

THE MODERATOR: We are pleased to be joined by Tennessee.

Coach, your opening thoughts on tonight's win over Texas A&M.

COACH WARLICK: Just a great effort. Texas A&M is an unbelievable basketball team. Courtney Williams was awesome tonight.

But I think our team stepped up, showed a lot of grit. We've talked about that. When your two best players show up, both Bashaara and Diamond, great things happen. Tonight they showed up. Really, really proud of these two, along with our team.

We just were focused. We didn't let things affect us. We got the job done.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions.

Q. Maybe the most impressive part is overcoming 19 offensive boards. How did you manage to do that?

COACH WARLICK: I don't know (laughter). That's the only thing I look at, and not too often we get out-rebounded.

I think we're having to rotate our defense. We weren't rotating down. But, yeah, I really don't know. I think they missed some put-backs. That's pretty impressive. We got to do a better job, Bashaara and Diamond.

Q. Holly, Bashaara and Diamond shot well, getting high-percentage shots, does that change everything?

COACH WARLICK: No question. Absolutely no question. I thought yesterday we shot too many threes. Today we shot 10. That's probably too many for us today. But we just wanted to attack.

These two I think now understand what's a good shot for them. I wanted the ball in their hands. They were making plays. Bashaara was making some great and-one plays. Diamond was attacking the basket. When Bashaara gets it on the block or near the high post, I have a lot of confidence in her. When Diamond gets it within 10 feet, I just think everything shot is going in.

Our team did a really good job of trying to find them, and they produced for us. When your two best players, we go to them, they've got to produce, and they did tonight.

Q. For both players. Not that you ever lacked confidence, but what have these last three games meant for you and do for you as a team?

BASHAARA GRAVES: I think it just gives us a lot of confidence. I mean, getting that energy from each game that we play, we've had so much energy, so much grit. I just love how our team has played these last three games.

DIAMOND DeSHIELDS: Yeah, I mean, piggyback off of what Shar said. I think everyone's relieved that we finally caught our break. Granted, it took forever, forever and ever, but we always knew we were capable. That's what motivated us to stay together. We knew we were going to peak. We were just waiting for it to happen. I feel like now we're getting there.

Every game matters. This is a new season for us. We believe every game is 0-0. We don't care about the losses or our mistakes. We're in this together. We're all we have. We have the same goal, and it's a pretty big one. In order for us to get there, we got to do it together.

COACH WARLICK: I would have liked y'all to have stepped up earlier in the season, but I'll take this now (laughter).

Q. Diamond and Bashaara, can you expand on the energy level with this team the last two nights, it's been Tennessee-like. What do you think is the thing there? Is it like you just needed to do it?

DIAMOND DeSHIELDS: I think a lot of it has to do with people finally settling into their roles. A lot of this season has been us trying to establish chemistry, people doing too much. I know I was part of that equation, trying to do too much maybe.

Like Hol said, I'm really understanding what a good shot is for me, what I need to do to get a good shot, high-percentage shot to the benefit of the team. I feel like that goes along with Shar, with Mercedes, great passers in the post. If we can play through them, we play great basketball.

BASHAARA GRAVES: Going off of what Diamond just said, this year we've been struggling with trying to gel together, play together as a team. I think we're getting to that point where, I mean, we keep encouraging each other, we keep going hard every time we get on the court.

These last three games show how much we improved from that.

Q. Holly, I know we sort of come to expect this from Tennessee fans. It has been a rough year, but once again here they are. What does that mean to you, that support?

COACH WARLICK: I've had the opportunity to work with these ladies every day. To say that we were disappointed in our regular season, we were. But these guys, they never faltered. They're one of the best practice players, teams that we've had. We would get beat down. They'd keep responding.

Sometimes I think practice has been harder than the games. But you just don't give up on 'em. They're great kids. They work hard. At times we didn't play well. We needed a couple of breaks here and there.

I just think they were very persistent in playing together. Like Diamond said, I think it finally clicked. We understood our roles. I knew we had it in us because I see it every day.

We haven't really focused on any of the negatives. We've just understood that we're going in a positive

direction. We try to work on that every day. I think you're seeing where it's paid off for us. So we've improved. We've gotten better.

I think you're seeing the result of us staying the course, staying positive, staying together. That's just kind of what's gotten us here.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, ladies, thank you very much.