



2014 NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Regional Semifinal · Baylor vs. Kentucky
Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center · Notre Dame, Ind.
Saturday, March 29

REGIONAL SEMIFINAL GAME 1 QUOTES – Baylor

Kim Mulkey – Head Coach

On Odyssey Sims getting three fouls in the first half...

“When I walked in to visit with them before the second half started, I looked at Odyssey and I said ‘Don’t pick up your fourth in the first ten minutes. You’re an All-American, figure it out.’ If she had picked up her fourth, I’m not sure it would have changed the flow of the game because she only attempted seven shots the second half. But, no, you don’t do that to a player that’s that good. I had all the trust and confidence that she would be all right.”

On the timeout three minutes into the game...

“Well, if I remember specifically, Imani [Wright] was in the game and she turned the ball over and I wanted to challenge a freshman. ‘Don’t you come out here with a deer in the headlight look and throw that ball away. Where’d that come from? You haven’t done that in months.’ And sometimes you just want to change the flow of a game. I felt like at that time I could get on them and challenge them and let them know that they needed to play as fired up as I was coaching. I also think I made a substitution there as well.”

On whether she expected to be an Elite Eight team...

“We didn’t talk about this being an Elite Eight team. I talked about the expectations I had that they definitely better be in the NCAA tournament and let’s see how good we are throughout the course of the year. Then as we started with UConn and played them within 11, I don’t know if anyone has played UConn that close, and then we went to the four overtimes with Kentucky. I watched us just get better and better, and I thought, ‘We can go pretty deep in this tournament.’ I realized that the inexperience and the freshmen aren’t going to be a good excuse as we kept getting better because they kept getting better and better. I was like, ‘O.K., how am I going to protect them now?’ Then they go out and win the BIG 12 and win the BIG 12 tourney title. You’ve got to remember guys, there’s no substitute for a fifth-year senior. Those two post players for Kentucky are fifth-year seniors. They’re both transfers. And I’m over here with a 5’11 post player that’s a freshman and a 6’3 freshman post, so how can I not be proud of how much they improved? Then, back to conference when we were playing West Virginia in the tournament championship, [Asya] Bussie is a fifth-year senior. She was redshirted with an injury. They’ve got a lot more experience. But I tend to like the effort that the freshman have. They just work.”

Odyssey Sims – Senior – Guard

On team's defense in the first half...

"We learned from the first time that we played them that they were going to attack, so we tried our best to defend dribble penetration and keep them in front. Rebounding was key. We thought they were going to come out strong in the second half with their perimeter shooting, but we just have to give credit to our defense."

On the difference in their approach facing Kentucky for the second time this year...

"We came out strong in the first five minutes today and then we kept that going. We knew we were up going into the second half, but it was not over yet. We tried our best to just stay on top of them and never let up. Our bench played outstanding today—they came in and gave us production, and that is what we needed today. We did our best to keep playing and get the ball to those who needed it at the most critical times."

On her confidence to push through her early shooting struggles...

"My teammates did a good job of scoring the ball, I started out 0-for-6 shooting, but I knew that I was going to keep shooting the ball no matter what. They give me confidence when I do not have it sometimes, and, like I said, we started out great as a team, we kept the tempo up, we sort of played into their hands a little bit, but we never got rattled and did a good job of taking care of the ball."

Nina Davis – Freshman – Forward

On the rebounding edge they gained today...

"It was a big game, and we knew yesterday that rebounding would be one of the biggest factors that determined the game. They have some great post players that are very strong and aggressive, so we just tried to match their aggressiveness and take control of that part of the game."

Khadijah Cave – Freshman – Post

On her confidence today...

"I just came in and did what the team needed me to do. I stayed focused, and we just played team ball. We are all in it together. If I do not do well offensively, then I just try to do well defensively, and when I do not do well on defense, I try to do well on offense."

On her increased role lately...

"I just kept pushing myself and working hard in practice and playing team ball pretty much. I try to work hard on the defensive end and keep going hard in practice every day and take it one day at a time."

Makenzie Robertson – Senior – Guard

On the team advancing further in the tournament this year than last year...

"I have been blessed to have been on teams that have gone far every year that I have been here. I do not take any of them for granted. It does not really compare to last year because it has been so different. With what we lost, we did not really know what to expect, but that gave us motivation to prove people wrong, and it means the world that we have come this far and taken it one game at a time."



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REGIONAL SEMIFINAL GAME 1 QUOTES – Kentucky

Matthew Mitchell - Head Coach

Opening statement...

"I'd first like to express our deep gratitude to the great people here at Notre Dame. The NCAA and all of the good folks here at Notre Dame really did a great job; it's just a first class place. From the time you walk in the door to the time you leave, you're really treated in a first-class manner. We're deeply appreciative of the experience and the way we were treated here and we thank everybody with NCAA and we thank everybody with Notre Dame. It's certainly not the way we wanted the season to end. It was a very difficult day. We had a really tough time, and it looked like we were ill prepared and that's squarely on my shoulders. I'm real proud of our players for the season that we had. It could have been a very different season and all of the failures of the season are mine and the successes are the players'. I want to thank our players for battling through some tough circumstances and doing a good job this year."

On not calling a timeout to stop the early Baylor run...

"I didn't think it was necessarily plays that Baylor was making. I thought it was mistakes that we were making and we were trying to get the pace of the game at a certain level. I didn't feel like it was out of reach at those times. Not much that I did today was right, so that probably could have helped if I had done something different there. I probably at the time was feeling that we should settle in a play a little bit."

On playing well but not fully executing all game...

"It's hard to figure out exactly why you would come out in this kind of game and struggle to make easy shots. It seemed like the ball was bouncing their way. We would do a good job and the ball would be right there for us to get it, but it would kick into the Baylor players' hands and they would lay it up. I felt like we were doing a lot of good things early except for rebounding and that was very disappointing. We did not seem to really be going after it in the first six or seven minutes like we needed to. When you get yourself into that kind of hole and you're going against a player like Odyssey Sims, I was concerned. I thought that we could make some type of run back at them, but [Odyssey Sims] is just so good and can

make so many different things happen. She scored 25 points and had seven assists as well and she was really terrific today, but our defense did not put forth a Kentucky type effort today.”

On Baylor’s defense...

“Baylor played an excellent game. I congratulate them for being prepared and for playing well. They had a tremendous defensive presence today and they played very hard. I think that there were some shots that we missed, but don’t mistake me for saying Baylor didn’t play well defensively. They played a tough game, and I thought that [Sune Agbuke] was a huge factor at the rim. We had some real tough plays in there. I thought we had some open perimeter shots that could’ve made a difference, and certainly we missed some layups, but you have to give Baylor a tremendous amount of credit.”

Bria Goss – Junior – Guard

On what went wrong against Baylor...

“We just didn’t play together as a team today, and as a leader, I should have been able to pull the team together through adversity. We just didn’t have it today.”

On if Kentucky focused too much on Baylor’s Odyssey Sims...

“I don’t think we were too focused on her. You can never be too focused on one of the best players in the country. She did a great job getting her teammates the ball, and they knocked down a lot of big shots. They deserve a lot of credit for the way they played.”

On Baylor’s rebounding advantage...

“That was one of the things Coach [Mitchell] told us in the locker room at halftime. They were missing their first shots but getting two or three putbacks. We didn’t have the focus that we needed, and holding them to one-and-done possessions was a challenge.”

Linnae Harper – Freshman – Guard

On what went wrong against Baylor...

“We just dug ourselves in a big hole, and it was just too difficult to get the score back within reach. Our struggles with rebounding played a big factor too.”

DeNesha Stallworth – Senior – Forward

On Kentucky’s struggles to stop Baylor...

“Defensively, we didn’t do a great job. We just didn’t play well together as a team today, which obviously set us back. We fought back in the second half, so that’s all that matters but we’re just really disappointed with this loss.”

On what Baylor did differently in this game from their first matchup...

“This game, they played really well together as a team, which was the big difference between us and them. Like Bria [Doss] said, Odyssey [Sims] did a great job getting her teammates involved and they did a great job knocking down shots. Our rotation wasn’t great so that just led to easy opportunities for them to grab rebounds. It’s just our fault, and credit to them.”

On conclusion of her career at Kentucky...

“I’m so happy to be here, and I appreciate everything Coach Mitchell and my teammates have done for me. This season has not been easy for us, but I have to give all credit to my team for sticking together. I wouldn’t want to be at any other place or any other position. I love these girls and I know they are going to fight next year. I’m just so happy to be a part of UK.”