

PAC-12 Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 2 2018

Scott Rueck

Mikayla Pivec

Katie McWilliams

Oregon State

Arizona State - 57, Oregon State - 51

SCOTT RUECK: I thought ASU played a really good game tonight. They came out aggressive just like they did last Sunday, and did a great job on the boards. We didn't match the intensity early, and I think that kind of set the tone for the game, and then you're behind the eight ball. Burned a lot of energy trying to get back in this game. You've got to give them credit.

Ekmark was 3 for 17 in our previous two games combined, and obviously got three a lot tonight and made us pay with those opportunities, and had a great game shooting the ball. So between her and the offensive rebounding, you know, I felt that was the difference. You've got to give them a lot of credit.

Proud of our team, proud of them for battling back, and came up short against a tournament team that we've had three really tough battles with this season.

So proud of our group. Really proud of beaver nation for traveling In Style, once again, and supporting us so well.

Q. Katie, did you think that that shot at the end of the third quarter was kind of a catapult for you guys? Did you feel there was momentum at that point?

KATIE McWILLIAMS: Yeah, I felt like it. I don't know what the score was at that point, but I felt like things were flowing better than they had been, especially from the first half. I don't know, I thought it was a good shot, but it wasn't enough to pull it off today.

Q. ASU ended the game on a 13-1 run, and they hadn't scored until about 3:30 left. What changed toward the end of the game?

SCOTT RUECK: Yeah, that's a good question. I mean our previous two games we ended in the exact same fashion, just opposite. So I don't know if that's that third game, you know, it's in your head. Like, okay, we've got this.



We're up six, they couldn't score, and then we didn't score for probably four or five possessions or who knows. Maybe we didn't score again, I don't know after that. But it was as if it felt like, okay, this is our game. It felt very similar to the last two games, and then we made two mistakes.

Ekmark hit the corner three, and I think we gave up an O-board lay-up for a five-point run. It was a one-point game, and they were back in it, they got momentum and we couldn't get it back.

Q. Obviously, Marie dominated the first two meetings against ASU. What was the difference? Was it something they did that made it so you couldn't get the ball down there?

SCOTT RUECK: I thought they helped. They certainly helped more than they did last game. They sent two or three people at times. I thought that was one of the adjustments. I kind of felt like they would try something different like that. I didn't feel like we saw the floor as well as we did in the first half, we did in the third quarter. That was the difference.

The ball moved much more freely for us on the perimeter. But we had a hard time getting in our position. I don't know. We did a lot of similar things to keep Marie off the block. I'll have to watch the film, we just talked about it in the locker room. I'm not sure why she couldn't get there in this game, but she had a hard time getting deep against them.

Q. To have played them five days ago, and in a tough game, I mean, it's not only to play them a third time but to play them on that quick turn again. How much do you think that's just a factor in playing a team and turning around and playing them again when you've had that kind of match-up?

SCOTT RUECK: Yeah, we've done it before though. Last year we did the same thing with Cal. I don't know. I don't put too much on that. I don't, to be honest. I think they have confidence knowing that they could play with us, and probably felt like they should have won the two games because they were close. If it was a close game, I'd feel that way. Then we have the confidence knowing that we can win, and maybe it lulls you into a little overconfidence, possibly. I don't know.

But I don't use those -- it's a different game, a different day. Two of the same teams, but I don't put too much on that.

Q. What did you think was the biggest difference in this one as opposed to the other two? Did you have trouble getting it down to Marie as well?

MIKAYLA PIVEC: Yeah, they were definitely helping it a lot more, Marie. But the offensive rebounding, at the start of the game they got two or three in a row, and we just weren't being physical enough, and that needs to change.

SCOTT RUECK: The 1:22 possession to start the game kind of set the tone for the night.

Q. I know you've been talking about host seeds and things for a couple days. Did you feel like you needed to come here and get some wins to solidify that?

SCOTT RUECK: Yeah, not necessarily. I think any loss that we've had has been to a tournament team. We've finished 9-1? I don't know. We were 9-1 in our last ten. We've beaten two Top 10 teams and we play in the Pac-12. So I think we should strongly be considered for it.

Q. Coach, all those things didn't turn out how you guys wanted. You had done some amazing things this entire season. You have such good women of character on your team. What did you tell them after the game to encourage them to look forward?

SCOTT RUECK: Yeah, I just told them I'm proud of them. I mean, it's tough to play a team three times, especially a tournament team like Arizona State. Extremely physical team. They challenge you in many ways. You knew they were coming in and coming in confident, and upset, if anything, that they got beat a week ago. It's a new season, so very hopeful.

I didn't like that we got back, but I was so proud of them for fighting back once again, and then tonight we came up short.

I also told them, it's over. This is the third segment. Tournament, conference tournament, it's the third segment of the season. It's over, let it go, but we need to learn from it. And this team has done a great job.

Like you mentioned, the character on this team has turned every bit of adversity forever, for the last eight years, every bit of adversity into positives, and we need to do the same. So it's time to look in the mirror, how can we each get better for it and get ready for the fourth segment, which is the NCAA Tournament. It's always an honor to play in that event. This team has

earned the right to do it, and we're going to make the most of it.

Q. Katie, Marie has obviously been through something like this. She's seen the good, she's seen the bad and early exit as well. Did she give any words of wisdom to you guys?

KATIE McWILLIAMS: She just said keep your heads up. She talked about how we're not done, we're not done yet. We just need to regroup and keep each other under our belts. We'll be fine. She said she loves us, so we'll be ready for the NCAA Tournament.