

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Sunday, March 8, 2026

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

San Diego State Aztecs

Coach Stacie Terry-Hutson

Nala Martinez

Nala Williams

Naomi Panganiban

Postgame Press Conference



Air Force 83, San Diego State 76

THE MODERATOR: We have student-athletes Nat Martinez, Nala Williams, Bailey Barnhard, Coach Stacie Terry-Hutson. Coach, some thoughts on today's game?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: Obviously really disappointed in the outcome. I thought Air Force played a great game today and deserved to win.

But I don't want to get too high or too low, because we've had a fantastic season this year. We have played an amazing brand of basketball for about five months now, and we're not going to let one loss dictate or dampen the season that we've had. To go 19-1 in this conference was a challenging feat.

Really proud of our kids, and we know this isn't the last game for us. We're going to bottle this up and get better for postseason play.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Milahnie Perry, what changes did you guys make defensively throughout the game to try to slow her down with what she was doing? For any of the players.

NALA WILLIAMS: Some of the changes we tried to do was to double her on the screens and also to try to blue on the on-ball screens.

Our communication wasn't great today, and that's due to me, like a big part of it. I take big responsibility for her

game, but she also played an amazing basketball game as well, so I give her credit.

Q. When you played them, what, five, six days ago you shot 65% from three. Was there anything on the perimeter that they were doing differently, or -- I mean, obviously that's not a sustainable number even on air, but was there anything you guys sensed that they did differently?

BAILEY BARNHARD: Air Force is just a great defensive team. They're going to be super disciplined going into every single game. It could be different. The game plan could be different based on who shot well in the past games, who shot well this game.

So just going into it, they say tournament is a new season, so we saw that from Air Force today.

Q. Nat, can you speak to the challenge of guarding against this Air Force offense once they get Perry rolling as she did in the first half, you know, opening things up for her teammates?

NAT MARTINEZ: Yeah, they're a tough, competitive team. They executed their scout well. We did in glimpses, but what we did we just have to watch film and learn from it.

Q. I guess my question is during that run at the end, how did you guys feel? You guys are on the court, time is going down.

NALA WILLIAMS: I feel like we didn't think the game was over until it was over. Until it says 0:00 we're going to put our heart into the game, so that's what you guys witnessed out there.

Q. I know for Nat and Barnhard, you'll keep growing and keep growing. You're such a young team.

BAILEY BARNHARD: There's so much to learn especially from a game like this and just taking this as kind of a chip on our shoulder, like Coach said. We're looking forward to the postseason. So just learning from this and just moving

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forward as best we can.

Q. Nat, you had 22 points versus Air Force last time out, yet this time you were only held to five shots. Specifically with you, what adjustments did you notice they made on the defensive side?

NAT MARTINEZ: I mean, every team kind of guards me the same. They're very up to touch, face guarding. With that, it helps our point guards and our other wing players to get open. It's the same team, but a new game every time. Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: We'll dismiss the student-athletes at this time. Thank you. Questions for Coach.

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: I can answer those too if you want me to.

Q. What end game adjustments did you try to make on Milahnie?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: Like she said, we tried to put a little more pressure in the back court on her. In the first half I thought they were just effective at executing plays, walking the ball up. Obviously they had played yesterday and did a good job of just executing their sets.

We tried to switch. We tried to trap a little bit, but it's hard to contain a guard as good as she is. I was a little bit more disappointed in how we couldn't contain the other players.

Perry does a great job getting to her spot and rising up and shooting it, and they run a lot of stuff for her to get that shot, and she was magnificent today.

For me, defensively it was some of the others that we didn't do a great job of.

Q. Offensively you guys had just shot 65% from three, and then you come out today, and I think maybe first 16 of your first 18 points were in the paint, so it looked like, okay, they're going to try to guard you out top, and you are going to take advantage of inside.

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: Well, they adjusted. Like Nat talked about, they're not going to let our shooters shoot. The pressure bothered us a little bit. I say that, we still scored 76 points. That should be enough to win. The offense wasn't the issue. It wasn't our best and cleanest game, but it was defensively where we lost the game.

I mean, we gave Emily 20 points who played fantastic against us up there as well. We didn't defend her very well. Obviously Milahnie had a fantastic game. Then

McNabb hit some threes that we weren't expecting either.

So just kudos to Air Force for what they were able to do and make shots when it counted. They made big shots. Every time I thought we were trying to crawl into it or we would get it tied, they made some really big plays.

Q. You faced enough Air Force teams over the years to know what you get. What you did think when you saw them beat Wyoming yesterday and knew that was going to be the match-up?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: You know, they're a hard match-up because they play a really aggressive brand of basketball. They're up denying at every position. All pressure for 40 minutes. That's who you are.

That kind of took us out of our rhythm offensively, what we wanted to do. But, again, defensively we got to play better defense. We can't give up 83 points and expect to win a game.

Q. What does this do to your postseason aspirations?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: We're hoping that because of our nonconference schedule we get an invite to play somewhere. We're hoping to play in the WBIT at this point, and kind of going from there.

Q. Coach, two things that really jumped at me off the stat sheet was the 8 for 11 that Air Force was in the third quarter, and then being outrebounded by the margin that the team was in the second half. Can you just speak to the offensive shifts that Air Force did? How were they able to get to the glass more down the stretch?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: Want-to, discipline, will. I just didn't think we did a great job of blocking out and paying attention to the details; something that we've done a good job of for the majority of the season.

They just flat-out beat us to the ball. They beat us to 50/50s and, again, made big-time plays when they needed to. I thought they played a really good game. Again, 38 points from an Air Force team is not normal, and they made a lot of shots when they needed to. You make baskets, and you defend like they do, they're going to win more games.

Q. 25-5 overall season and 19-1 with a Mountain West regular season title. What is your message to the NCAA Tournament committee, if any, on why you guys would deserve an at-large bid?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: Wow, I have two answers for that. I'll give you my honest answer. We're probably a one-bid league, so whoever wins this tournament will get invited to the NCAA. I do hope they see the body of work that we've put together and consider us.

If not, there are other tournaments that we'll be happy to play in, and I know our girls will be ready.

Q. Second question, Naomi had a fantastic game, including that late-game rally to put pressure on Air Force. After a spectacular season, how do you think she can grow and expand her ceiling as she goes on to her junior year?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: Naomi has a really -- she's already a fantastic player, but she can really continue to grow in a lot of different aspects, but I thought she kind of put us on our back and made some big-time shots. That's just who she is.

We talk about having a little dog in us, and she definitely has that. She's a competitor, and when the lights are on, she's always ready to compete. So I'm looking forward to her growth.

You know, she had 29 today. She also had 6 assists and zero turnovers. She played a pretty good game all the way around.

Q. One of the things that you've talked about a lot is how young this team is. The saying goes, when you lose, you learn. What are the big things you're hoping this group learns from the result here today?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: You know, I have to go back and watch, because I'm looking at it, and I didn't think we did a great job sharing the basketball as well as we normally do, but then on the stats it says we have 16 assists. I thought we were pretty one-dimensional offensively, so I'll go back and watch that. I think we can learn from that.

Defensively we have to play with a little bit more toughness and discipline than we did tonight, and we have for the majority of the season. So we'll go back and watch film and just kind of get back to who we are and what got us to 25-5 thus far and hoping to play quite a few more games of basketball.

Q. I guess my question is, what does this team mean to you after everything you guys have gone through this season?

STACIE TERRY-HUTSON: You know, I huddled them before the game, and I was just telling them how special this group is. They've done things this year that I have never been a part of.

This is a very, very special team, and I'm really excited for what they were able to put together. There was a lot of question marks coming into the season because we had lost so much last year, graduated a lot, and we had a very young team, but these kids are resilient and competitive and highly unselfish, very unselfish. That has allowed us to put the season together that we have.

Although we're disappointed, although I'm disappointed, I am very, very proud of this team.

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