

Big Ten Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 7, 2026

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gainbridge Fieldhouse

Ohio State Buckeyes

Kevin McGuff

Chance Gray

Elsa Lemmila

Postgame Press Conference

UCLA -72, Ohio State - 62

THE MODERATOR: Ohio State, along with Coach Kevin McGuff and student-athletes Chance Gray and Elsa Lemmila are here. Let's go to the first question for Coach.

Q. Kevin, it felt like you guys were always in the game but just didn't have that final push. What are your takeaways from a game like this?

KEVIN MCGUFF: One, UCLA is a great team. I thought they played well today. We played really hard and competed for 40 minutes but just didn't play good enough.

Specifically, their length gave us problems where we turned the ball over, and we also got some opportunities in terms of shots that we got that we were going to have to make if we were going to beat UCLA.

Q. Chance, I wonder, did you guys feel like you did get some shots that you would normally make and they just weren't falling for you today?

CHANCE GRAY: Yeah, that's pretty much what happened.

Q. For either Elsa or Chance, you get a two-in-one trip here, not the final outcome you were looking for. Focus will shift to the NCAA now. Just tell me what the biggest lesson is for you guys heading into the tournament in a few weeks?

CHANCE GRAY: I think we did a good job. We always play really hard. We played to the best of our ability. As Coach said, we just needed to make a couple more shots, less turnovers to beat a team like that.



Q. Coach, can you speak about Kylee, seven points, six rebounds, just how you felt her game has grown during the tournament as a freshman?

KEVIN MCGUFF: Yes. I think that we were probably at our best this year when Kylee was playing both the four and the five for us. She had an unfortunate injury where she was out for a few weeks and fought her way back. I thought she handled herself really well in this tournament and hopefully she will continue to get more comfortable and impact us in a big way when we hit the NCAA Tournament.

Q. Kevin, pacing at halftime seemed to be a lot quicker. Started working in the paint a lot more and scored more points in the second half from that. What was your thought process behind that? How do you think that worked out?

KEVIN MCGUFF: Yeah, we came out at halftime. We looked a little tentative in the first half. I thought our effort, our physical effort was great, but we were a little tight, little tentative in the first half. The second half I felt we executed as a much higher level. We moved the ball, played aggressively, and it led to a lot of great opportunities and we were able to score a little bit more.

Q. Coach, can you talk a little bit more about UCLA's depth and balance. When you can bring players like Angela Dugalic off the bench and Sienna Betts with her defense, how much of a difference does that make with so much balance and depth?

KEVIN MCGUFF: Yeah, that's what makes them really special is they have plethora of talent and depth and length. It's not just the Betts sisters around the basket, but across the board they're really long. That bothered us today, they tipped a lot of balls, a lot of passes we usually get through for shots or at least shot opportunities, they were tipping those.

I think their combination of talent, depth, length really makes them very difficult to play against, that's why I think they've got a chance to make a great run in the NCAA



Tournament.

Q. Yesterday Minnesota's coach raved about Jaloni's ability to finish. Obviously you guys were able to finish a lot better around the basket yesterday. Today was it just their length, or was there anything they were able to do to disrupt you there?

KEVIN MCGUFF: Yeah, I thought we got some opportunities. Their length is certainly a factor because they can challenge a lot of shots around the basket. Then when we did get opportunities where they weren't challenging, we didn't make some we normally make.

Like I said, to beat a great team like UCLA, you're going to have to make those shots. It wasn't like we weren't trying or weren't making the right decisions. I thought we made a lot of good decisions and really put forth great effort. We just had to play better to win this game.

Q. Elsa, Chance had a really strong tournament run here in Indianapolis. When you're looking at her leadership, how important is it to have somebody like that heading into the NCAA Tournament?

ELSA LEMMILA: It's very, very important. She's one of the older players on our team -- first of all, I want to say it's so nice to see how much she's improved since last year, especially around this time. It's so much fun to play with her because she's improved so much. She's driving the ball more, she's just so much more confident. That just gives the rest of the team a better energy, I would say.

She's also a very vocal leader. That's not the only way she's leading us, but it's very, very nice to see.

Q. When you talk about playing better, kind of what goes into that?

KEVIN MCGUFF: I think we've got to turn the ball over less for sure. Then when we get the opportunities on some of the shots that we got, we've got to make a few.

I thought we competed really hard defensively. I thought we competed really hard on the glass. That gave us a chance, but they played a little bit better. They played better on offense than we did, and I think ultimately that was the difference.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports