 from three, and we didn't get it. When we gave up an open shot or gave up something from three, they shot an amazing percentage for the second game in a row.

So they really got things rolling right now.

Q. You played Ohio State earlier. Any comparisons?

KARL SMESKO: Well, their size and athleticism are pretty similar, and the way they get out in conversion, both teams are great out in conversion.

So I mean, I think there's definitely some comparisons. I know the last time they played, they went into overtime. It was a great game.

I think Stanford has a real chance to move on and advance further in this tournament. If they keep shooting the ball the way they shot it tonight, I wouldn't bet against them.