



2018 Big West Women's Basketball Tournament

Presented by MemorialCare

Game 9 - Semifinals Quotes

Final - No. 1 UC Davis def. No. 6 UC Riverside, 49-46



No. 1 UC Davis

Head Coach Jenniffer Gross -

(Opening statement) "I just want to compliment UC Riverside, what an unbelievable team. They made a great run through this tournament. They played with everything they had. Michelle Curry, such a great player and led the way for them. So congrats to them on a great season and a great postseason run. I am just so incredibly proud of my team. It's playoff time and it's never easy. To find a way to win today when things weren't really going our way, and the ball wasn't dropping for us, it says a lot about the grittiness of our group. I was really proud of our effort on defense and coming up with some big plays down the stretch and I'm just happy to be playing tomorrow."

(On challenges facing Riverside) "They make you defend for the entire shot clock and if you slip up, they hit you with it. They have gotten better and better as the year has gone along with their offense and they run it extremely well."

(On four seniors) "When you go out and recruit players, you hope that the chemistry will be good but it's been so fun to see the chemistry grow throughout the years, not only off the court but on the court. When you look at Dani [Nafekh] and Rachel [Nagel] and Pele [Gianotti] and Morgan [Bertsch] and then you add Marley [Anderson] to that mix on a transfer and they all bring something so unique to the table. Somebody who I thought played an amazing game today was Danni Nafekh and it wasn't just her scoring it was her leadership was unbelievable today. She came out of every timeout relaying every important message to the team, she came to the bench and said 'hey I think this will work' and probably got us 6 points off of those. And in a game where you only score 49 points you know we'll take all of those. It's a special group and an amazing team and it's a lot of fun to coach."

Junior Forward Morgan Bertsch -

(On making halftime adjustments) "The entire game we were stressing our defense, this entire year we've been stressing our defense, so we really relied on that. Especially coming out and getting those few stops really early. Our defense was definitely what won it for us today. Offensively we definitely didn't have our best game."

(On sister in the crowd) "It means the world to me. She's an amazing sister and the most supportive person. Words can't explain how much she means to me. When she comes to the game you guys can all obviously hear her and she makes her presence known. She's always my number one hype man and this team's number one supporter."

Senior Guard Rachel Nagel -

(on final couple minutes and making plays down the stretch) "I think kind of what Morgan said, our offensive shots weren't falling, a lot of them were in and out which can cause a lot of frustration but you just control the things you can control and always play incredibly hard on defense. Especially in those last couple of minutes our defense is what gave us that win."

No. 6 UC Riverside

Head Coach Joh Margaritis -

(Opening statement) "It was a hard-fought game, a lot of the credit goes UC Davis and how hard they play and how they took us out of our offense. Our young ladies never gave up and played hard also but they had a couple more points than us. There is still a lot to be proud of and it was a really good approach we took to the end of the season and this tournament so there is not anything that I could not be proud of about the effort we gave."

(On play down the stretch) "The game changed earlier when we had an opportunity to get offensive rebounds and throw it back out to work a 30 second possession instead of putting it up right away and missing and then fouling Davis allowing them to make free throws. There were big points and sequences towards the end of the game that we didn't handle as well as we should have. A lot of credit has to go to Davis. They pressured us and we did not attack that pressure properly. Our seniors carried us even though we did not have the best offensive output but a lot of that goes to Davis and the way they played."

(On play of Michelle Curry) "Michelle is a better person than a basketball player. Her ability showed this tournament. She played hard and she was always hurting. She could only go for so many minutes but she pushed herself beyond that point and played well. We played her a lot of minutes and she produced for us. She's a special young lady and I will miss her."

Senior Guard Michelle Curry -

(On play this tournament) "I was determined. We fell short but it did not stop my determination. I thought I could've played better but I played hard, the team played hard and everybody did great work. Our season could've been different but we showed a lot today."

Senior Forward Inara Nyingifa -

(On flicking the switch for Tournament) "For every team when tournament time comes around a switch flicks and people play differently. Different people for different teams come out and sparks them like you don't see normally."