

# Women's National Invitation Tournament

Sunday, March 26, 2017

Iowa City, Iowa



**Lisa Bluder**

**Ally Disterhoft**

**Megan Gustafson**

**Kathleen Doyle**

WNIT - Iowa Hawkeyes

Washington State - 74, Iowa - 66

LISA BLUDER: First of all, I want to thank the crowd. They were great. They came out. They supported us today. They were loud. They were engaged. You know, we didn't give them a whole lot to cheer about after the first quarter. The first quarter was really nice, and then after that, their defense really disrupted us. We really had trouble boxing out. We gave up too many O-boards for them, too many second chance shots for them.

But you know, we didn't shoot well from the three-point line or from the free-throw line today, and obviously those things hurt us. But in saying that, it's been a great year.

You know, I'm really, really proud of this team. We lost Tania, could have buckled then. We have three freshmen in the starting lineup. We could make excuses for everything, and these guys never did.

We had great seniors on this team. Ally Disterhoft, Lex Kastanek and Hailey Schneden were three fabulous seniors, and we're sorry to see them go, but they should go out of here holding their heads high. They had great careers. They are tremendous women as well as just basketball players, so they have nothing to be ashamed about. They really tried to lead our team this year, and all of them did a great job with that.

I'm really excited about the future. Megan gets her 18th double-double, Kathleen has a career-high eight assists. I think the future looks incredibly bright.

**Q. Megan, was that one of the toughest defensive match-ups that you've had all season?**

MEGAN GUSTAFSON: I wouldn't say that. We've faced a lot of bigger challenges in the Big Ten, but they did a nice job. They came out really intensely right

from the get-go, and I think we handled it a little bit better in the second half, but we kept fighting each possession. So we'll just get better, and we'll see from here.

**Q. Ally, what particularly were they doing from the second quarter on that bothered you guys?**

ALLY DISTERHOFT: I mean, like Coach said, I think they turned up their defensive intensity a little bit. They got a lot of offensive rebounds, and when a team is offensive rebounding like that and we're struggling to hit some of our shots that we normally do, it's kind of tough. We tried to buckle down a little bit in the second half, but they're just a very physical team, and they stuck with it.

**Q. It was kind of hard to get an open shot, wasn't it, on the perimeter? You'd think with them doubling down on Megan most of the time that it would have been easy, but they really were racing around, weren't they?**

ALLY DISTERHOFT: Yeah, I thought they rotated really well in both their player and zone defenses. They were really focused on that on-ball pressure, but yeah, I think even when we did get kick-outs from the post, they did a pretty good job of scrambling in those situations. Just one of those games you have to credit them for their defensive effort.

**Q. Did it feel like they were answering everything well? I thought especially in the second half, the fourth quarter, whenever you guys would put together a run to get close, they would answer and kind of quiet the crowd.**

KATHLEEN DOYLE: Yeah, I feel like they hit a lot of big shots, so credit to them.

**Q. Megan and Kathleen, even with the new guard with the old guard, I guess kind of the emotions in seeing the seniors graduate?**

MEGAN GUSTAFSON: Yeah, it's tough. They're pretty amazing people, being able to be with them on the court, on and off.

KATHLEEN DOYLE: Yeah, I agree. They all had great careers and did a lot for this program, so we just want to make sure that they know how grateful we are for their efforts.

**Q. Ally, that was your last time walking off the court. Do you want to take us through what you're feeling right now?**

ALLY DISTERHOFT: Yeah, it's tough. The program has given me so much these past four years. I've said it before, but these coaches are incredible, and the younger girls on this team are going to go on and do some really great things. Lex and I were talking about that, we can't wait to come back and watch them do that.

Obviously I'm going to really miss it. I'm always going to be a Hawkeye, though, whether I'm wearing that jersey or not. Very, very thankful for the opportunities that I had when I was here.

**Q. It looked like Makenzie Meyer couldn't get a shot. It was really tough to even find an open shot.**

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, I thought they were really physical, and we didn't adjust well to that. It's not like we haven't seen physical basketball, but I think it was a combination of their length and being physical that kind of hurt us a little bit.

They're just aggressive, and we just really kind of struggled with that. We had 16 turnovers, which isn't terrible, but it was more like what you said. We just really didn't get into an offensive flow because they really disrupted us so much.

**Q. Did you think that it was one of the tougher match-ups for Megan all year?**

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, I think they did a good job of doubling her when she got the basketball, and there was some good size in there, as well. So I thought they did a nice job really defending her. They had more paint points than us. That's something that we always pride ourselves on, that we need more paint points than the other team, and they got more than us today, and a lot of that, I think, though, was the boards, us not boxing out and giving up those easy twos.

**Q. From your perspective on the bench, how hard is it to kind of keep mounting comeback after comeback when they do makes those big shots?**

LISA BLUDER: Yeah, they did, they really did. Every time we'd get it down to three, then they'd make a basket, and it was hard. If we could have just caught up maybe one time, but again, our fans were really trying to do their best of trying to support us and trying to give us energy out there. Thanks to them. But it's a good team. They're a good team. They've had some great wins. They beat Oregon who's in the Elite 8 right now. They've had some injuries and had to come back from injuries throughout the year, and they're playing pretty well right now.

**Q. What has Ally brought to the team?**

LISA BLUDER: Well, I mean, the record book speaks for itself, but more than that, it's the academic accolades, it's everything that she's done in our community, the role model that she is. I mean, you'd be hard fought to find a better role model in women's athletics, and I'm not saying we don't have a bunch of them here. We do. But boy, she just does it all. She does everything for us, whether it's on the floor, off the floor, in the classroom, going to watch high school games in the community. I mean, she just is so active in the community, and she loves it. She loves this community. She loves Iowa.

It's going to be hard to replace her, but at the same time, this is what we do, right? Every four years we have to do this. Every year I guess we have to do this.

**Q. So next year you do have to replace that; what are you looking forward to about this team next year?**

LISA BLUDER: Well, what I'm looking forward to is that we got some great play for our freshmen in the last couple of weeks. I think that's exciting. When you look at Megan and Kathleen, I mean, you guys know, you see how good our freshmen are and our sophomore classes. If Tania can come back healthy, that would be pretty important for us. We're bringing in a really nice player in Jinaya Houston. She's going to do well for us. You know, the future looks incredibly bright for our team.

**Q. The biggest thing you want the girls to work on in the off-season?**

LISA BLUDER: Well, right now I want to say box-outs. Three-point shooting, that will be another one. But we'll sit down as a coaching staff and really identify every player, a development plan for every player, and start working on those. Give them about a week or two off and then we'll start doing that in April with them, toward the end of April, and start working on their individual skills.