

Big Ten Basketball Media Days

Wednesday, October 12, 2022

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Minnesota Golden Gophers

Women's Head Coach

Lindsay Whalen



KEVIN WARREN: The next coach to the podium is really special here to the Twin Cities, a special friend, was really blessed to see her play and lead. You could probably name the Target Center here the house that Lindsay built.

Lindsay Whalen, the head women's basketball coach at the University of Minnesota, we have a special presentation to make to her. I'm going to ask Diana Sabau, our chief sports officer, and Megan Kahn, our vice president of women's basketball, to come to the stage right now, and also Coach Whalen.

We wanted to present a ball because one of the highest honors you can get as an athlete is to get the game ball. Lindsay has the ultimate game ball when she was named to the basketball Naismith Hall of Fame, which is obviously phenomenal. So we wanted to get a painted ball by a local Minnesotan artist to give this to Coach Whalen to tell her how much we appreciate her.

Welcome to the podium the head basketball coach at the University of Minnesota, Lindsay Whalen.

LINDSAY WHALEN: Thank you, thank you, thank you. We'll find a really cool spot to frame that basketball. Thank you all so much.

Well, welcome to Minnesota. It's obviously home to me. I'm honored that we are going to be hosting such a great event. Minnesota has hosted many in this building, WNBA Championships, women's basketball Final Fours, Super Bowls, men's Final Fours, volleyball NCAA tournaments, women's hockey NCAA tournaments. We know how to put on a great event. I know that everything that Commissioner Warren does is first class and we're going to do a great job of hosting the Big Ten basketball tournaments here for the next few years in a first-class manner.

Just an extremely cool honor for me to be here today representing the University of Minnesota on the 50th year of Title IX, which I know I've been given so many great opportunities throughout my career due to Title IX. I would

not be standing here without that.

Our team... We've got a really, really fun group. Our athletic director, Mark Coyle, talks to all of our programs about being great academically, socially and then athletically, competing in all those areas.

Last year we were one of five Big Ten institutions that made the WBCA honor roll academically. Our team GPA was a 3.2. We've had some really, really unique opportunities this off-season, if there is an off-season, to really explore some really cool things off the court.

Alanna Rose Micheaux, she visited Selma and Montgomery, Alabama, part of Big Ten student-athletes event there as an educational experience and a key center for civil rights. We're extremely proud of her.

Katie Borowicz was part of the Big Ten leadership summit, along with Rose, representing our team in the Big Ten and in leadership.

Incoming freshmen, we have Mara Braun, an athlete ambassador to the Special Olympics. A way she's using her NIL to be a part of something very special to her in the Special Olympics.

Niamya Holloway from Eden Prairie in our freshman class as well co-founded a Black student union in Eden Prairie to promote youth leadership.

We've got a lot of really, really cool things happening on and off the court.

Basketball-wise, today is practice 13, so we're ready to get that going later today. We've used every possible hour to practice and to work together as a team to continue to build this group. It's a fun group. Every day I look forward to going in and coaching them, being a part of practice and being a part of their journey.

So with that...

Q. What excites you most about this team that you have this season coming off one of the program's best



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recruiting classes?

LINDSAY WHALEN: Yeah, I think just that excitement, that excitement, that work, getting this recruiting class here, them coming in with that excitement, along with Katie, who I mentioned, and Rose and Maggie, who were here last year, have taken some really big steps, as I mentioned, in leadership, some different aspects as leaders on our team, as well as some transfers that we've had come in.

But there's no question that's a group that's really special. They're very talented on and off the floor. Very excited to continue to work with them and see what they can do.

We know they're freshmen. Big Ten, I said earlier, every night is like laying in the NCAA tournament because the competition is so good. Every year half, if not more, of our teams go to the NCAA tournament. Every night is that. It will be exciting for them, to see them continue to grow and continue to get better.

Q. Can you talk about maybe one or two things that you've been happy about in practice that you've noticed about the way the team is playing together or who has stepped up.

LINDSAY WHALEN: I like how we respond every day. It's hard to put my finger on it, but no matter what the previous day held, this team comes with a really, really good attitude and good just excitement for the next day of practice.

I think when you get into this time of year where it's essentially our training camp -- like I said, this is practice 13, we've been together since June -- I think there's some times when you can possibly get some complacency. But this group doesn't. They're just excited. They have a genuine excitement to come in every day ready to work.

Like I said, whatever the previous day held, they're ready to come back in the next day ready to work. The teams I've been on as a player and as a coach, the teams that do that have been the ones that have been really successful, that they truly look forward to being together every day and look forward to getting back to work. Those have been the teams that have been really successful.

Q. You have seen the success that then results in the support from this area of women's basketball. Would you be willing to expand upon what it means to have the conference tournament coming to this area and what this community does for women's basketball.

LINDSAY WHALEN: Yeah, I think I've been a part of some really special teams in some special times. The fans are

just as much a part of that as the teams I was on.

In this building alone, we've had several times 18,000 people for games, regular season, championship and everything in between. Same thing at Williams Arena when we've had some really good stretches.

The fans, the support, the community, they were just as much a part of those teams as us on the floor. I would say that to them, that I feel like it was a shared experience that we had. Obviously we were out here playing, but we have a really smart fan base so they know when a stop is needed, they know when we need to have a great possession.

It's been fun to be a part of that. I expect nothing less for these upcoming tournaments. It's going to be a great time. Like I said, we host first-class events. We'll expect nothing less than that hosting these tournaments in this great building.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

