

# PAC-12 Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 3 2018

## Charli Turner Thorne Charnea Johnson- Chapman Kiara Russell

Arizona State

Stanford - 58, Arizona State - 46.

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: I'll start by thanking everybody here, Pac-12 conference, Pac-12 Network, everybody that makes this tournament really special. It's really first class. We always appreciate it. It was nice to be here for three days. We wanted to stay a little bit longer.

Obviously, we just didn't hit shots. We needed to shoot better. We needed to execute better offensively. Really proud of the team. We battled, we defended, holding Stanford to 58 points. We got to the free-throw line. We took pretty good care of the ball.

We outrebounded them and did a lot of things, but we just had to make a few more shots and we just depth. The good news for us, we're going to go back. We don't have very many players, so we don't practice much.

So now we actually get a break. We get some well-deserved rest. We get some much-needed practice time, and people that know our program know that we're going to be really, really ready for March Madness.

So I'm excited about that for our team because I know we can really improve a lot with our team offense. We did last year, and had a really good performance in the NCAA Tournament. We'll look forward to doing the same this year.

### **Q. Is it too easy to say that you guys might have run out of gas, third game in three days?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: Well, I mean, I know in their hearts, their passion, they wanted it. But fatigue is real. I don't know if it was that or maybe we squeezed too hard. We really wanted it. We knew. We've played these teams and we beat that team before. I think our team felt really good about this



opportunity today and getting a rematch with them. I don't know if it was fatigue or tension or maybe a little bit of both kind of factored in because we weren't ourselves. Everybody saw that.

We were just, although I thought we really continued to battle defensively, we were just a little step slow and not quite in sync as we have been. But I'm also, you know, we stayed with things. With KiKi out there just creating something out of nothing because we weren't quite executing a whole lot. Just trying to battle.

But, yeah, we did this one other time. We played Mississippi State, Wisconsin-Green Bay, and Columbia, and so we had Columbia on the third day. So Stanford, Columbia might equal academically, but athletically this is a little tougher third game in three days.

I just told our team we don't have to do this again. It's pretty unique with the conference tournament. NCAA, we'll have a day -- for our team, we're built for a day off and that will be nice for us.

### **Q. Charli, when you play Stanford, tell us a little bit about the challenge of going against that defense, because they do it to a lot of people. Is it the length, the quickness that they switch off? Why exactly are they so good defensively?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: It is their length and their size and they're physical. But they're just scout specific. They do a good job. They chased Courtney Ekmark all over the court. She wasn't going to get a clean look. Kianna, our leading scorer, they're doubling her on every touch. They just do a great job keying in on your top scorers and trying to make other people beat you.

Same as Oregon State. I mean, we knew it would be similar, but we needed to kind of wear them down, and we didn't. We never got Kianna going. We never got Courtney going. Never got Robbi going. But they do a great job of just, hey, you want to make other people beat you. They do have size. They have length. They're just disciplined and they work hard. Obviously a very good defensive team.

### **Q. Charnea, you had really strong performance throughout the tournament. What was it about this**

**big stage that brought out that performance in you and how are you going to use that going forward into March Madness?**

CHARNEA JOHNSON-CHAPMAN: I wouldn't say so much as the big stage as my teammates. Just wanting to be there for them and being that person that brings energy and making sure we all stay together and we all play together. Hopefully I'm -- well, not hopefully, but I plan on keep doing that for the rest of the season.

**Q. Kiara, you guys seemed throughout the first half to struggle to find rhythm offensively. How did Stanford's defense affect that?**

KIARA RUSSELL: Like Charli said, we just didn't execute. They were chasing Courtney all over the court. Kianna couldn't get going. So we just tried to stay poised and get what we could get. We took good shots, but we weren't hitting them. Obviously, second shots is the biggest key to the game, and we didn't do that too. So Stanford did a really good job of boxing us out. So we've got to put more effort into that, I guess.

**Q. With the slow start to the game, how did this affect you guys mentally in how you guys played?**

KIARA RUSSELL: Obviously it was a struggle. But we tried to stay calm, stay collected and play together and play for each other. Connectedness is a huge key to the game, so we just tried to stay together and do what we can do out there.

CHARNEA JOHNSON-CHAPMAN: We have a big emphasis on next play. So with the slow start when, we took a timeout we came back and we're trying to focus on coming back. We're not worried about what we just did. We have to look forward and play harder.

**Q. The game was kind of out of reach, but you went on a 16-2 run to end the game. What can you say about the overall character level of the team?**

CHARLI TURNER THORNE: Well, you guys have been watching the character level of this team all year long, and you know that's all we talk about. We talk about the way to be all you can be. I mean, everybody has talent. To get beyond that talent, you've got to go to the core of your character, and this team does that consistently day-in and day-out. We talk about it. It's who we are. That takes care of what we do, and I couldn't be more proud of this team and how they carry themselves and how they compete.

Yeah, we didn't make some shots today, but I love them. I mean, they're amazing young women, and we're not done.