



Baylor (25-6) 3, Rice (27-4) 2

Friday, Dec. 2, 2022

Ferrell Center (Waco, Texas)

Attendance: 1,007

BAYLOR POSTMATCH QUOTES

Baylor Head Coach Ryan McGuyre

Opening Statement...

"What an amazing team Rice is. Just what Jenny does with that group and how hard they fought tonight. A lot different team than what we saw when we were at their place. Most certainly, all of our players would say it took everything we've got to get through the match tonight. I thought some players who maybe struggled for them yesterday really stepped up and played well. I think, for us, of the three sets we won I never felt we were in control of any of them. So it just came down to the end. We had a good start in the fifth set to get it going. I think when you do it right both teams finish emotionally exhausted in a five-set battle like that. I know it's always disappointing to be on either end when it ends that way, but love my team's heart and character and how they started the fifth set, after just probably being demoralized a little bit in that fourth set. Then we were able to make some adjustments.

"We talk about compartmentalizing stuff. Kara was huge down the stretch, Lauren was huge down the stretch, Allie Szech was huge, it was a good team effort. Our players were asked to do some things that maybe we weren't doing as often, because Rice was defending the traditional stuff we were doing. A few little wrinkles there at the end and then we were able to go back to some of our strengths. It was good. Proud of our team effort. It was a long day for me today, and I'm blessed with an amazing staff who do a good job of preparing our girls."

On digging out of it in the second set...

"It really is. The strength and character of this team shine through. It's so hard to end a team's season, especially when they're really good. We have our fifth-year seniors, but they have a couple of really seasoned ones as well. They didn't give us anything at all. I felt like we really had to earn it. Had to pass down the stretch, had to swing down the stretch. Just the character from our young players. Averi is a setter, and I was asking her to set some sets we should probably practice a little more. ... But, ultimately, this team trusts each other. Briseño made some great digs down the stretch. Such a fun team to coach. They just play so free, and adjust when needed. You don't have to worry about managing emotions."

On opening the tournament at home...

"I think that was huge, too. Rice and us were on the bubble, and we did some work early. Our sport comes down to one or two points. If we don't pull out the five-setter at home against Oklahoma, maybe we're on the road. If we don't recover and finish off K-State well after losing to Texas, maybe we're not hosting. If we don't beat Wisconsin in five sets after being in a similar match like this back in August, maybe we're not hosting. It's huge because our fans are great. The energy was great. Kara talks about multiplying the joy, so we get to multiply it with a bunch of beautiful people here in the Waco community."

On the turn into the fifth set...

"It's difficult, but not so when you have a resilient team and you have a game plan. We say all the time, you've got to weather the storms. So, definitely a storm crashed on us in the 4th set. But our principles are, we're going to stay the course. The best way to get through it is to tackle it head-on. We don't want it easy, we don't want excuses. We don't want it to get easier from our opponents. We can't abandon ship, and that's what this team is really good at is not abandoning ship in those storms. But there's got to be a real change, or we're going to sink. So, we're going to stick together, but we're going to make some real changes. And the change was multiplying the joy, it was being good on the blocks, it was being a little more aggressive on our hits. Maybe one degree tougher on our serves and we really talked about wanting to swing for edges a little bit more. And that was different than what we were doing most of the match. So, it made it a little bit more difficult to defend."

Baylor Outside Hitter Lauren Harrison

On the match...

"It felt pretty good. But at the end of the day I was just excited that our season is continuing, and that was the most important thing."

On being a service target...

"I think it's been happening a lot this season, so I've gotten a lot of practice working with it. And then in practice, we work on it a lot. And in my head, I'm just saying, pass for the middles, pass for the middles. And if I'm passing for the middles and it's a good pass, then the offense can be run efficiently."

Baylor Middle Blocker Kara McGhee

On the match...

"We kind of talked about it in the huddle, but our team does really good when we're playing with joy. Sometimes, a lot of times, that has to come from one great play with momentum and you can just carry that on."

On team blocks...

"I think getting a good block it just naturally brings a lot of momentum. So, that's huge. I also think it does the flip side on the other team. it's just really frustrating. So, having a bunch of those, 11, helps change the game, for sure."