



2019 NCAA VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT – MADISON REGIONAL Press Conference Transcripts - Dec. 13, 2019

NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS

Opening Statement

Head coach John Cook: “Well, first of all, much congratulations to Hawaii, Robyn (Ah Mow), Angelica (Ljungqvist), her assistant, they have done a great job. They have a great team. I was really impressed, just preparing for them, the talent they have and how they have used it all year, and they have had a great season. And so it was an honor to play Hawaii. And their fans and just the tradition, and I thought our team made some great adjustments as the match went on. And I think winning the close game in game one gave us a lot of momentum that got us game two, and then it was a battle in game three. But I thought we made really good adjustments as the match went on and we're really, really happy to get out of that 3-0.”

Q. What were those adjustments that you made as the match went on?

John Cook: “Well, we pretty much shut down their middle attack which has been their, kind of their bread and butter. And at first they were out-quicking us and it took us a while to adjust, but Lauren (Stivrins) and Callie (Schwarzenbach) got some blocks. I'm not sure those guys even had a kill in game two or three. They were really hitting off our block and hitting one really well, so we tried to get -- those players, we don't see those players in the Big Ten. That's the small outside hitters. And so they were doing a great job going high off our hands and we made some adjustments blocking and started blocking balls and getting better touches, and those were the big adjustments.”

Q. Lauren, what was the end of game one like, the back-and-forth, the emotion of what ultimately helped Nebraska pull that out the first set?

Lauren Stivrins: “Yeah, I just think we went back to the basics and we got really into it toward the end, which we were kind of slow to get started. But I think just the way we have been preparing all week kind of helped us get through that. I think our block, we started getting a lot of good touches and Jazz (Sweet) started shutting them down, so that helped a lot. We were taking big rips, we weren't tipping, we were just going after it.”

Q. Lauren, what were you guys doing in the locker room there and what was that experience like?

Lauren Stivrins: “Yeah, I pretty much just lost my voice here. We were all around a little phone watching the Texas and Louisville game, and Louisville came out on top, which is really exciting for them and my sister and I'm super proud of her.”

Q. Jazz, what was game one like for you? You were taking some pretty big swings there late. What was your mentality as it got tight and Hawaii had a couple match points?

Jazz Sweet: “Definitely trusting my training, trying to get the energy to my team and that was through big rips and going out there and trying to swing high and hit good shots. So that was really my goal right there to push us to the second set, win or lose, with some energy.”

Q. Lexi, hitting there tonight, what was working well for you and what were you seeing from Hawaii's defense that allowed you to terminate the way you finished up? What were you able to do against Hawaii's defense?

Lexi Sun: "I think we're were just attacking as a team. That was our mindset going into it. We were attacking with our serves and passing and hitting especially, and I think that all the hitters, we were all attacking tonight and I think that that really helped us out."

Q. Lauren, against Wisconsin what are the reasons you'll tell your teammates to be confident going into that match?

Lauren Stivrins: "We've played them twice before and we have been so close both times. And I think the reasons we lost in the previous games was because we weren't attacking. And I think we have grown so much since then, and I'm excited to see what our team can do. And our serving has been causing fits for other teams. So I think if we come with that same aggression from the service line then we'll, that will give us the confidence to go out there and take big rips as a team."

Q. How do you like your team's chances against Wisconsin tomorrow?

John Cook: "I always like our team's chances. Anytime we got a chance, we like it. All we need to do, there's going to be no surprises, so we know how we have to execute. I think we learned from the first two times we played them. And we know it's going to be a great challenge. They're at home, they got a big crowd. And so we got to come in here and go for it. So I think we're excited and this is what we wanted."

Q. There's a moment in the middle of the second set where it got, you a couple of errors in a row, I think, and there was a little bit of a run-in. And you said something to Lexi, it looked like, from the sideline. What were you looking for from your team, I guess, in general and from her in that moment?

John Cook: "I don't remember. I think it was just trust it. Trust it."

Lauren Stivrins: "Yeah. (Laughing.) Trust the training. Possible."

Q. What can you kind of take away from today's match that will help for tomorrow's match against Wisconsin?

John Cook: "Just we found a way to win so we're in a regional final and that is the most important thing. Right now it doesn't matter how good you play. It's just finding a way to win three games and that's our mindset and has been our mindset for about the last month right now. Again, there's a lot of pressure in these matches and as you know it's over and done with if you lose. And Hawaii's a great team, and so this was a big win for us. And so I think the confidence, and we got to play in this gym, and our freshmen get to experience being in a regional, so there's a lot of positives that came out of this. But we know we're going to have to have a great effort tomorrow night."

Q. Jazz, why are you looking forward to tomorrow's match? And what needed to happen differently for Nebraska to come out ahead this time around?

Jazz Sweet: "I'm definitely looking forward to tomorrow's match just because it's always fun to play Wisconsin, play big hitters like that, play in front of a crowd that is really going to cheer every point and they're into it. So that's definitely going to be fun. I've been in it before, so I'm excited to do it again, have a chance to rematch. Definitely, I think we just need to keep pushing with what we have been doing. We have been running a really consistent offense, just serve and pass, down it and we know what to do. We have seen Wisconsin a couple times and we're going to make sure we're well-scouted for the game."

Q. Lexi, how is this team different from the last time you played Wisconsin, or do you need to be different from the last time?

Lexi Sun: "Yeah, I think that it, like she said, just touching up a few things. We obviously know what we need to do and we have been training and preparing and we're going to be ready to play them."