

**March 10, 2015**



San Jose State - 64  
Colorado State - 55

An Interview With:



THE MODERATOR: We're joined by San Jose State.

Coach, some thoughts on today's game.

COACH CRAIGHEAD: A great defensive effort from my team when the offense wasn't clicking. A very good basketball team that we just beat in Colorado State. We also out-rebounded them. We won a different way than we normally win. I'm just so excited and proud of this group. I can't wait to keep coaching them.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. In the first half your defensive effort really sort of took precedent to what is normally an explosive offensive game. Is there a point that it all kind of clicked for you?**

TA'REA CUNNIGAN: Yeah. I mean, in the second half. In the first half, we just kept telling ourselves, We'll win any way we can. If it means it's going to be an all-defensive game, we'll take it. We were having a tough time in the first half with our shots falling. We didn't let that concern us, just focus on defense.

**Q. Your offense scored 99 points two straight games, then it slowed down in the first half. Second half out of nowhere it started picking up. Once that happens, what kind of**

**confidence took place and momentum for you, especially playing against the No. 1 seed?**

ANIYA BAKER: No, we just decided to play together, play hard. Coach always asks us to push the ball. We just try to have fun, set the pace and keep it there.

**Q. It was 19-16 with two minutes to go. You hit some shots. Seemed to me that was the turning point. You controlled the game. How big was that? It looked like it was the same thing you did yesterday.**

ANIYA BAKER: So big. Coach JC has a lot of confidence in us. She always gets on us, but it's all for the best.

Once she has that much confidence in us, then there's no way we can't succeed. It's just fun to play together.

**Q. Tea, it seemed like down the stretch it was clutch shot after clutch shot. You came out in the start of the second half and scored the first seven points for the team, down the stretch it was a lot of the two of you. How critical were those shots?**

TA'REA CUNNIGAN: They were huge because we know they were going to come out looking to go on a run. They're a great basketball team. They can really shoot from all five positions.

We just wanted to make sure that we just stayed solid on defense and kept moving the ball on offense to get the best look we could.

**Q. What was the defensive plan, to try to stop the penetration and the kick-out?**

TA'REA CUNNIGAN: It was to try to stop everything. Like I said, they're a team that they can score inside, they can score from the outside. The one through five are solid shooters.

We just wanted to play solid defense, help, and be ready to close out on solid shooters.

**Q. You're a team that's known for scoring points. Is there a certain amount of**

**pride in showing people one day you can score 99 points and another day you can grind it out?**

ANIYA BAKER: Pretty much, yeah. That's what we try to do. We just try to play together, push the tempo, play together. No matter what happens happens. No matter the score, we just want the win.

**Q. How much did it help you to have gotten a game under your belt on the court and have a chance to play?**

ANIYA BAKER: It really helps a lot. We're trying to win as many games as possible. Our main goal was the championship. We weren't stopping because they were the No. 1. We were playing together, hard and having fun.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies. We'll continue with questions for Coach Craighead.

**Q. Yesterday we talked about how after such an explosive game, you're going to have to sit back and maybe reassess how you may approach this game. What sort of things did you think about pregame, as the game progressed did you make some changes or adjustments or just go with the flow?**

COACH CRAIGHEAD: We lost to Colorado State on the road by 20, then by 10 at home. We thought we started to figure them out a little bit.

They're a really good basketball team, the best team we've played this season. We thought that we could maybe take away a few things defensively that we didn't at home. We didn't play them that long ago.

We switched some of their handoff dribble-drive action, that allowed them not to get into the corner and into the paint. We really tried to stay home on shooters and not hold off. We thought if they got hot from the three-point line, it could be a really long night.

Our defensive effort was huge. Offensively, they send four back on the shot they take, so transition-wise it's really difficult. But we hit huge shots when we had to. We stuck with the game plan that we had from the tip. Play solid defense. We were going to have to play defense to beat these guys.

We're good enough to compete with everyone. We can mix it up, like everyone has said.

**Q. You were on average to score 38 points for the ball game. Was there some**

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**shocking moments from you, any concern with how slow the pace was going?**

COACH CRAIGHEAD: No concern because it was tied at 16-16. I sat them down in the timeout. They looked worried offensively. We get worried because we rely on our offense.

I said, Why are we worried? It's a tied basketball game, it's like we just tipped off. We went on a run. When they saw the ball go down a few times at halftime they were all pumped up. They knew they had to play 20 more minutes.

We talked about there couldn't be an ounce of doubt in us that we were going to win the basketball game. They gutted it out offensively and defensively.

**Q. Is this the biggest win for this program in maybe history?**

COACH CRAIGHEAD: I would think so maybe. Yeah, absolutely. Haven't been here that long. A pretty big win. This conference is a tough conference. To take down a team, I mean, they only have three losses, they were undefeated last season. Sorry, four. We didn't count the one at home. We thought we won because we only lost by 10.

They're hard to guard defensively, they have shooters, a post inside, can hurt you in so many ways. It's huge. We're not done, though. We're going to keep playing, keep battling, keep competing.

**Q. Talk about the first half defensively. That's about as bad as they've played offensively all season. They shot under 20%. What were you doing to them to make them shoot that low?**

COACH CRAIGHEAD: We really try to take away the things they got the last time we played them, which is the penetration inside. We kept leaving shooters when we played at our place. We thought if we could stay home on 5 and 14, it would take away some offense. We didn't rush out on kids that wanted to drive and get into the paint.

We had a good game plan. I said before the game, Players make plays and execute game plans. We can say a lot of things in the locker room and in practice, but they've got to go out and execute, and they did.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much, coach.

COACH CRAIGHEAD: Thank you.

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