

MINNESOTA HEAD COACH LINDSAY WHALEN

WHEN DID YOU FIND OUT SARA SCALIA WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO PLAY?

Final word this morning, but kind of had an idea yesterday.

WHAT DO YOU TELL A TEAM IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS WHERE THEY'VE GOT THESE KEY PLAYERS OUT?

Not every day is going to be 75 and sunny. Living in Minnesota recently we just a stretch of weather where it was minus 20 and we had to keep going to class, we had to keep getting on our zooms, we had to keep meeting with our group and our team and keep coming to practice. Today is a day when we had adversity, but you're going to face this and you have no option but to keep going. I said obviously we have a lot of our players out, but everyone was there in the locker room who is on the team. Everyone has a role. If you're able to play, leave it out there. If you're unable to participate in the game today, then be a great teammate and continue to uplift the ones that are on the floor. We're all in this together. We started this together and we were going to play here together.

TIMES IN THE GAME WHEN THE GAME WAS GETTING AWAY FROM YOU, BUT TO SEE TEAM BATTLE THROUGH THAT, WHAT DID THAT MEAN TO YOU?

I thought our second half once we got our feet under us a little bit with some of the different lineups we were going to have, we started playing hard. We played together. I thought defensively we were really good especially in the third quarter. In the second half, we were playing really well and I told them I was proud of them for that and bringing it to the court and representing the state of Minnesota in a really good way. I told them I was proud of them and everyone who got in the game had a really good effort today.

FIRST HALF SHOT DIFFICULTIES...

I thought we had good looks. I liked the looks we got. Difference is we had one offensive rebound compared to nine offensive rebounds in the second half. We started crashing the boards harder. I thought we got some really good looks and did some things that were really good in the second half. Crashing the boards was one of them and it obviously increased our field goal percentage and it ended up being a good second half for us.

KATIE (BOROWICZ) WAS STARTING A HIGH SCHOOL GAME A FEW MONTHS AGO. HOW IMPRESSED HAVE YOU BEEN WITH HER?

I think she's done a great job of coming into a situation that none of us have ever been in. Graduating early, getting down here and joining the team midway through the season and then gets her first career start today. Once she got her feet under her, I thought she just got things going in the second half and she showed a lot of poise and a lot of grit. I'm proud of the whole team, but definitely proud of her.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND HALF

I think in the second half we stopped worrying about things and who was playing what position and we have Laura playing the three who has played the four and five all year, but without a guard substitute on the bench, that's what we had to go to. Once we dialed in to that, we settled in and played our game and played really hard.

THOUGHTS ON LAURA BAGWELL KATALINICH...

Gets 10 and nine and a big steal. I thought she did a lot of things really well. She was playing three different positions today and handled it all really well. There's no questions she's going to hustle and give it everything she has.

THOUGHTS ON GRACE

She scraps, gets the rebound, we kick it out and then she hits the three. I'm telling her when she has it to shoot it and let it go and get that shot up. Fun to see that go in for her. Having it come off a hustle play makes it even more fun as a coach to see.

MINNESOTA FORWARD LAURA BAGWELL KATALINICH

POSSIBILITY OF LAST COLLEGE GAME

That's been the question ever since there's been the possibility to play more. I still don't know the answer to that and will take my time making that decision. It's been a long career and I figured if this ends up being it for me, I'd want to give it everything I had. I think most people felt that way, but particularly the seniors. I think we did that, but it didn't go the way we wanted.

PLAYERS SETTling INTO NEW ROLES TODAY AND PLAYING IN FIRST HALF FIGURING IT OUT

We were without three of our typical starters and when that happens you have to be ready to step up. I played a little bit of the three today, which I haven't done all year, but that's why you have to know every position. That's what every coach tells you and today it actually happened. We had Erin Hedman playing the three, Gadiva Hubbard sometimes playing the four. There was a lot of this adjusting that even if you know the plays, getting into a game and executing them from an unnatural position is difficult, but we're basketball players playing at the highest level and we had some trouble getting going and I had faith we would get into a groove, especially in the third quarter, we started finding the right people at the right spots. I don't know how often that will happen again, but that's good to be able to do that.

WHEN YOU SEE TEAMMATES PLAYING HARD AND NOT QUITTING

I feel very proud of this team today and it's been a tough season with a lot of ups and downs with illnesses and injuries that no team wants but everyone has got them at some point. It was our turn. I really am so proud of this team. You had players playing positions they may have never played, ever in their life, definitely not this year and I think after the first half when we struggled, we could have given up and let Nebraska roll us over and say we'll come back next year. We fought in the second half and even thought it didn't go our way, but big picture that is something to be proud of to build on for next year.

PLAYING SHORTHANDED...

It's hard, especially on a gameday, but that's not the first time that's happened this year. It's cliché, but next player up was definitely ringing true for us today. Kadi (Sissoko) is our starting four and does a phenomenal job and it was hard having her out so I had to step up and try to fill her shoes. She's a fantastic player. It's nothing new to us. It's unfortunate it happened, but the message the older players such as myself say is next player up and some players took that to heart and that was awesome to see.

HER DIFFERENT POSITIONS PLAYED TODAY...

My spot is the four the power forward. Today I stepped out and played the three. Sometimes I have to play center in some rotations, which isn't my favorite. I'm certainly undersized in this league. It's one of those things again you have to know every position and be willing to do your part no matter what that specific part is and we have a lot of girls doing that. It was kind of fun though. I actually enjoyed playing the three, but I don't know if that's a permanent thing.

MINNESOTA GUARD KATIE BOROWICZ

SHOOTING STRUGGLES TO START, BUT SHOTS STARTED FALLING TO CLOSE GAP...

At the end, we definitely played for ourselves and we had fun. At the end of the game in the locker room, coach was talking about how we weren't focused on plays and were just playing hard and having fun. We weren't worried about anything. Laura was going in for offensive rebounds and it was really fun.

STARTING THIS GAME WITH LAST-MINUTE NOTICE...

Everyone on the team is a role model to me, so their support was helpful and I know the plays, but they were all there for me and knew I could do it.

RECAPPING FRESHMAN SEASON AND PLAYING DIFFERENT SPOTS TODAY...

It's gone by so fast. I first come here I have to learn the plays, I have to learn everyone's tendencies, their names and I figured that out. I got to play a couple of games and last game it has been very crazy and I couldn't imagine going through this without this team and coaches.

EXCITEMENT LEVEL OF COMING BACK...

I'm very excited. I cannot wait especially because I'm already like a step ahead. I know the plays. I know the teammates, but I cannot wait to go out and represent the state of Minnesota and play basketball.