

Big 12 Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mike Carey
Lanay Montgomery
Teana Muldrow
Tynice Martin

West Virginia

West Virginia - 77

Baylor - 66

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by the West Virginia Mountaineers, Coach Mike Carey, his student-athletes, Tynice Martin, Teana Muldrow and Lanay Montgomery. Coach, congratulations. Your thoughts?

MIKE CAREY: You know, first of all, Baylor is a great program. They do a great job. Won the leg again and everything, so it's an honor for us. If we're going to knock somebody off it was an honor for us to knock off Baylor because they're such a great program. Give all the credit to our players.

They knew coming down here that we had to win at least one, two games; and I told 'em after the second game, hell, we might as well win the third one since we're here. And they came out and played extremely hard and continued to play defense the whole time. I look here where Baylor only had nine offensive rebounds, which is pretty good for us, defensively keeping them off the boards.

We turned it over only 7 times, so I thought those were going to be the areas that we had to do really well in and we were able to do that.

Q. Coach, what clicked for you guys here in Oklahoma City?

MIKE CAREY: I tell you what, our players just -- we were having good practices before we came here. We really were. They were focused, and you could just see it in their body language that, you know -- I said in here after the Oklahoma game I had to shut down our shootaround because they were so focused and going so hard. We needed some energy for the game.



I knew we were focused, and, you know, I thought the last 5 minutes of this half we played not to lose instead of playing to win; but, you know, we were able to hold on and get the victory.

Q. Coach, last evening you mentioned about the pace of the game, it was -- especially against Texas it was quicker than you wanted it to be, but tonight for whatever reason that was the pace that you got and you stayed with it until you as you just mentioned until late in the game. Was it just a gut feeling or just what?

MIKE CAREY: I just felt, especially when they were going big on us, the opportunity we had on the fast breaks we wanted to pick that up when they went big on us. Then I just thought the last 5 minutes I could tell -- I took a couple of timeouts because I could tell we were about out of gas. Instead of attacking their press and attacking their zone we were just, you know, getting some bad shots and wasn't getting to the rim. But, you know, give our players all the credit. We don't play a lot of people and to play three games in three nights against the caliber of teams we played, they did just a fantastic job.

Q. Tynice, you had a huge tournament. Kim Mulkey said that you really willed your team to this championship through all three games. At one point you hit a three, stuck your tongue out, looked like you were having a lot of fun out there. What was it like for you and did you know going into this, did you feel like you were going to be on in this tournament?

TYNICE MARTIN: I mean, coming into the tournament, yeah, we had a lot of confidence. Like Coach said, we had great practices and we had good energy. It was just different from regular season. Everybody was just playing hard. I could tell from the Oklahoma game that we came here to win and I mean, we had to do it for Lanay. I wanted to send Lanay out with a championship, and that's what we did.

Q. You guys had to -- you know, losing Bria from last year you had to find your new identity maybe a little bit this year and you went through some tough times during Big 12 play with a couple of losing streaks. As recently as nine days ago you

lost at Oklahoma State. What was it that finally clicked you guys together? Can you put that into perspective?

LANAY MONTGOMERY: I think, like, coming into the tournament we didn't know if we would like the NCAA Tournament and our coach told us that, you know, girls, we have got to go down here and win at least two games to know for sure that we can get to the NCAA, and I think we came down here and had our mindset and the girls knew it was all or nothing. Our backs were against the wall and we had to give it our all. I think we came out and played strong, tough and physical for three games.

TEANA MULDROW: I just think that we wanted to defend. Playing basketball I learned that offense is great, but defense wins championships and we bought into defense and we knew it was going to be the key. Scoring is not the problem for us. It is just sticking with defense and having each other's backs. I think we did that well this tournament.

Q. Ladies, can you talk about fourth quarter. Baylor gets within 4, what was the key for y'all to be able to hold back that surge they had and extend the lead and go on to win?

TYNICE MARTIN: Defense. They hit some good shots, and we stopped playing defense for a while and we picked it back up and we had to hit free throws. They started fouling us at the end, and we had to focus and not let their press get into our heads and not turn the ball over.

Q. Coach, can you put into perspective a sophomore scoring 32 in a conference championship game?

TYNICE MARTIN: Of course. It feels amazing, but when you have the team --

MIKE CAREY: I think he asked me.

TYNICE MARTIN: Okay, go ahead. Sorry! (Laughter.)

MIKE CAREY: No, Tynice, you know, she has been a scorer the whole year. Well, for two years. She was a scorer last year for us and a scorer this year. Our biggest thing with Tynice during the year when she started scoring, people started overplaying here and playing box and ones and sending their zone out at her.

Once she learned how to start moving without the basketball and attacking the rim, good things happened for her. Our players, you got to give our players a lot of credit, because, man, they looked for her in this tournament. They really looked for her. When she broke open she had the ball and that's the key. People

got to free her up and make good passes to her, and we were able to do that.

TYNICE MARTIN: Like I said, it feels amazing, you know, to average what I averaged this tournament. But when you have good practices and when you have, you know, my teammates behind me saying nobody can guard you and my coach saying attack them, you have no choice but to do what they say and to believe in yourself. So I feel like that's why I play with the confidence I play with.

Q. Tynice, you got a little bit emotional talking about your family being able to be here and watch you play. What was it like to have them in the crowd and how often do they get to see you play?

TYNICE MARTIN: My dad, he gets to the big games. My mom, she has a heavy work schedule. But it was good seeing them in the stands, you know, witnessing this and us having this first Big 12 championship together. It meant everything, you know, looking in the stands and seeing them, you know, cheering and happy and them on TV. So it meant everything for them to be there.

Q. Mike, I know with all the conference changes and stuff over the last few years a lot of schools suddenly were playing teams way far way and you guys are way far way from this whole conference. Can you talk about what some of the difficulties of that have been to play a championship game so far away from your home fans, but also what it means to win your first one?

MIKE CAREY: You saw when we played Oklahoma here in Oklahoma it was like a home game for them, and then Texas, a lot of fans and Baylor today. We're so far from West Virginia, Morgantown. We don't get a lot of fans here, but you know what? The fans we did have here we really appreciate it and I can hear 'em, and when the game was over they were singing "Country Roads" and that's all that mattered, that we heard that song we end. And give Lanay Montgomery credit. She does so much for us on the defensive side and the offensive side, but she sacrifices a lot of games setting picks and helping the guards on defense; and, you know, we're really going to miss her as a senior.

Teana played half a game and almost had a double-double, so that tells you what she brings to the game. And Chania had 8 assists and only two turnovers. So it was a total team effort, and Tynice hit some great shots and some tough shots. Tynice takes shots you say, "no, no, no. Great shot!" She has that confidence, and we want her to have that confidence, you know, she has a green light. You got a shot, shoot it.

THE MODERATOR: Best of luck in the NCAAs, guys.

