

NCAA Media Conference

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Chris Reynolds

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: I'm joined today by Chris Reynolds, the Director of Athletics at Bradley University and the Chair of the Women's Basketball Committee. I'm going to turn it over to Chris for a quick opening remark.

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Hello, everyone, and hope you're having a great afternoon. We certainly are. We're in Carmel, Indiana. We're here for the second consecutive year, and look forward to the process beginning this afternoon, and that will be going on through Sunday evening.

We are here to take any questions that you might have at this time.

Q. Chris, I had a general question about where you think the committee is in 2023 versus when you started, if there has been a growth or a change when it comes to -- if you can take us inside the room as much as you're willing here, when it comes to discussing teams, their resumes and the metrics that are available, as much as you might look at strength of record, has that been more discussed than maybe it would have been three or four years ago, or Sagarin? I want to get a better sense of how those discussions take place when you are talking about team quality and what the data is presenting outside of just what the NET ranking is and the quadrants.

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Absolutely, thank you for that question. Certainly, as you all well know, the NET being the sorting tool is something that is just one criteria that we use. But I would say for the most part, we look at the quadrant system, as you guys know, and then all available metrics. That certainly hasn't changed.

The committee is now 12 members versus 10 when I started, but we continue the process as systematically as we possibly can. We have robust conversations throughout the week, and we certainly do our absolute best to get it right each and every year.

Q. Chris, as you go into the last few days, I was wondering if you could sort of map out for us, when you're looking at the 1 seeds right now and the handful

of teams that may be under consideration, how much is weighed conference tournament-wise? Is that more of if there's a 4, 5 or 6 team that's in the mix for the 4 spots? How can you sort of explain to us how the tournaments factor into the final process?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Well, thank you for that question. Certainly as committee members, the conference tournament is certainly a piece of the puzzle. Games that we certainly follow throughout this week.

However, always keep in mind that these games are looked at in the same way as we do look at games in November, December, January. It makes up part of the resume. It's another data point for us to evaluate and discuss. Certainly recency bias can come in with regards to the public, with regards to teams that may get hot at the end of the season, but we certainly don't look at that from that perspective. We look at each game; each game stands on its own, and each game is looked at as part of the puzzle in addition to the games that have taken place prior to.

With regards to the other question you mentioned, as relates to teams on the No. 1 seed line, certainly maybe three weeks ago or so we had the Bracket Preview Show, and we had four solid No. 1 seeds on that No. 1 seed line. Certainly there have been a lot of games since the Bracket Preview Show. There's been a lot of movement.

At the time, we stated that those four No. 1 seeds were solid, and we did not discuss any other teams or consider any other teams for that No. 1 seed line. Well, that's changed.

There's certainly a few other teams in play for the No. 1 seed line, so that's probably the biggest difference on that line today versus three weeks ago.

Q. Chris, sorry if this is an overly simplistic question, but the quad system and the NET system are sorting tools in a sense, but looking over history no team has ever gotten in with zero Quad 1 wins, I believe the fewest is two. Can you envision a scenario where you would select a team for an at-large bid with only one

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Quad 1 win and especially if it wasn't a Quad 1A win?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Well, thank you for that question, and certainly there's history as relates to what's been determined each year by that particular committee, based upon the number of quad wins a team does or doesn't have. But each year stands on its own.

We'll certainly be evaluating teams this week as relates to how they did during the course of the year, but I can't speak to how that will play out this year because this year is different, and each year is different.

Q. If I can ask a follow-up, I feel like people are really paying close attention to this this year, but when a team is say in the top 30 and all of a sudden they slip to 31 and it's a Quad 2, I wonder how much you keep that in mind where it's really, really close on the borderline between being a Quad 1 or Quad 2 or a 2 or a 3?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Yeah, and just to say, just to follow up on the previous response I gave, we certainly don't eliminate a team that has zero Quad 1 wins. I just want to make sure I make that clear. It's discussed. It's debated around the table. But it's certainly not an eliminator to not have any Quad 1 wins.

Q. Chris, in the history of the Final Four, there's only been four schools that have played in the Final Four in their hometown, and obviously there's the possibility this year just based on Houston being in the field. I was wondering, when it comes to bracketing, you have so many moving parts, so many teams, and so few options in terms of where you send teams. Does that on the rare occasion have to play a factor in terms of what path you may have to put for a team that has the potential to end up in the Final Four in their home?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Well, I'm going to try to answer your question. I'm not sure I'm completely following. But what I will say, as relates to bracketing, geography does play a factor.

Houston certainly has a great team. They're having a great year. But the fact that the Final Four is in Houston doesn't play a factor in how we're going to bracket or seed teams.

Q. I'm sorry, the way I phrased it. I guess maybe in general terms, not even factoring in Houston, just the rarity also of the difficulty of a team reaching a Final Four, much less playing in one in their hometown.

CHRIS REYNOLDS: I'm not following. I'm trying to answer your question.

Q. How are you handling or evaluating UCLA with Jaylen Clark's injury? There's been no definitive word about whether he's going to be able to return for the NCAA Tournament, just that he won't play in this tournament.

I think Mick Cronin said something about, hey, he'd be willing to talk to anybody on the committee. How does that work?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Yeah, great question. Certainly during the course of the year, whether it's UCLA or any team that we're considering, we look at injuries, and we talk about those things. Throughout the course of the year, we've talked about injuries, who's available, who's not available from a player perspective, from a coach perspective, and to go a little bit further, we talk about particularly in the conference 1 plays versus 2 plays. So all of those things get discussed.

Certainly we'll watch a team with all their players available, and certainly we evaluate teams and how they're doing without those particular players available. All that's taken into consideration.

With regards to each team, in the committee room, we have discussions that focus around how that team is doing without that particular player because certainly that would be something that we would need to consider as we see teams.

Q. What about a circumstance that could be like this where you may not know the status of a player and if he's going to return or not?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Yeah, that's a great question, great follow-up question. What we do, we make every effort to reach out to that school and their conference office to receive the latest and most up-to-date information with regards to that player. Even in the committee room this week, we'll certainly be reaching out to conferences, their offices, as well as schools to find out any particulars that we can because we want all the possible information that's available to us before making decisions.

Q. When you get done with this call, I think you guys are going to get rolling here in about 15, 20 minutes, right? When this happens, what is the first thing as official business that's going to go down? Is everyone in the room going to just punch into a computer their no-brainers for at-large consideration? Then however that gets tallied up, it spits out 20, 24, 27 teams, whatever it is, and you have the at-large pool, and then you start to get into the nitty-gritty from there? Is that



how this thing gets rolling?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Yeah, great question. We'll get started right after this call. We just have some committee business to handle initially that won't take long. Once we get done with that, we'll cast initial ballots, and approximately 25 teams or so will be voted into the field. That'll take place this afternoon.

Then also approximately 40 teams will be voted into the under consideration board. So that will be Wednesday.

Thursday, additional teams will be voted into the field. We'll have a process of seeding and scrubbing teams. That'll happen Thursday through Saturday.

Then on Sunday we get to the bracketing.

Q. Chris, is the process that the No. 1 overall has the preference of destination? Is that for the first and second round?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: For both.

Q. In terms of when you do the bracketing, for teams that play on Sunday in a conference tournament, is there the option or the preferred or tried to have them do a Friday-Sunday, or that doesn't necessarily always work out?

CHRIS REYNOLDS: Geography will determine -- bracketing is based on geography.

THE MODERATOR: When Chris said "both," the teams choose their preferred destination for both the first and second round site and the regional site, but it's important to note that only the overall No. 1 seed ends up getting that preference.

This concludes the call. The same Zoom link will be available for Sunday night 8:30 Eastern time will be the post-selection teleconference with Chris Reynolds. Thanks for joining us this afternoon, and have a great day.

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