

Big 12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Saturday, March 4, 2017

Jeff Mittie Eternati Willock Kayla Goth Kansas State

K-State - 74

Iowa State - 67

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by the K-State Wildcats, Coach Jeff Mittie and his two student-athletes, Kayla Goth and Eternati Willock. Coach, your thoughts about this afternoon's game? Congratulations.

JEFF MITTIE: Thank you. Well, I think it's what everybody expected of this game. Two quality teams going at it, a 4-5 game going at it in this tournament should be this type of game, back and forth, ties, lead changes, all those things.

I think for us it was certainly a struggle early on. We couldn't make anything early. We didn't have very good rhythm. Iowa State, that's their system. They force you into taking open jump shots and I think we were 1 of 10 at one point to start. I was proud of our group. Goth gave us a huge lift. She was the one that opened up the basket for everybody and everybody relaxed, and I thought our rebounding got better as the game went on. That was critical.

But this game didn't have anything that I didn't expect. We had to fight through a lot of adversity today with our foul trouble issues, with Lewis in foul trouble, with players not playing good. Our bench was critical in this game and our bench played very well today.

Q. Third quarter, you hit 5 of 5 3's, at a point where Iowa State was I think at about 0-9 or 0-10 funk. Did you guys sense that opening? That was a good time to hit some threes and create separation?

KAYLA GOTH: I thought for sure it was a great time to do that. When another team is struggling, it's time to go! We looked up at the scoreboard and it was a tight game at that point and we wanted to stretch it out there



a little bit.

ETERNATI WILLOCK: Definitely our seniors were emphasizing that we wanted to push and separate at that time, so we wanted to go out there and get some stops and create some opportunities for us on the offensive end.

Q. Kayla, what was working for you tonight?

KAYLA GOTH: A little bit of everything. I kinda tried to start with my defense. I've always been a defense first player, so if I can get steals and stuff on that end of the floor I can usually contribute to my offensive game. But just going out there and shooting the ball with offense. We knew they were going to sag off of me, Shae, and a couple of other players. So coming in, shooting the ball with confidence.

Q. What were the keys to shutting down Iowa State defensively?

ETERNATI WILLOCK: I would say one of their two best players, I would say Buckley and Carleton, we had to stop them first and let the others score because they're a great offensive team, and Durr hit some big shots. Keeping those players to minimum points was our key and playing to their energy, I guess.

KAYLA GOTH: I would say we decided if they were going to beat us we didn't want it to be by their best two players. So really shutting down those two and rotating to the other shooters. Durr obviously had a big night, so rotating hard to her and trying to get hart hits and close-outs there.

Q. Coach, Lewis didn't score until tied at 56. She we want on a 6-0 run. What do you think sparked her?

JEFF MITTIE: Probably sitting on the bench a while. I don't have any grand answer for that, but I wouldn't like sitting over there very long so she probably got tired sitting on the bench, in foul trouble, a little bit of frustration and she came back in and decided, you know, I'm going to do something about it.

I will say in that stretch we did have some ball movement that got her a weak side seal. So we didn't intentionally put her away from the ball. They were shoving her off, but ultimately we were doing that in some parts of the game anyway, but in that stretch she

was much more aggressive and much more physical and our ball movement was pretty good in that stretch.

The other thing I want to make a point of is people get asked this question all the time about NCAA Tournament teams and all those things, but I feel very strongly that Iowa State is an NCAA Tournament team and while they may not listen to me, if the "eye test" is true and anybody has two good eyes, that's an NCAA Tournament team. They have gone to Texas and won and there probably isn't a bubble team out there that has a top-5 win on the road at a top-5 team in the last month. So that was an NCAA Tournament game this morning that you saw and I hope that they're certainly in there.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. We'll see you tomorrow.