

Sun Devil Volleyball Postgame Quotes: November 29, 2024

Arizona State Volleyball Head Coach JJ Van Niel

Opening Statement

"What an amazing turnout tonight. A 3 p.m. match on a Friday...I was like, 'ok, it's kind of a bummer, senior night,' but man, the fans came out and I mentioned it to them when I spoke after the match. It's really, really special for our team and our program to have everyone coming out. I think this was like six or seven matches above 4000 (fans), which is just incredible. Really, really exciting for not just the current team, but the future of the program and I hope the fans realize how much we love and appreciate them coming out. It makes a really, really big deal. Huge home court advantage. So, hopefully we get them out there next week when we're hosting."

On winning the Big 12 Championship

"It's really special for this group of kids. We have a very veteran team that's been through a lot. We have some kids here that have never made a tournament. They set the goal of winning the championship at the beginning of the season. I never set goals for the team and I think the cool thing is we believed the whole time that we could be in the mix to do it and they went out and did it. So I'm really proud of this team and really, really special for our program that's for sure."

On the seniors' impact on the program

"This is a really, really special group. Tonight was senior night and it's easy not to really be that emotional on senior night because we're playing again. I think once these kids are gone, a lot of people are gonna have some big shoes to fill because it's a very, very special group. They're veterans. They're wonderful, wonderful humans to be around. I truly feel so grateful and honored that I get to come in and coach these kids. I just love them to death. It's really, really fun."

On the seniors' bond with each other and younger teammates

"They've helped set the standard for not just what we do on the court, but I think more importantly off the court and our culture. I would put our culture up against any program, in any sport in the country. I feel pretty confident in that. It's just a special, special group and I felt like last year's team was really special with that and did an amazing job with the culture. The kids that were on the team last year have continued and helped to keep that going. And then the new kids have come in, just flourished and helped continue that. Yesterday we had a Thanksgiving dinner at my house and it was just amazing. I'm just watching everyone interacting together. Parents were there, it was huge. I think we had like 60 people and it was just a really, really cool environment and you just watch (them interact). Mary (Shroll) is interacting with KP (Kiyah Presely) and Piper (Rama); they're like six years difference in age yet they do such a good job of just having fun and enjoying each other. It's just really, really special. I think this group has really set the standard for what is expected in the culture. We gotta continue to drive that."

On NCAA tournament home court advantage

"I hope it helps us. Tournament's (are) always crazy because it's just so matchup dependent in the first couple of rounds - who do you get? Last year was really fun going down to BYU; it's a tough place to play. I love playing at home. I think we have a huge home court advantage whether it's in Mullet or DFA and it's just such a fun environment... If we can bring that kind of environment, just imagine the pressure that your opponent has to feel when they walk in. Every time they serve, the crowds screaming at them. Every time they make any play that doesn't work out, the crowds screaming at them. So I'm super excited. It's really, really special to host."

On Mary Shroll being drafted to the PVF (Professional Volleyball Federation)

"It's a testament to how hard she's worked. I'm so proud of the kids in this program..I mean, Mary, before she got here was a DS at LMU and kind of had lost (her) libero shot and came in here. Her first year, she was really good for us. She knew passing had to improve and this spring absolutely crushed it when it came to working on her serve receive. So she's earned what she's receiving, which is being drafted by Vegas. I know she's really excited to get down there once the season is over— not before that. I think it's really special and she's worked so hard. She deserves it."

Graduate Libero Mary Shroll

On winning the Big 12 in ASU's first season in the conference

"Just winning the conference is a huge feat and a huge testament to how much work you put in. We deserve it, and it's super cool to come in and do this in our first year in the Big 12. So it's very special."

On building on last season's foundation

"Last season, I think a lot of that was trying to prove ourselves. This year, we really were just trying to make it known that we were here to stay. We were here to make an impact, we will be heard and you will know our ASU name. So it's just building on that and building on the future of the ASU program and everything that we're trying to accomplish here. Not just this season and not just last season, this is for the future."

On what it would mean to host the first and second rounds of the NCAA Tournament

"It would be incredible. Just being able to host in and of itself is something so special, and we talk about that on our team. The freshmen coming in say 'yes, okay, we're in the tournament,' but it doesn't happen like that. You have to put in so much work. Seeing all the work and all the hours that you have to put in, I think being able to host is incredible. Obviously being in Tempe, I know my mom's going to get the invite list out and we're bringing probably 50 people. So it's going to be really fun."

On getting recognized on Senior Day

"We're not done here, so it's a nice emotional moment. It's really nice to be recognized, but I was wondering if I was going to cry and then I thought, 'We're here next week.' Maybe I'll cry tears of joy at those games. It was a very special moment in front of a ton of fans tonight."

On getting drafted by the Vegas Thrill of the PVF

"It was exciting and it was a very busy day. I found out right after practice, but it was really exciting seeing all the sweet messages. It just kind of felt like this is the right move and this is the thing to do right now. It's really exciting and it's been awesome talking with them and connecting with them. So I'll definitely know more once the season is done. I'm just staying focused on making this deep run in the tournament and then I'm excited to go to Vegas."

Senior Outside Hitter Geli Cyr

On the home crowds:

"We were talking to Graham, our AD, about it, Mary and I, and we were just saying that we're igniting the valley and bringing volleyball to Tempe and it's becoming a volleyball school, which is so, so, so cool. Shout out to all of our athletics right now. It's been such a fun year and I think the fans are really starting to see that and I mean, we haven't lost at home. I think that has a lot to do with the crowd to be honest."

On leaving big shoes to fill:

"The biggest thing that we've done is we've held them to a really high standard and that helps. When I was a freshman, my standard wasn't as high as it is for them and it's hard sometimes for sure. They have taken that and some of them have even doubled it. So I'm really excited to see what they do in the future."

Graduate Middle Blocker Claire Jeter

On the first conference championship in ASU history:

"We don't like to talk about the past, but Geli and I have been here through a lot of it. It means a lot to make it this far. Everyone thought it (last season) was a fluke. Everyone said it before and our job was to make sure everyone knew that it wasn't and that we trained to be in the position that we are today."

On the senior group:

"These are all of our best friends. We fight for each other and with each other every day. We've definitely grown that bond with everyone, seniors, freshmen grads, we're all very, very close. We play for each other, with each other, for the same common goal, which is something you don't find everywhere. There's a lot of teams where some people want to play for something different, they don't think it's as important. Everyday we step in the gym, everyone has the same goal with the same intent on how to get there."

On balancing senior day emotions while also still playing a game:

“We let ourselves have our emotions, that's part of the game. We have a team full of people that we're going to miss, but it's also easy knowing that this isn't our last game and this isn't our last game in DFA. It's hard, but it's really exciting.”