

MARYLAND



SPORTS NEWS

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Postgame Quotes

Michigan State 82, #11/11 Maryland 68

Head Coach Brenda Frese

Opening Statement:

"All the credit to Michigan State. I thought they put a great performance together. They came out aggressive, hungry and really prepared. I thought their size and aggressiveness really out us back on our heels in the first half. I thought we missed some uncharacteristic shots in the first half, but I thought that when we were able to make runs in the second half they did a tremendous job at answering back in those runs. I think this is another example of the depth of the Big Ten and being prepared each night and ready to play."

On finding rhythm on offense without Blair Watson:

"There's a flow to when you're playing this many games and so it's going to take some time to get rhythm and consistency back. We'll be able to get back there but it's going to take some trust and belief amongst each other. Defensively we need to be a cohesive unit. Offensively, like I shared with them, it was hard seeing our negative assist-to-turnover ratio. Fifteen assists to 24 turnovers is a very uncharacteristic stat line for us and something we pride ourselves in. We felt like we needed to shoulder the load tonight and obviously we paid for that."

On Michigan State being aggressive:

"We better get used to it. It's not going away. That's what you're going to see every night and I don't think we responded at all. I think we got caught up in the officiating which, I think, just let both teams play. They have the blueprint now. That's what we're going to face every week so we have to do a better job sharing the basketball and being patient instead of making a move off the first hit by ourselves."

On Michigan State's posts' performance:

"I thought Michigan State's bigs were great tonight. Watching them on film, we let a lot of them get some wide open looks. I thought we got frustrated early in the post and we let that impact us throughout the game. We made a courageous comeback in our fight but we've got to do a better job in the first half."

Sophomore Guard Kaila Charles

On dressing nine players and only playing seven:

"It's just going to be something that we have to adjust to. We have good chemistry, but today we just went away from things that we usually do. So we just have to make sure that we're consistent with that. Eleanna has been playing with us for a year now, so it's not like she new coming into anything. We just have to be consistent."

On Blair's contributions and getting used to her off the court:

"She's a big part of our team on and off the court. Everybody steps up when their number is called, it's just that today wasn't one of those days. We just have to make sure that we're playing a hard 40 minutes."

Junior Guard Eleanna Christinaki

On starting tonight:

"It doesn't change anything. We need to keep working, especially now that we lost Blair. She was very valuable for us. We need to find a way to play hard and play well. And if I'm not in the starting lineup, and if that was the problem, I would prefer to be on the bench. I want this team to be Maryland and play Maryland basketball. We'll figure it out. It was just a difficult day for all of us."

Michigan State Head Coach Suzy Merchant

On playing a depleted Maryland team:

"Well, we're a depleted Michigan State team too. We have two kids with ACL's, a broken arm and I didn't even think I was going to be able to play Shay Colley, she had eight stitches in her foot. I think we're both in the same situation. Our roster is depleted of guards, I have one guard sub and a post player I turned into a three man lately. I'm proud of our fight, I've been there before, Brenda does a great job. The good thing with her is she plays a lot of people, so those kids I think, her depth may not have as many, but they certainly played a lot of kids through the course of the preseason. Last year's team I thought everyone played a ton of minutes and I thought she did a good job of spreading them around. I really feel bad for the kid, Blair Watson who blew her ACL because I have two of them and the third broke her arm so I have three guards out and two of them were starters. I know how that feels, it's tough in the women's game, it's something that's really frustrating when you're just trying to prepare for stretches, you just never know, practice, a game, it is a challenge. I thought they did some good things, I thought our kids did certain things we had to do to compete here."

On defensive play and forcing 24 turnovers:

"I think we did a better job of helping each other on rotations. I think we did better job of understanding scouting reports and tendencies this game compared to the last game. There are kids going left really hard, going right really hard, you try to get into Confroy's space. We obviously didn't know until the game that Watson was out so we were really going to make sure that shooters, drivers give cushions to certain people for certain kids left, for certain kids right but at the end of the day it still isn't done because they are the best rebounding team in the league and they are tremendous offensive rebounders. We still had 18 on boards but I felt like we battled harder on the boards."

On keeping Fraser down:

"The Charles kid is the one who scared me more than any of their post players to be honest, I mean that kid is a beast and she's so talented and she can bring it in transition and she can rebound and she can post and her high post game is ridiculous. I mean Fraser is good too, she tried to power us in there and she got away from us in the second half but some of that is just leadership and wanting a little more in terms of her stepping up. I thought that Jenna and Sid and Kennedy came in and gave us really good minutes defensively."

On adjustments made for the second half:

"Well, we couldn't give it back to them. Maryland's transition offense is big and we didn't try to slow the game down at all because we play kind of fast. In the first half, they looked really tired and we were just kind of pushing it pretty hard in transition so I was proud of our group for pushing it. Tee second half is just about taking care of the ball because if you give it to them it's over. We did that a few times and they scored on it. Our big thing was taking care of the ball and keeping them off the boards and just understanding tendencies and execution. They made a run and we were able to withstand it a little bit and different people stood up. It was a positive thing for us."

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