

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Kentucky vs Iowa State

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St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Enterprise Center

## Kentucky Wildcats

## Malachi Moreno

## Kam Williams

## Collin Chandler

Media Conference



MODERATOR: The Kentucky Wildcats No. 7 seed are with us. They were winner over Santa Clara yesterday. They'll play Iowa State in Sunday's first game, 11:10 am. We have Collin Chandler, Kam Williams and Malachi Moreno with us. And we're going to go straight to questions.

**Q. Kam, just wanted to get a quick update on your foot. Are you prepared? How many minutes are you prepared to go tomorrow.**

KAM WILLIAMS: Prepared as much as Pope wants me to play. I worked hard to get back to the court as fast and in the best possible shape I can. Sitting out this season was definitely tough, but it definitely opened my eyes a lot more to the game of basketball and I'm glad that the staff allowed me to get back as fast as I could.

**Q. Malachi, yesterday, first tournament game, first tournament start. Can you kind of talk us through the emotions of that and if anything maybe caught you off guard with the experience?**

MALACHI MORENO: Definitely crazy. Being a little kid making all the brackets watching the games is definitely a dream come true. I think the only thing that caught me unexpected, I didn't understand what the atmosphere would be. You can only hear so much noise on the TV. Hearing it in person was a crazy feel. Just something you always expect at March Madness.

**Q. Collin, was so iconic, so crazy. The ending, how do you guys flush that and start over knowing you got Iowa State coming?**

COLLIN CHANDLER: I don't know if it's a complete flush. I think it's good for us to take the momentum of last game into the next game. It's restart 0-0. So we have to come out with hopefully that momentum to carry us into this game.

**Q. For all three of you, what were your reaction to Otega's shot and how many times have you watched the replay since?**

MALACHI MORENO: I thought it was crazy being in a moment like that. We practice those shots at shoot-around. So once the ball left his hands, I knew it was going in. Because he's the only one that usually makes them.

KAM WILLIAMS: It was great because, obviously, it advanced us to overtime, which ultimately helped us win the game. I've seen it replayed on TikTok like 20 times already.

COLLIN CHANDLER: Yeah, it's been all over my social media, as well. I've been a part of a few moments like that with O bleeding into last year. It kind of felt like the one in the SEC tournament last year where O got the ball and it's kind of like you're -- I'm sitting there watching as much as the people on the TV just waiting for him to make a play. It was cool to live another one of those moments with him.

**Q. Guys, as far as the matchups tomorrow, we hear a lot about individual matchups, but where do you think you guys have an advantage?**

COLLIN CHANDLER: I mean, it depends really. We're going through a bunch of different lineups. I'm sure they're mixing up lineups, too. They play a pretty deep bench, maybe nine guys, something like that. So I think that's ever-changing throughout the game. But they play a very aggressive style. And so I think if we can match that aggressiveness on offense that they play with defense, then we can use it to an advantage for us.

KAM WILLIAMS: I'll kind of piggyback off what he said. They're definitely an aggressive team on offensive and defense. Definitely we need to match their physicality and I feel like if we match their physicality and also limit our



turnovers because they're an aggressive defensive team, like I said.

Just protect the ball as best we can and limit our turnovers and I feel like we'll have our chances.

MALACHI MORENO: Just like they said, they're very aggressive. They make plays on the ball a lot. I think they're the Top 5 team on defense in the country. They led the Big 12 in turnovers and points off turnovers. So protecting the ball is definitely going to be a big key factor for us. But I also think we've been battle-tested all year and I think that's kind of an advantage we have. We've seen a lot of different situations and scenarios. There's not really much to be unexpected. We expect a lot, and we see different things. So I think we're prepared.

**Q. For all three guys, especially Kam, how much does it resonate with you guys that you're part of March Madness, you get to play and yet Jaland Lowe can't play, JQ can't play. How does it resonate with you all?**

KAM WILLIAMS: I'd say definitely an experience that I wish that they had the opportunity to have. It's definitely once in a lifetime. But we're definitely playing as hard as we can for them because they're not capable of playing right now. So definitely them sharing with us how important it is to keep dancing. Definitely makes us play a lot harder, and we also want to play for our BBN fans and our families and everyone has motivation, but we have extra motivation because we have two players that are not allowed to play right now.

COLLIN CHANDLER: I think they've come into their role like our whole team has had to find roles, and they've found a role that impacts winning, from being on the bench and supporting us that way. I think they help us win games and they're here to experience that. They're experiencing it with us, and their contributions, although media or fans might not understand what they bring to our team, it's definitely felt, and I think they're helping us win games.

MALACHI MORENO: Yeah. To piggyback off what Collin said, even though they can't play right now they still show up every day ready to work. Anytime we go into a timeout, Jaland is always the one to come and speak. That goes to show even though he can't play he's here to help us win. Just having those two around, it's almost like having more coaches, they help see the floor a lot. Especially JLowe, he sees a lot on the floor that everybody else doesn't see, and JQ is always talking to us on the bench and letting us know what he sees and we're able to apply that to the game in real time.

**Q. Kam, from my vantage point taking photos, there**

**was a timeout late and all the coaches gathered over in the huddle. It looked like JLowe just took control and said it's do or die, just really letting you guys have it. Am I correct?**

Kam Williams: Yeah, I would say that's correct. He's a player-coach. He definitely repeats anything that Pope or anybody on the staff tells us. So having a leader like him definitely makes everyone's job easier, for sure.

**Q. All three of you have mentioned how aggressive Iowa State is going to be. So evidently that's a talking point. Is it more important to make sure you guys do what you do well or to make sure that you respond to what they do well?**

COLLIN CHANDLER: I think it's a little bit of both. I think they bring it to you. Which triggers a response, but I think we can be aggressive in that response. I think that not letting them slow us down, or not letting them speed us up, rather, I think is the emphasis made is play our game through what -- don't let them dictate what we do, I think is the best way to put it.

KAM WILLIAMS: Going off what he said, really just throwing the first punch kind of thing so we can dictate the game. Because you allow the other team to dictate the game you kind of counter what they're doing, but if you're the aggressor then you kind of control the entirety of the game. We just do what we do well, like you said, and we're going to come up with a victory.

MALACHI MORENO: Just like what they said, it's definitely going to take a little bit of both. And like what Coach Fox says before every game and before every scout, he says we gotta be the hammer, not the nail. So just being able to bring that aggressiveness and kind of just match their intensity and really key in on what we do well and just make plays for each other and I think we're in a good spot.

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