

Penn State Lady Lion Basketball
Head Coach Carolyn Kieger Postgame Press Conference
Vs. Northwestern, Feb. 6, 2022

Opening Statement:

First of all, I just want to say it was great to have the survivors back in the building this year. We've missed it. Phenomenal energy back in there and it was just great to see the inspiration of the Pink Zone and the Play4Kay game and what that means to us as a program. It's just so motivational and inspiring to see all of them back in the building and I can't wait to build upon it next year and keep having a bigger audience more survivors coming back.

Q: Throughout the pregame there are a bunch of videos being played a past Lady Lions talking about the impact that this game had on them. What do you want the impact to be on your players?

A: Obviously, you know the way you're able to give back and pay it forward of a game like this, teaches you more than just basketball. How much the basketball and the jersey can do for you and how much you can do for others by putting yourself in a position to give back. To be a part of a cause that is way bigger than yourself. I hope our players remember this for the rest of their lives and not remember for the experience but remember it because it reminds them to give back to other people. That's what it's all about. To leave the jersey in a better place and leave a legacy and continue to understand that causes like this are important not only now and in college, but for the rest of their lives to give back.

Q: There was an extended scoreless stretch for your team in the fourth quarter. Do you think that was more because of what Northwestern was doing on defense, or what you guys weren't doing on offense?

A: I think it was a combination of both. I thought our shot selection was very poor. I thought we weren't tough in the lane with some layups. We missed a lot of layups there in the fourth quarter a lot of open shots. And then having a commander and director out there, we need to have somebody to get us in spacing and spotting and get us in the positions that we need to be and then finish them in the paint.

Q: Prior to this game, it seemed kind of had an extended away in Nebraska. What did it team do to kind of stay active during that stretch and time away?

A: We practiced in Nebraska. They were very helpful and did a great job with us. We watched a lot of film, had some team bonding opportunities, but mostly just prepped for Northwestern.

Q: So the fourth quarter was their highest-scoring quarter of the game. What kind of happened on defense for your team that really let it get away from them there in the final quarter?

A: Yeah, a lot of communication breakdowns. We gave up open threes there in the slots. Obviously, I think our guards were sinking in too much and we weren't aware [of Northwestern's] personnel.

Q: Looking at the Play4Kay game, what did that kind of have an impact on u specifically?

A: It always has, I coached at Miami, I got to coach against Coach [Kay] Yow. I knew her personally and it started back then to be a part of something really special for the Play4Kay game. And obviously here at Penn State, they have always had the Pink Zone support and done it the right way and been the staple in the nation for what a Play4Kay game looks like, and a Pink Zone game looks like, so we're going to continue to build on it. I know it's been hard these last two years with what's been going on COVID-wise, but it's our mission at the Pink Zone to do as much as we can to pay it forward and we're going to keep growing this game back up where we have hopefully 8,000-to-10,000 fans in the stands and bring back 700 survivors again, when everybody feels safe and healthy to back out.

Q: You guys had zero turnovers in the first quarter but 16 in the final three. What do you think needs to be addressed about ball security?

A: A lot. We need maturity. We need composure. We need a leader to get us in the spots on the floor. We need a for general and right now we don't have that and we're searching for it, and [Northwestern] did. They have a senior led point guard, and she really commanded the show down there in the fourth quarter, showed a lot of toughness, came back. We'll keep getting better and we'll keep putting ourselves in a position to learn and be able to command and direct [the ball] down the stretch and make big plays for the team.

Q: [Leilani] Kapinus finished with 15 points, seven rebounds, and three steals. What can you really say about her and what she does not only on the stat sheet but also off the stat sheet with her hustle and her toughness on the court?

A: Yeah, obviously Leilani's motor is elite. She's continuing to get better on the offensive end as she learns the game and spends more time in the film room. I've always talked about [how] her and Makenna [Marisa] spend a lot of time together but defensively she's very active. Five offensive rebounds tonight I thought was phenomenal. We weren't able to capitalize on those offensive rebounds, but just the motor, just wanted to play hard, wanting to get in the passing lane. She's got a lot to learn and a long way to go but she's got a bright future and incredible opportunity here to help this program turn it around and rebuild it.