

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Regional Final: Indiana vs Arizona

Monday, March 29, 2021

San Antonio, Texas, USA

Alamodome - Mercado

Indiana Hoosiers

Mackenzie Holmes

Elite 8 Postgame Media Conference



Arizona 66, Indiana 53

THE MODERATOR: We will get started with our student-athlete. Mackenzie, if you would start us out with an opening statement about the game.

MACKENZIE HOLMES: All I have to say is I love these girls so much. I would do anything for my team. I would do anything for these girls, for our staff. We care so much about each other.

I think I've learned a lot about -- this is my first tournament, so I've learned a lot. I feel like I'm going to mature a lot from this and we're going to be better because of it.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open up the floor for questions.

Q. Obviously a tough loss for you guys today. What was the mood like in the locker room afterwards, the conversation you have to balance the accomplishments you did have, obviously the tough ending today?

MACKENZIE HOLMES: Yeah, I mean, I would say we were kind of at a little bit of a loss for words. Like I said, we all love each other so much. We wanted to be here for longer. We were all pretty upset. Coach Moren came in and talked to us. We just got to learn from it and pick our heads up and keep moving forward.

Q. Obviously I know you didn't guard her directly, but what was it like dealing with Aari McDonald? What does she do that gets a defense scrambled up? You gave up some open looks from three. What made her difficult to deal with?

MACKENZIE HOLMES: Yeah, she's an elite player. She stepped up big-time. She hit a lot of tough shots. We just

tried to do what we could to slow her down. Like I said, she's a great player. She got to the rim well. She can score on all three levels. She's a tough player to guard for sure. We gave it our best shot, but like I said she hit a lot of tough shots on us tonight.

Q. I know you guys usually have your 24-hour rule whether it's a win or a loss. I'm assuming this might sting a little more. How do you balance understanding what you were able to accomplish this season while also being disappointed because you wanted to do more?

MACKENZIE HOLMES: Yeah, like I said, this is something that we're going to learn from and we're going to have to be better from, no matter how much it hurts. We're going to have to learn from this.

I guess, you know, the 24-hour rule, we're going to have to get over it. We don't have any another choice. We have to keep moving forward. We want to build off of this. We made a great run and we want to make this a regular thing for us.

I think having this type of night gives us a lot to learn about ourselves, what we can do next year to be better.

Q. Obviously things are still pretty fresh right now. Looking ahead to next year, this is going to be a team you return pretty much all the players you had this year. Where do you think you guys stack up next year? Do you think it's possible to pull off a run like this again?

MACKENZIE HOLMES: Yeah, like I said, we want this to be a regular thing. We don't want this to be a surprise to have Indiana in the Elite 8. We want it to be expected. I think that having this opportunity gives us something to build off of. We got an opportunity. That's all we can ask for, is a chance to play on this big stage.

I think now that we got a taste of it, all of us are going to be hungry for more. I think it's going to pay off in the end for us.



Q. It's a 55-50 game about five minutes to go. They outscored you 11-3 in the last five minutes. What do you think offensively bogged down for you in the last five minutes?

MACKENZIE HOLMES: I mean, we weren't -- we were a little rushed on offense. We got good shots, we just couldn't hit them. That happens. It's really unfortunate that it had to happen tonight. But I feel like we got some good looks. We couldn't put an exclamation point on some of them. It was tough for us, but I feel like we gave it everything we got. We didn't let up for one second. That's all I can ask for from my team.

Q. In the Bloomington area a lot of support for you since you left for the tournament, particularly with little girls in the Bloomington community looking up to you guys. What does it mean for you to perform on this stage and get to the point where you did and have the people in the community backing you up?

MACKENZIE HOLMES: I am so, so thank you full for everything that Bloomington has supported us with. Even for me back home, everyone back home has been nothing but supportive, nothing but wanting us to do well. We can't ask for anything else.

We're so appreciative of the support that everyone has given us. We're so thankful for it. We're so appreciative of it. It just means so much to us. I know that next year I can't wait for us to get fans back into Assembly Hall.

Q. I know obviously Ali has an option to come back. What has it been like playing with her the last two years? If this were her last run, what has been to have this much success with her as your leader?

MACKENZIE HOLMES: Yeah, I love Ali to death. She's not only a great teammate, but she's going to be one of my sisters for life. She's the heart and soul of this team. It hurt to lose because seeing her hurting hurt me. Same with the rest of my team.

But, yeah, I love Ali. She's so selfless. She's a great teammate, great player. It's just been so amazing forget a chance to learn from her for the past two years. She's guided me in more ways than she probably knows. She's just an amazing person. I hope that wasn't my last time on the court with her, but I'm so, so thankful for her.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations on an outstanding season. Thank you so much for joining us.

MACKENZIE HOLMES: Thank you.

