



Postgame Quotes

(1) Stanford vs. (3) Southern California - Sunday, May 16, 2010

**2010 National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship
Aztec Aquaplex | San Diego State University | San Diego, Calif.**

(3) Southern California 10, (1) Stanford 9

NCAA Championship - National Championship - First-Place Game

USC Head Coach Jovan Vavic

Opening comment:

"This was a 100 percent team effort. We had so many players play well. Our goalie was excellent, our seniors played a great game. So many contributed in so many different ways. The last time we played Stanford, our extra man offense was not very good and that was very good today. Our 5-on-6 defense was outstanding and actually saved us. Overall, I was very pleased with our energy of our girls going into this game. They played with lots of fire, lots of heart. I am so happy to see our seniors end their careers with a win."

On reaching the final for the third consecutive season:

"I was thinking a couple days ago, what if we had lost this game. Being in four finals and not reaching this final stage and getting this trophy, it would feel (like) a failure to me and my coaching staff. I am extremely happy for them. That is my No. 1 emotion right now. I am really happy for my players."

On winning the championship:

"When you are a coach for so many years, you think you are going to get old. But I swear, I was as excited (for) this finish and (for) this championship as I was (for) the first one. It just doesn't get old. In some ways, I was even more excited for this, because we waited for this so long."

On what he told the team at halftime:

"I told them it was going to be two quarters of war. I have never seen our girls this excited. I have coached the seniors for four years now and I have never seen this much emotion and this much desire. When you reach this level, where the girls want it this much, win or lose, it is incredible. I felt that the girls were in it for each other."

USC Senior Tumua Anae

On how fired up she was for the game:

"I think I probably played my most passionate water polo today. I was fired up. I was ready to go. I was talking a little smack and I usually do that. My blood was boiling. I was ready to go."

On her thoughts in the last few minutes:

"You needed to stay level headed. We needed to stay and play a smart game. We still had a few minutes left so our focus was on defense and patience on offense. You don't want to back down, but you don't want to start playing bad water polo. I think it was defensive minded. On the team, everyone was looking at each other in the eye. We knew what we came here to do. We needed to finish these last few minutes of the game. Everyone was there for each other."

USC Senior Kally Lucas

On how it feels to win the title:

"It was honestly one of the best feelings in the world and the best part about it is I am doing (it) with my best friends. This is my last water polo game ever and to go out with a win is so exciting for me."

On her thoughts in the last few minutes:

"The thing we tried to focus on was keeping the ball as long as possible. With 45 seconds left, we were all in the middle of

the pool saying, 'we have to get one more stop, this has to be the best defense of our entire lives.' And we got our stop."

Stanford Head Coach John Tanner

Opening Statement:

"To me the story of this game - it played out exactly how our other games with them did where they come out with a lot of energy and execute well on their 6-on-5s and get off to a lead. It was really eerily similar to our other games with them and as we had done each time previously, we came back (by chipping away). We started the third quarter, getting the first two goals and at 6-5, we then have two 6-on-5s to tie it 6-6. (We got) great looks, opportunities that we wanted to create, and didn't convert. We felt that if we got that goal (to tie it), as with the previous times we played them, it would have swung things completely in our favor. We felt like we had good control of the game. We were playing more aggressively on defense. It created a challenge for us when they got the goal to go to 7-5 and then 8-5 and then we were constantly spending a lot of energy to get back in it and never could get back even.

"I'm extremely proud of how we played, of these two seniors (and) of our other two seniors, and the fact that they left everything in the water. (I'm) also extremely proud of our team and the character they showed coming back, not once, not twice, but three times. To get a shot like that at the buzzer when trailing 10-6 with four minutes left, to come back to 10-9 and have a shot to tie it, shows this group has a tremendous amount of faith in one another and resilience in the face of just seemingly an overwhelming hill to climb."

On their final possession:

"We had that play set up to get a shot - we just wanted to make sure it was on goal. With Jess (Steffens) and Kelly (Eaton) on one side and our two left-handers on the other side, (we) hoped they'd be there for a rebound. We just didn't get enough on the shot to create that kind of problem. We had probably two other options that we could have gone with closer to the 10 seconds, but felt we would be shooting through a lot of defenders. I liked having these guys swarming the goal."

On his thinking when they were trailing 10-6:

"The approach was just to get a goal in our next possession and just start putting the pressure on them to respond. To get to 10-7 was a huge deal and then at 10-8, (we) felt like we were really going to have a chance to convert that 6-on-5 and Annika (Dries) scored to make it 10-9. Boy, that really had us feeling that if we could just get one last look that we could get a quality shot off and get it into overtime. We felt that if we came back from four goals down, we could have played that overtime 10 times, we would have won all 10."

Stanford Senior Jessica Steffens

On if the game was more physical than the two schools' previous meetings this season:

"You're playing for a national championship, so everyone's going with all they've got. Definitely, it was physical in there and that's what it takes at this point of the season. We take it and it doesn't bother us playing physical."

Stanford Senior Kelly Eaton

On her career and her final season:

"I've been around J.T. (John Tanner), Suz (Susan Orlwein) and Kyle (Utsumi) for many years now. I grew up in the area and they taught me everything I know. It was just a really great experience this year. The whole ride - losing and then going to second and then coming back first and being ranked No. 1 for this tournament. I know I didn't really contribute that much in the coming back (in the game) part - the younger girls had so much heart and didn't give up. I could learn a lot from them and it was a good time."