

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

Saturday, March 17, 2018  
Stanford, California



## Tara Vanderveer Alanna Smith Kiana Williams Stanford Cardinal

Stanford 82, Gonzaga 68

COACH TARA VANDERVEER: You know, we're really excited to be playing Monday night, especially when you're playing at home. Want to congratulate Gonzaga on a great season. They have an outstanding team, and we really had to work hard to be sitting in this situation so that we're playing Monday night.

You know, the two people to my left I thought really made some big plays for us. I thought Alanna worked really hard defensively. As we know, Jill Barta is an outstanding player and Alanna worked really hard against her, and then for Kiana, for her first game in the NCAA Tournament, I think she looked very comfortable out there. Knocked down big shots. Made big plays. Worked really hard for us.

And going forward, we're going to need everything they have got and more from their teammates playing against Florida Gulf Coast, they are a really unorthodox team and we're going to be very challenged.

But I'm very proud that we're moving on. You know, obviously everyone knows, we lost last year to this team, and I think our team took it very personally. We had to work hard, but I thought we had a really good game.

**Q. As we said, first year, big moment, tournament, five threes, 50 percent from the field. What's going through your mind and what do you have in your veins?**

KIANA WILLIAM: I'm just excited to be playing with my teammates, excited that we're hosting and that we get two more home games for our seniors. I was just out there having fun with my team and just executed our game plan and knocked down shots.

**Q. When you see Kiana setting up for a three at this point, are you thinking, well, that's good? She has**

**hit 27-of-44 over the last month. What is it like for you watching her?**

ALANNA SMITH: I'm just really happy and just almost proud to see Kiana just flourishing right now. I think she's an amazing player and I'm so excited for her future.

Just touching on the threes, when Kiana puts it up, you're assuming it's going to go in. But obviously as a post player, and as our team mantra is to rebound, so I'm going to go in and rebound it anyway. But when Ki puts it up, I'm assuming it's going in?

**Q. What was it like facing Barta? There was a stretch at the end of the third quarter, I think you folks were up by eight or something like that. You hit a three, then you threw a charge from Jill, and then Kiana and Nadia hit threes, so that seemed like a pretty big stretch in this game. First of all, what was it like placing Jill Barta, and what about that particular sequence?**

ALANNA SMITH: Obviously she's a very talented player and she played extremely well this game, and has played extremely well in the past. We knew that she was going to be a threat to us.

So we worked really hard in the past week. I think a shout-out to our practice players and the scout team; they helped us immensely for this game. We just had to be ready, and knowing that she's aggressive and knowing what shots she likes to take.

In that just stretch of time, I think it was just about trusting your teammates; trusting that your teammate is going to hit an open shot. I think that's what we do really well is that we trust each other.

**Q. You said yesterday it was really about energy and aggressiveness. Can you just talk about the way the whole team kind of answered that bell, and then can you talk about Dijonai's contribution tonight?**

ALANNA SMITH: Yeah, I think just every game that we play, we talk about our mindset beforehand, and Tara really tries to instill in us that we have to be aggressive and we have to be more aggressive than the other team that we play.

So having someone like Dijonai, who you know every

time she's playing, she's going to come out and give a 110 percent. She's like leader of the aggressive club, we like to call.

So you know you can rely on Dijonai to be there and give energy, and so she's one of the leaders in the team in that department I think, and we're really lucky to have someone like that.

**Q. How much did it mean for you guys to start pushing the pace early and really get out in transition and establish that for the course of the game? Because they were in here earlier and said they couldn't get stops and it deflated them?**

KIANA WILLIAMS: We like to push the pace to get the ball down the floor quickly. Everything in our offense, we have to do it with pace, so that's just what we've been doing all season.

**Q. Tara just said that she thought you looked comfortable. Were you comfortable, and did you have any of the freshman, first game in the tournament nerves?**

KIANA WILLIAMS: No, my teammates, they have so much confidence in me. It's hard to like just think about what I'm doing. I just go out there and play my game, and our seniors and upperclassmen, they are telling me to stay aggressive and keep playing my game, so that's what I do.

**Q. Do you talk to Daejon at all? Both you guys are doing tremendous as freshmen.**

KIANA WILLIAMS: Yes, I talk to them when I see them, like either at dinner or breakfast and I'm in a class with him, so yes, we are really close -- not too close. (Laughter)?

**Q. There was a stretch in the first half and into the second when you were having people in foul trouble. Marta first, and then Kaylee and Dijonai. Seemed like -- was the game being called too close or was it just were you guys were making fouls that you shouldn't have?**

COACH TARA VANDERVEER: I think I need to move on to another question.

**Q. Would you like to call your attorney first?**

COACH TARA VANDERVEER: Yeah, I just think we have to move our feet and do a better job defensively. You know, I don't know, I just -- I didn't -- we didn't see the same thing sometimes. But you know, for us, we can't be fouling and getting people in foul trouble. You have to adjust to that.

You know, I don't think the officials make you throw the ball away as much as we threw the ball away. So we've got to do a better job. We talked about that at

halftime: Take care of the ball, move our feet defensively, not be putting them at the free throw line. They are excellent free throw shooters. Just kind of do a better job running our offense.

**Q. You're going to be facing a Florida Gulf Coast team that doesn't have anybody over 5-11, and you've played -- you lost to a Western Illinois team that was pretty small, too. I don't know if they were any bigger than these folks. What is the big challenge as you see it when you face Gulf Coast?**

COACH TARA VANDERVEER: Well, you know, they put it right on their shirt: They shoot 3s. We might have somebody that's made -- Kiana, how many 3s has she made totally for the whole season? 45? Maybe 50? I mean, I don't know the exact number. John would probably know.

They have players on their team that have made 88,70, 59. They make the most 3s. They are a very proficient offensive team, whether it's shooting 3s or getting the ball out of the basket and shooting layups. So it's more about their skillset I think than their size.

We kind of just -- I thought they were a gritty team. You know, Missouri is a great team and very physical and very big, and they don't back down.

We're going to have our work cut out for us. I'm very confident that Kate Paye will be scouting and she will have a good game plan for people. Our team really works very hard this week to be ready to play Gonzaga. I know it's a quick turnaround, but they really pride themselves on knowing what the game plan is and coming out and working as hard as they can to make it a good game plan.

Against Florida Gulf Coast, you've got to take care of the ball. They force a lot of turnovers and they don't turn it over. You know you've got to guard people at the three-point line. You can't give them layups. They had one play where they are going in for a layup and she tosses out for the three.

The thing I hope is that Steve Kerr will take a couple of those shooters and have them play for the Warriors on Monday against us because their three-point shooting is exceptional. They are really -- it's going to be a very tough challenge for us.

**Q. Brittany didn't have the greatest shooting day but 11 points, 11 boards, six assists, two steals. That was quite a performance.**

COACH TARA VANDERVEER: You know, I thought she had some really nice looks that just didn't go down for her, like on the out-of-bounds play, she came off her back and had a layup. I think Britt tried so hard to just

win the game. You know, maybe her shot wasn't going in, but she found other things to do. Her rebounding was great.

I think rebounding was a real key for us. You know, getting the 17-0 boards, getting 42 boards; that might have been the difference for us right there. You know, shooting -- different people shooting a good percentage.

But Britt, I know that Britt's a great scorer and it was great for her to do other things in this game. Her defense, she didn't get in foul trouble; her rebounding, her leadership, were all good.

**Q. Don't get really mad at me for asking you this question. Have you reached out to Tony Bennett and what was your reaction to that?**

COACH TARA VANDERVEER: You know, I didn't know. I got a text actually from Janey.

You know, I watched the game, and you know, I was sad for him, because -- you know, in basketball now, first of all, seeding is not a science. Who knows, the seeding. And sometimes you just don't have a good matchup.

I just feel like as much as it hurt last night, probably today when they woke up, it was even worse. They had an exceptional year, and they have everything to be proud of. I just feel like I'm in really good company. I think he's a great coach.

**Q. Is it sort of a relief or nice to have that company**

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COACH TARA VANDERVEER: No, not at all. I was rooting for them -- you know, he's from the Pac-12 back then, and I think he's an absolute class guy. You know, sometimes you can't control everything.

They had an injury, and I know our situation I think was different than that in that it was -- the injuries that we had, we weren't a No. 1 seed at the time that we were selected as 1.

You know, it taught me an important lesson. I think he'll learn from it in a good way and so will the guys on the team.

The thing that really I took away from it was, you know, all year they are talking about No. 1 seed, March Madness, No. 1. Enjoy each day. I mean, I'm excited for our team today to beat Gonzaga.

And yes we're getting ready for Florida Gulf Coast and we'll have a lot of work to do. But enjoy each day. You don't know when someone is going to get hurt. You don't know when you're going to get run up against a

buzzsaw of a team like they did. It's something that he'll be stronger because of it, and so will his team.

We'll see everybody either tomorrow or Monday. Thanks for coming.



2018 NCAA® DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL  
CHAMPIONSHIP

NCAA First Round

Maples Pavilion - Stanford, Calif. - Saturday, March 17, 2018

LOCKER ROOM QUOTES

**STANFORD**

**BRITTANY MCPHEE**

"We just really wanted to get the job done, especially after watching Missouri get upset. We didn't want to leave anything to chance. We were very focused."

"We just try to play our game, especially since it's the NCAA Tournament. You don't need any extra incentive to play hard."

"The coaches did a good job with our scouting report. We were locked in defensively and that just helps lead to good offense. We were able to run our plays and hit shots."

"We believe we can play with anyone. But we just know that it's one game at a time and anyone else can play with anyone because everyone is in the tournament for a reason. You have to get past the next game before you think about anything else."

"FGCU is a really good team, even if they aren't super-tall. They get into it defensively and kind of disrupt things. They have really good shooters, so we'll have to prepare for that."

**DIJONAI CARRINGTON**

"We really, really focused on defense. We limited them to one shot a lot of times and we didn't give them what they wanted. Even though they got shots off, they weren't the shots they are accustomed to taking."

“We watched the Selection Show and saw how people responded to playing different teams. We knew they kind of had our number. Especially after last year, we didn’t come out strong enough and we let them beat us in our own house. We weren’t going to let that happen again.”

“FGCU is obviously a very, very good shooting team and very scrappy and aggressive. I think we have to throw the first punch. We can’t let them come out and be more aggressive than us. We have to be the aggressors from the tip and until the last whistle. We have to use our size and strength, because those are definitely an advantage.”

## **GONZAGA**

### **JILL BARTA**

“The last time we played Stanford, it was a different year and a different game. This game came down to who was more prepared for it, and basically that’s how it played out.”

“We could have rebounded better and ran our offensive players better. We had to do one of those two things. We rebounded poorly and shot awfully from the field. If we do any of those things better, it’s a different game.”

“I’ve got to give it to Stanford. They played an awesome game. They made us play to our weaknesses. Kudos to them.”

### **CHANDLER SMITH**

“If we would have played Stanford earlier in the year as opposed to now, it would have been a different matchup just because of how the season progresses. Teams mature and get better at certain things. The difference from this year to last year ... We had some key players on the roster, huge defensive players, who gave us a lift last year. We struggled defensively tonight. I think that could have made a difference, especially in terms of our rebounding.”

“Stanford is a fundamental team. They’re really good at driving and dishing. We struggled with our rotation at times, and definitely at getting second-chance points. That really hurt us.”