

2022 NCAA Women's Volleyball Championship

Friday, December 16, 2022

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

CHI Health Center Arena

Texas Longhorns

Coach Jerritt Elliott

Logan Eggleston

Molly Phillips

Press Conference



see that at the ceremony, that we're really pumped for her.

She's just great on and off the court and keeps on working and sacrifices everything for this team and totally deserves that recognition.

Q. Jerritt, what kind of problems does Claire Chaussee provide for you your team, or what do you do against her?

COACH ELLIOTT: Serve tough, get her off the net. No, she's just a really experienced attacker. She has all the shots. She can also hit -- they do a lot of things similar to what Nebraska does. They hit the high hands, flat hands. They work the ball around the court. And very efficient attack.

We've just got to try to slow her down. We're not going to stop her. We've got to see if we can contain her and get some good touches. Our hand positioning and where we are will be critical. Again, you've got to serve tough to get them off the net.

Q. I know this is a big opportunity to win a championship. Also, what would it mean to bring a title home for the OG, Jerritt Elliott?

LOGAN EGGLESTON: I mean, that's the main goal that we've been thinking about all year. It's the reason we came to Texas. Jerritt has sacrificed so much for every single one of us. So it would mean so much just to bring it home to him.

He's worked so hard over the years and gotten there so many times. So kind of get him over the hump and win it for him and bring it back home to Austin would mean so much.

MOLLY PHILLIPS: We've been in literally this exact position before a few years ago, so it would mean a ton to bring this home for Texas, for Jerritt, literally for everyone. We have so many alumni and people behind us, and we want to do it for everyone.

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to our NCAA championship press conference with Texas. We're joined by head coach Jerritt Elliott and student-athletes Molly Phillips and Logan Eggleston.

Coach, if you would please begin with an opening statement on the championship match tomorrow night, and then we'll go to questions.

COACH ELLIOTT: We're excited to be here, to live another day, and to have an opportunity to get to the top of the mountain. We've got a lot of respect for what Louisville does and the competitive team they have. They're extremely well coached.

We've got to get our team organized so that we can play Texas volleyball and have a great chance to do what we set out to accomplish.

Q. Logan, I don't know if you just want to redo your acceptance speech. Can you react to your award? Molly, can you talk about how proud you are of your girl?

LOGAN EGGLESTON: It's an honor honestly. There's so many great volleyball players in the country and on our team. It's really an honor to get recognized like that. It's definitely a team award. I couldn't have gotten the award without all the hard work my teammates put me in. They put me in great situations every single point. It's honestly truly a team award.

MOLLY PHILLIPS: We're so proud of Logan. We've known all season she's capable of getting this award and deserves this award in every single way. We're just really excited to hear her name called. And you could probably

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Jerritt's worked so hard to put us in the position we're in today, so just go out and get it.

COACH ELLIOTT: Does OG mean the old guard? I know what it means. I'm just saying I've been here for a while.

(Laughter).

Q. I guess, Coach and Molly and Logan, if you could all talk about this. Louisville's been a really good serving team throughout this tournament. I think they had 10 aces yesterday. I know you guys have been against tough serves all year long, but how important is it to be able to serve/receive really well against this team?

LOGAN EGGLESTON: Yeah, I think that's what a lot of teams plan to do against us. They need to get us off the net so we're out of system. So we've been facing it a lot throughout the season in a lot of our games.

Also we have a lot of great servers in practice, so we're facing really tough serves in practice, which is making us a lot better. I think our passers have done a really great job of setting Saige up to get the ball distributed to all of our hitters.

It's going to be a big key tomorrow to make sure we're passing it high and off the net and able to run our offense.

MOLLY PHILLIPS: We talk all the time, to win a game, you need to be the best at serve and pass. We work on that a lot in our gym. We also work on being good in a not-perfect-pass situation, and we're really good at that.

Like Logan said, if we can get the ball high up and down the court, we can run our offense and put our hitters in good positions.

COACH ELLIOTT: If you talk to any coach at this level, they're going to say serve and pass is the most important aspect of the game. We know they serve tough. We can serve tough from our line as well.

We've got to manage the tough serves, get them high up and down, seven or eight feet off the net. It doesn't have to be perfect every time.

We have to identify when there are good serves and try to control them so Saige can get underneath it and deliver the ball to both pins.

Q. Molly, is this a revenge game for you all? Since this is a championship game, does 2019 not even

matter?

MOLLY PHILLIPS: We definitely want to get a little revenge on 2019. That was my freshman year, so it would be nice to come back after we put a lot of work in and come back and take a win off of them. Also, the championship game.

It's just like a lot of it. We want to take one step at a time and take it as just another game. But there is a lot of heart and meaning behind it, yeah.

Q. Coach, we talked a little bit on Thursday about what it's like to uphold these expectations year after year at Texas. I'm wondering what about the game in terms of the skill level of the players and the parity makes that hard? Is it because the talent is now spread out so many places? Is it because you have so many different types of skill players or all of those things, that makes it hard to keep reaching this level, and yet you guys still do it?

COACH ELLIOTT: Right now it's the fastest growing women's sport. So the level of athlete that's coming out, we have a lot of people transitioning over to the sport of volleyball.

The physicality now is there. The club system is so good that the players are developing and having to control the ball, and there's a lot of great arms.

You're seeing it with Louisville, right? They're not real big on the left, but they've got million dollar arms, and they can manage it and they've learned the nuances of the game to be successful. They know how to do it, and they can master it in a different way.

The level of the game continues to improve, but the physicality is the big one now. When I started in -- my first Final Four was 2000, and I think had two players touching maybe 10'1" and 10'4". My two outside hitters were touching 9'10" and 9'11". Now if you're not 10'3", 10'4", you're pretty small.

So the game changes, and the coaching's developed. There's so much science behind it. There's so much numbers, analytics behind it. People can study the game and manage the game. There's a lot more information out there than there was 10, 15 years ago.

Q. This is kind of a random one for me. Molly and Logan, how protective are you two of the finger-tape tradition? And what benefit does that provide you out there? Also, how did you convince Madisen to start doing it?

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MOLLY PHILLIPS: We're going to do it. That's one thing we're going to do. I think Madi started to doing it because she got her nails done and she didn't want them to break. So she taped her nails and ended up taping her fingers.

Now she likes it. We had to get her to try it once and then understand.

Texas tradition is, I guess, I forget why we do it, but I like it. I think it helps with, I don't know, mentally with blocking, I guess. It makes me feel like my fingers aren't as jammed, I guess.

LOGAN EGGLESTON: You see the people at our gym, they're hitting balls pretty hard. It protects the fingers a little better. It at least makes you think they're a little more protected.

Madi is finally on our side. It took a lot of convincing. When the nails got done, we're like, hey, tape might help. It took the nails being done, but we got her there.

Q. Logan, I know you probably don't care about this right now, but because of your award, you've done what you needed to do to get your jersey retired here at Texas -- at least you meet the qualifications. Why do you wear 33? I know you wore it in high school. What significance does that number have for you?

LOGAN EGGLESTON: It was my dad's number. He played Division III basketball back in the day back at Emory & Henry in Virginia. Small, small school, but he was a third-team All-American, he tells me.

He was a good player. He was 33, and I decided I wanted to follow in his footsteps. He was a great athlete. So I decided to be 33, and it's worked out pretty well for me.

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