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An Interview With:

**MIKE CAREY
ASYA BUSSIE
CHRISTAL CALDWELL
BRIA HOLMES**

MIKE CAREY: First of all, congratulations to LSU. I told our players for two days, the game is going to be won or lost in the paint. You can't give up 24 offensive rebounds. We quit getting the ball inside, and we had it going the second half, got the lead, and quit going inside. You know, but I'm proud of our players. They had a heck of a year, won 30 basketball games. We felt like we gave one away here today. But congratulations to LSU.

Q. I know that obviously 40 minutes is what you guys preached your entire year, but those four minutes at the end is when Coach Carey said he wanted you to be in the game. What went wrong in those Final Four minutes that you allowed the lead to go away and lose the game?

ASYA BUSSIE: I think we lost our focus. We weren't defending the way we were and not executing the way that we were to get into the game. I just think down the stretch we didn't do the things that we were supposed to do.

Q. Obviously the people that you probably scouted to play were absent a large part of the game, Shanece, Theresa and Jeanne. Did that in any way affect your preparation?

CHRISTAL CALDWELL: I don't think so, regardless of who was on the floor we should have defended. We've seen different things all year

long so I don't think anything they put at us was anything different, we just stopped defending and we stopped boxing out on the boards.

BRIA HOLMES: Like Christal said, I think we just should have stepped up and playing defense and boxed out and not allowed the offensive rebounds that they had.

Q. Asya, Ballard had 32 rebounds in the two NCAA tournament games this year. Have you ever played against a guard her size who was able to rebound like that?

ASYA BUSSIE: Not that I can remember, but she did get a lot of rebounds, ones that we should have had, and I think that might have been the difference in the game, just having the guards coming in and crashing not only the post, their guards were coming in, also.

Q. A lot was made of having to play LSU on their home floor as a 2 seed. How much of a difference do you think it made, especially late in the game as the crowd was really getting into it?

ASYA BUSSIE: Regardless of where we play, we just have to play our game and execute and defend, and down the stretch we didn't do that, and I think that towards the end the crowd did get into the game and hyped the players up, and that might have been a factor, also.

Q. Christal, talk about as a senior what was it like to go back into the locker room as a senior? What is this moment like for you?

CHRISTAL CALDWELL: I hate it. Just to know that we lost the game -- you're going to lose some ballgames, but I know just deep down in my heart that we did not play our best game and we did not do some of the things I've seen us do all year long that I know that we can do, and just to go out like that, it really hurts.

But at the same time we've done really well this year, and we've had some great accomplishments, so you can't get down on yourself too much. Right now it's still fresh, and it

hurts.

ASYA BUSSIE: Same. This game really hurts. We definitely didn't want to lose like this. We planned on going a lot further than this. But regardless, I'm really proud of the team and everything we've accomplished this year.

Q. Christal, you were shooting something like 3 of 18 or 19 or something like that. Is it an off-night, or were they doing something to help that out?

CHRISTAL CALDWELL: I just didn't hit shots, and I feel like I rushed a couple, probably took some bad shots. But at the end of the day I just didn't make them.

Q. Coach, they were talking about the defensive effort, but I'm saying the last three minutes you guys went almost without a score at any point. What were they doing defensively to stop your offense?

MIKE CAREY: We took some bad shots. When we took the lead and went up by I think six or seven, we were getting the ball inside, and then all of a sudden we turned it over some and we took some bad perimeter shots, and we weren't hitting them. And then the turnovers. We had turnovers off our foot and stuff like that, and then I think when it started down there, that one possession, they were down there for -- I think we had two fouls and they got two offensive rebounds, and I think they were down there until they finally scored.

We just quit rebounding. We went to a zone. We just quit rebounding. And then on the offensive end, we were having success going inside, and it's hard to tell some of your good players that are wide open on the perimeter not to take the shot. They've hit them all year, and we just didn't hit shots, but again, we've got to be smart enough to go inside. Asya was just dominating inside the second half.

Q. Similarly to what I just asked Asya, those final four minutes, you guys had talked about that coming into this one. Was it as simple as getting away from what was working with Asya doing so well on the inside, getting fouls, getting to the free-throw line?

MIKE CAREY: Well, I think we got away from getting the ball inside on the offensive end, and on the defensive end we quit boxing out. It was as simple as that. We started fouling and putting them at the foul line and not boxing out and giving them second and third shots. They got a

couple and-ones. It just kept going. We just didn't box out. It's obvious, they had 24 offensive rebounds. It's hard to beat somebody. And then they had 38 points in the paint. I mean, I said coming in two days ago, the game was going to be won or lost in the paint, and that's exactly where it was.

Q. And regarding the seniors, just how difficult it is to see them go out?

MIKE CAREY: Yeah, it's tough right now because I feel we gave one away there. And again, give LSU -- nothing against LSU, they deserve a lot of credit. But I just felt we gave one away. Seniors have done a great job since they've been -- not just this year, since they've been here. So I'm very proud of them, it's just tough right now for them and myself.

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