

Mountain West Women's Basketball Championship

Tuesday March 8, 2016



Jamie Craighead

Dezz Ramos

Jasmine Smith

San Jose State

New Mexico - 65 San Jose State - 51

THE MODERATOR: Coach, just some thoughts on today's game.

HEAD COACH JAMIE CRAIGHEAD: Tough first ten minutes for us. I thought that it really -- we missed some shots early, shots that we've been making and I thought we got tight. But that first quarter seemed to do us in. We played them pretty even the rest of the way. We had our chances to come back in the game. And obviously New Mexico is a very good team and shut the door on us.

Q. Khadijah had a big game tonight, obviously. Were there moments tonight when you felt she was sort of trying to take over the game or was she maybe successful in spurts? She had several spurts where three or four possessions in a row it would be a rebound or take a charge or score a bucket. Did you get the sense that she was kind of taking over at times?

JASMINE SMITH: I would say yes. I can tell that their teammates were really trying to feed her the ball, really trying to get her the ball so she could be in the best scoring position to score. I felt the offense ran a lot through Khadijah.

Q. But you did get the sense that her teammates around her were really trying to take advantage of that and get her the ball in those moments?

JASMINE SMITH: Yeah, I do.

Q. Offensively you guys are the leading scoring team in the league this year. They held you to 58 points in the regular season and 51 points tonight. What are they doing to slow things down? Is it a matter of slowing things down or doing something defensively that you guys have struggled with?

CHERISE BEYNON: I think tonight we just weren't able to hit shots. We got up a couple of shots but weren't hitting, at all. So I think that's what it was.

Q. How important was it, how much trouble were you in when Nyre Harris got three early fouls, had to go to the bench, I don't think she scored until the last couple of minutes of the third quarter. How big of an impact was that on the game?

HEAD COACH JAMIE CRAIGHEAD: I actually thought we battled well. When she was out we cut it to five in the first half. We're a motion team that wasn't moving much in the first ten minutes. And the Lobos are a very good defensive team. I thought we just missed open shots. And it takes a lot of guts to hit shots in this moment, on this stage. I thought that we really struggled offensively to get any type of rhythm going.

Q. Looked like this was the same scenario you saw at New Mexico and at your place. Your place you were able to come back. At New Mexico, it was the same thing, they blew the thing out early and you traded buckets with them. Is that what you saw?

HEAD COACH JAMIE CRAIGHEAD: Yeah, it's similar. If you told me New Mexico had 65 points before the game, I would have thought we would have won the game. Obviously our offense just sort of let us down today. Defensively if we hold the team to 65 points we're going to be okay usually. I just felt like, again, we have to move more and we didn't. To be a motion team you have to move. And it was a lot of standing around.

Q. Was there anything differently you could have done against Shumpert on the interior?

HEAD COACH JAMIE CRAIGHEAD: I don't know, we fronted her. We had a small guard behind her. They have more size than we do. To me it needed to be a little bit faster of a game. If we could have scored early and gained confidence from it, I think it could be different.

Q. Could the defensive pressure come earlier in the game? It seemed like in the end of the third, beginning of the fourth you started to put full court pressure on, turned them over, scored some points, got some loose balls, could that have come earlier, would that have helped?

HEAD COACH JAMIE CRAIGHEAD: Potentially, yeah, for sure. But when you have foul trouble then it's hard to pressure full court. Dezz had to play 19 minutes in the first half and that makes it really hard for her to

have to set the tone defensively for us in the full court.
So I felt like more so we were trying to just get through
the half. And we cut it to five and then the last minute
three we go down 12. We needed to keep it at five.