



2018 NCAA® DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Saturday, March 17, 2018

POSTGAME QUOTES

IOWA HEAD COACH LISA BLUDER

opening statement

"I want to congratulate Jim (Flanery). I thought Creighton came out and played a fabulous game. I thought they were ready. Defensively, they had a great defensive plan, surrounding Megan (Gustafson), obviously. They did a great job of clock management. At the end of the game, they scored on every single last-second shot-clock look and did a really, really good job. I'm proud of our team. We're a young team, starting one senior on this team. We battled back through a lot this year, losing our point guard. Really, really proud of the team and how they handled everything this year and then we made it back to the tournament."

on Creighton's offensive aggression

"I thought they did a good job of just using the shot clock. You work that hard on defense for 30 seconds, it's a long time. I think we're making their job easier. We were only making them play defense for five, 10 seconds where we were having to play defense every time for 30 seconds. When you play defense for 30 seconds, you're going to have more opportunities to foul, you're going to get a little more tired and it's hard to keep them in front of you. They do a great job of spacing the court—an unbelievable job—and there's really nothing you can help off of because they have such good 3-point shooters. I just think they did a really good job of that."

on guard play and small margin of error in tournament

"I absolutely think we needed more people than Megan (Gustafson) to carry our offensive load. I thought Hannah Stewart came in and did a really nice job for us. It's too bad Makenzie (Meyer) got in foul trouble. She's really our best 3-point shooter. Obviously, when she picked up some foul trouble and fouled out ultimately, not a good thing for us. They weren't really sagging off of her. They were sagging off of everybody else and we just weren't able to make them pay for that."

on how this season sets up next season

"Yeah. That's what I told the team. I'm really proud of them. They fought through this year. Next year, we're going to have more weapons. We'll have a deeper team, a healthy team, hopefully, with Tania (Davis) next year all the way through. We return some really good players. Megan, I think, is one of the best posts in America and coming back for her senior year. I think Hannah showed today what she's capable of doing. We have four recruits coming in, so I think the future looks bright for our team. I mean, I wish they would've had a better experience here, for them to go into next year, but certainly they know they're good enough to play at this level and we'll keep growing. We're going to keep getting better."

on the difference coming down the stretch

"The third quarter, I felt like we didn't get the ball into Megan (Gustafson) enough. I think she took one shot in the third quarter and that's not the best. We did get it down to four a couple times and just could never get over that hump. We had a couple of turnovers, some poor times, maybe not the best shot selection sometimes in those situations, but certainly again, they would go down, milk that clock and keep working. I thought our kids worked really hard on defense. I thought they really worked hard to get around those screens. Those are hard screens to defend and I thought our kids did a really good job with that. Just could not get over that hump like you said. I think it could've been different if we'd just gotten that down to a tie."

on the season

"We hadn't been in the Dance for the last two years and that's been a really sore subject for us. We got back to the Dance and we're happy about that. We know we return the majority of our people. I love this team, I really do. They were awesome to coach. They were positive, they were enthusiastic every day. They were pleasant to be around all the time. This is a group I really like to coach and I'm going to remember them that way and I'm going to remember them because the grit they have, the resilience they have and just, the wonderful, really unbelievable women that they are. That's what I'll remember about this group."

on looking toward next year

"Yeah. They're not going to let down. This is a group that's going to go back to work right away. We'll take a couple weeks off and we'll get back to work. Obviously, we're going to add some new pieces to the puzzle, which I think will be good and getting Tania (Davis) back will be really good. We'll get back at it. I think it bodes well for next year."

on Creighton's Agnew and Lamberty

"Yeah, when you bank in a 3, things are going pretty well for you. Again, they made some great clutch shots as the shot clock was expiring. Lexi's (Alexis Sevillian) not very big, she's got good size over Lexi, they're able to pass over Lexi a little bit. So she was able to finish down there, too. They did a really good job of finishing at the end of the shot clock. I agree with you—both of those young women did a really, really good job"

IOWA JUNIOR FORWARD MEGAN GUSTAFSON

on not being able to build momentum

"I think we were all just trading baskets with them, and I think that's what ultimately stopped us. We weren't able to get the stops on the defensive end. If we were able to do that I think we'd have a different result right now. Again, we were where we needed to get those stops, but it just didn't happen tonight."

on what was difficult in the game or new when facing Creighton

"No, people double team me all the time. I didn't think there was anything different than what I've seen. I was able to finish inside, and then team was doing a great job of setting me up. I think we could have taken our time a little bit more to be able to reverse the ball a bit and open up a little bit on the inside."

on what she can take from this game and apply to next year

"This really sets us up for next year. Both of us are seniors, this is going to be our last year, and we're going to be really excited to make a run. We are young, and I think just having this experience in the NCAA is huge, especially when you're a player. This is our first time, and we definitely want to come get back next year to make some noise."

IOWA SOPHOMORE FORWARD HANNAH STEWART

on what Creighton was good at besides her best defensive efforts

"Well we knew coming in that they were a 3-point shooting team and that was what we came out to stop in order to win this game. They came out hot early and we missed a couple of defensive assignments that way. Their shots just seemed to fall in the bucket and ours weren't at times, and I think ultimately that's what hurt us."

But we knew we were going to have to guard the 3-point line.”

on having to fight through trading buckets

“We’re at the NCAA tournament, so we’re not going to let anything get to us. I think that’s one thing our point guard Kathleen Doyle throughout the game was telling us, ‘Hey guys, we got this; don’t get down. Getting down is not going to get us anywhere. This is do-or-die time.’ I think we had that mindset a lot when we went through. We tried to not let their shots get to us, but they just didn’t seem to miss, and they just kept going in.”