

2007 Missouri Valley Conference Women's Tournament
Drake 59, Southern Illinois 47
Quarterfinal Round
Friday, March 9, 2007
Knapp Center, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa

Drake head coach Amy Stephens:

"I could not be more proud of our effort and intensity and just the heart that our kids played with today. The credit really goes to our defensive effort."

"As we struggled a little bit offensively, our defense was outstanding in both halves and that's why we feel we're fortunate to win here today."

"Once we got up 10, 14, then its become just playing to win and not playing to lose and we have no pressure on us, all the pressure was on Southern Illinois today. I was expecting a press at any moment in the second half and it never came. Fortunately, we were able to sustain an 18-point lead once we got it under the three-minute mark."

(on fan support)

Our team is very inspired right now and we're playing our best basketball at the right time. To be doing it in the Knapp Center, obviously there's that comfort level to be doing it at home and that's a huge advantage and that's why the conference is moving it to another site.

Of all the years we needed the tournament at home, this is the year because of all the adversity that we have gone through as a team. To have all of those freshmen and sophomores out there, to get the tournament experience at home. I'm just so pleased for our kids. And our fans; that they get to see the true character of our team. It's just great to be at the Knapp Center."

(on contributions of role players)

"We've been clicking offensively really the last two weeks, but everyone looks at the win-loss column. It's about the total package and right now we're in a pretty good rhythm offensively. We're being more patient and we're moving the ball – at times – OK, and nobody cares who scores. But it really goes to the crux of our defense, tempo, and when we go on our draughts, that's what allows us to maintain a lead or stay even. But you can see the confidence growing in this young group and the tournament experience is so valuable for the future."

Freshman guard Kaniesha Agee

"I knew that somebody needed to step up; I tried to find an open look."

Junior guard Lindsay Whorton

"I got some good looks in the second half that didn't fall. The team did a good job executing. It's great to score zero points in the second half and still have your team get the win. Our freshmen don't know that we're the eighth seed and that we're not supposed to win any games."

"We expected them to come out really strong (in the second half). Defense, that's what was key for us. We were able to hold them at nine points for a really long time. We just capitalized the situation."

"They cut it to three points and we got into a huddle and talked about establishing ourselves offensively and defensively. Every player contributed to that effort so that we had a cushion going into that last 10 minutes."

“I didn’t feel tired. I didn’t feel different. We’re well conditioned. It’s just like Coach says, ‘Mind over matter. If you don’t mind, then it doesn’t matter.’”

Sophomore forward Tori Runner

“I’m really proud of us. It was a team effort. Everyone’s stepping up and that’s what the tournament is all about. Everyone contributing is key to the game.”

(about her knees)

“They’re good.”

Southern Illinois head coach Dana Eikenberg:

“The best team out there won tonight. Drake deserves that win, convincingly so. We were outplayed convincingly in that game.”

“I thought it was Drake’s execution on the offensive end, Drake’s execution on the defensive end. We can’t catch up to a team that can score as well as Drake does.”

(did you see this coming?)

“I got after them this morning a little bit. I thought they were a little lackadaisical in shoot-around. We talked about how much respect we had for Drake and I’m not so sure that was all the way down the line today.”

“We did not do anything that we talked about today.”

(about postseason)

“It’s kind that they’re going to give us that (automatic NWIT bid). I said to them earlier in the week that I may choose to bypass that if I didn’t like the way we worked. We still have a long way to go. We lost an opportunity tonight – an opportunity to do something we haven’t done before. It will be valuable, we’ll make it valuable.”

“I’m disappointed for the kids, because we’ve done some good things this year.”

Southern Illinois players

Senior forward Carlai Moore

“It was a lack of execution. I think we were disciplined enough. I think we had our game plan, but as far as flowing it to a T. I think that’s where we failed.”

“It wasn’t who they had out there, but it was us coming out there and playing as a team and really doing something that hasn’t been done in this program. That was our focus.”

Junior guard Jayme Sweere:

“We just needed to get back and get our offense in sync. We couldn’t get anything going, and we know that feeds off our defense. I think we could have gotten to the line better, and definitely limited their rebounds.”

(How Drake took the lead in first half)

“Offensive boards.”