

March 5, 2015



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An interview with:

WASHINGTON

COACH MIKE NEIGHBORS JAZMINE DAVIS KELSEY PLUM

THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up day one. Congratulations to the Washington Huskies, Coach Mike Neighbors, Jazmine Davis, and Kelsey Plum. Coach, if you'd open with a few remarks.

COACH NEIGHBORS: I thought second half we were as good as we've been maybe all year. Focused offensively and defensively efficiency; I think we had one turnover. Rebounded it +2 in the second half. We all know that Utah is a team that guards us as well as anybody that we play, and for us to have that type of efficiency against what I think is one of the best-coached teams in our league, I'm really proud of our team for that.

Q. Jazmine, you had a big second half. Was it something where you wanted to take over the game or was it something that Utah was giving you?

JAZMINE DAVIS: I just wanted to do whatever I could. It got to a point where we needed energy, and we needed it from somewhere, and I think that maybe if I started it somehow -- we all respond to each other really well. So I'm just glad that my team, I was able to lead them and they trusted me with bringing that.

Q. Coming out of this halftime there was about three minutes left. Coaches are sitting on the bench, you guys are still in the locker room, what was said during halftime

before you guys came up for the second half and before you guys were able to make your run and hopefully win?

KELSEY PLUM: We've been in this position before. In Utah we call it being "Utahed". So we knew what we needed to do; it was really on the defensive end to get stops and rebounds and I think we did a good job running in transition.

We knew. We didn't really have to say anything. I think people knew they needed to win their match-up offensively and defensively, and play collectively and it would turn out the right way in the end.

Q. Do you feel a sense of relief then now to have gotten this win?

COACH NEIGHBORS: I do, absolutely. Yeah. Our team has a mutual respect for this team. They came in after they beat us down there. It was good to hear our team say that. They've got a lot of respect for how they play, their players specifically, how they approach the game, and it is a relief.

It's hard to play in Seattle for your tournament because you have a lot of expectations, and we had a great crowd that was tremendous. I had goose bumps when they were doing the starting lineups. The cheer that went up for our kids was amazing. You spend all year talking about it and it gets here. We honestly had a bad taste in our mouth from last year, and to get that out, yeah, there is a sense of relief.

But that relief goes away pretty quick, and it becomes a sense of pride that our kids can find a way to play against somebody that you respect as much as we do them.

Q. (No microphone).

COACH NEIGHBORS: It's already gone, unfortunately. We'll have a lot of time next week, and I told the kids that. We'll have a lot of days in between the end of the Pac-12 Tournament and see what happens next to reflect on not, again, not

what we're doing, but how we're going about doing it. That's so much fun about being part of a team and having a team like this is how we go about doing it.

We don't practice a lot. That's been talked about a lot because we talk about it a lot. But we're very efficient in what we do, and it takes a special group to be able to do that, and they have to. I leave the locker room way early because they talk to each other so well and they listen to each other so well and they respond to each other so well. Anything I point out is usually tactical. I may question their effort sometimes, and sometimes they agree and sometimes they get it already fixed. When you don't have to try to inspire and motivate your team and you can just coach them, that gives you a chance to be pretty good.

I can't do both of those things. I'm not good enough yet to inspire and to coach. I can do one or the other, but it's hard to do both. We don't have to. This team inspires themselves, and they come in focused and ready. Everything that comes up next practice, next shootaround, whatever is next. We can really spend our time as coaches on the tactical side of it.

Q. Kelsey, second half it seemed like you were able to get going on the offensive end as well. What changed for you in the second half, and how much of that is Jaz getting going and spreading the ball around?

KELSEY PLUM: It was Jazmine Davis from the tip. She really got us going. She scored on three or four straight possessions in a row. I think that gave us a lot of energy, and I think when that gets going, the defensive end gets going, and we were able to get in transition. We hit some threes and kind of opened up the can for everyone else.

So really it was Jaz that made the first big punch, you could say thrown, and then we went from there.

Q. Coach, you guys start, you're down 7-0 with a timeout. Chantel comes in, you guys make a run. It seems like in the second half you make a run as well. She doesn't score any points, but it seems like when she's in, that's when you guys are able to do some damage? What is it about her that makes you guys do so well?

COACH NEIGHBORS: She gives us another point guard on the court. She thinks the game like a point guard. She passes it. She's an

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outstanding rebounder. She is the spark. We made the decision to bring her off the bench, that was the reason, because we knew we'd always get a lift when that happens. Her efficiency numbers are unbelievable.

For a post player to be almost 2-1 assist-to-turnover ratio is unheard of, and she does always give us a sense of energy. It's not just been once, it's all the time.

I thought the timeout we just needed it. We just didn't look right. So I thought taking the 60 then was important to refocus. We went on a 12-0 run at some point in the first half. Not right then, but at some point in the first half we had a 12-0 run, and like Jaz and Kelsey were saying, all of that was dictated by defense. Getting stops and getting out and running in transition. I felt like we had -- again, you don't score 75 on Utah very often. For us to do that, you've got to take advantage of those transition opportunities.

We missed about eight lay-ups tonight, if you all think about it. We renamed an inbounds play "Smoke" because Jazmine smoked the lay-up down there. It was a good pass. Kelsey could have added another assist. But I thought we played -- the spark that Chantel gave us was huge and then sustained throughout the game.

Q. Is that because of the way you were playing or Utah's defense?

COACH NEIGHBORS: We were in dribble drive, so we don't get a lot of assists. We usually get most of our assists on kickouts after a rebound. The way they were playing us, they were staying on our shooters. When we'd drive it, they were forcing us to make shots.

So our number of assists, I don't look at that very often because we're not going to get many because we do dribble it so much, and we don't throw it to the post a whole lot. So the numbers I always look at is assists to turnovers and how they were doing there. So always when we have 9-4, I'll live with that.

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