

Big Ten Volleyball Media Days

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

Purdue Boilermakers

Coach Dave Shondell

Lourdès Myers

Chloe Chicoine

Press Conference



DAVE SHONDELL: Thanks to all of you for being here. We're cautiously optimistic going into this 2024 season. We were probably a little better than expected a year ago with a very young team and learned a lot as the season went on. Very proud to be here with Lourdès and Chloe, two key people on our team. But we've got a whole bunch of them that we're excited about.

Going into this season, I'm a little concerned because the league is going to be so good, but I trust our team so much. I got a chance to spend a lot of time with them in Europe on our spring trip that we took over there, the foreign trip. They just got better every day.

So I think they feel good about who they are. And the league is going to be really, really good, but I think if we continue to compete the way we have, this group has for the last year, then we'll have our shot at having another really good season.

Q. I wanted to hear about the potential atmosphere in Mackey and how that will be an adjustment from playing in the intimacy of Holloway?

LOURDÈS MYERS: I think we as a team thrive in big environments like that. I think we're super excited, and we're ready and super happy to play in Mackey this year.

CHLOE CHICOINE: Purdue's fan base is insane. If you watch football, basketball, women's basketball, obviously volleyball, everybody comes out and has a great time. I think it's really neat that we get the opportunity to finally play in Mackey. And we have something called The Paint Crew that can combine with our Boiler Block, and it will be a really fun experience.

Q. With the House settlement regarding revenue sharing coming down the line at some point, and I know details are still being worked out, how has that

changed your point of view and how you manage your program going forward?

DAVE SHONDELL: Not enough information, unfortunately. I've been in a lot of conversations with our administration about that. They don't have answers yet. So, to answer that question would be a real challenge for me.

I think that being in the Big Ten, you're in a better position than a lot of conferences are for that. I know our administration is convinced that we're going to be able to provide the funding that is going to be the cap. So I'm excited about that.

How gender equity comes into play is something that has not been determined. But I do believe being at Purdue, in the Big Ten is a good place to be when that does start to happen.

Q. The players talked about the excitement about playing in a big gym, but it's also an NBC broadcast. How excited are you about that opportunity to have a network game at home?

DAVE SHONDELL: I'm just pleased that we're at a point right now that we're being considered for those things in a league full of teams that have unbelievable traditions. And we've worked hard over the course of time to get to this point.

We have some exciting players. If we didn't have the players we have, we wouldn't be on NBC. We wouldn't have 12 or 13 games on linear TV. So I think that's a credit to our players and what they have done.

The same with being in Mackey. You don't go in Mackey unless you can get 14,000 people. We think we'll get 14,000 people. We think Boilermaker Nation will thrive in that environment.

I'm just happy that we're at this point. And a lot of people have done a lot of things to help us get here. So hopefully we can pack Mackey have another great season.

Holloway Gym is a great place to play, as John Cook



knows, one of the places he doesn't like to go to because it's tight and it's packed and there aren't a lot of facilities for coaches to go to when they visit. We're excited about it. This should be a grand season for Purdue.

Q. Aside from Holloway and Mackey, where do you guys like to visit the most, play in the Big Ten?

LOURDÈS MYERS: I love playing at Ohio State. They have a nice gym and it's really intense in there when we're there. I'd say Ohio State.

CHLOE CHICOINE: I haven't been everywhere yet. I'm still going to be a sophomore. But I really enjoyed Indiana last year just because it was a rivalry game and it always is just so much fun. We blare their fight song in practices before to get us ready, which is super fun. I also like playing at Penn State because their student section is right on top of you.

Q. The trip to Europe, can you talk about how that benefits the team from a connection perspective and also competitive? Was there more value in one or the other? And for the players, too.

DAVE SHONDELL: I think for us on this trip it benefited us more just pulling our team together, even though we had a veteran group that was going over there. We added our three incoming freshmen. I thought that was really important.

We had a lot of fun. There were no problems. The only concern that we had was that we didn't get the schedule we thought we were going to get when we went over there. There were three teams in Turkey, professional teams that were going to be three of the best opponents we were going to play. They weren't there when we got there. So, we had to makeshift our schedule together.

But on the other hand it allowed us to play everybody a lot of volleyball. All of our roster got a lot of minutes. So that was a positive.

But I'm all about competing, to be honest with you. When we're going to spend that kind of money to go over there, we want to play good people and we want to compete and we want to see how good we are, and we didn't get that opportunity.

CHLOE CHICOINE: I really enjoyed the overseas trip, personally. I think it gave us a great opportunity to get closer with a lot of the younger girls, like the new freshmen who didn't come early, and that was Sienna. So that was fun to get closer to her. I think we made a lot of memories.

When you're overseas you don't have everything that goes on here, so it's just really all of us, volleyball and just exploring. So that was really exciting.

LOURDÈS MYERS: I agree. I was super happy to be down there with the team, and felt like we bonded really well. And it helped us connect on the court, and felt like we created a lot of chemistry down there.

And I love how Sienna and Ryan and the other freshmen were allowed to come on the trip with us. I feel like that brought us a lot closer with them.

Q. Being a part of the growth of volleyball right now, what's that perspective like for both of you guys?

CHLOE CHICOINE: I'm just really excited and happy to be at Purdue because I've been watching volleyball for a long time. I grew up coming to these games. And just being able to play at Purdue now and seeing that kind of support we have, not just at Purdue but everywhere in the Big Ten, volleyball is just growing. And it's really fun to see and it just makes all of us happy. And we just want to keep growing the sport.

LOURDÈS MYERS: I agree. I'm happy to be at Purdue during this time and have this opportunity to experience volleyball growing and finally getting recognized. I think it's pretty cool.

Q. Chloe and Dave, what did you see last year from Grace Heaney, the development, a classmate of yours? How did you go through that freshman year with her? And, Dave, what growth did you see through that campaign from Grace?

CHLOE CHICOINE: I roomed with Grace over the summer, actually. We were in different dorms but we were close together, so we were with each other all the time. She's a lefty which is really valuable on the right side. She just developed so much.

She's just very shotty and she's very smart where she puts the ball. And she gained muscle and confidence in herself. There's a part in the middle of the Big Ten where she was just thriving, and I think we'll keep seeing it down the road.

DAVE SHONDELL: She's the epitome of a student-athlete. She's an engineering major. Played a lot as a freshman. She probably started most of the time in that opposite position, switching some time with Kenna Wollard. And she's had some physical issues here this spring and we're hoping that she'll recuperate quickly from that.

But she's a great learner. She's a great worker. She's everything that we look for when we recruit a player to come to Purdue. She fits Purdue to a T.

Q. You've been through realignment couple times now with the Big Ten. How different is it this year with the four western schools as opposed to the first time when the Nebraska, Maryland came through? What was the biggest differences that stand out to you in realignment?

DAVE SHONDELL: Just the name brand of UCLA, USC, Oregon, Washington, the success that they have already had. Obviously Nebraska had great success, too.

But the unknown. We just don't know those teams right now. And we're only going to play them one time. So how well you can prepare and put your scouting report together for those teams will be really, really important.

But a lot of people made a big deal about them being on the other side of the country and the travel. We're going to charter fly out there. It's going to be another, I don't know, maybe an hour longer than it might be going to some places. It's not a big deal. We're excited about it. The opportunity to play in Pauley Pavilion and some of the great venues we've known about before.

I think our players will enjoy that. And it just makes our conference that much stronger. And that's what we're trying to do at the Big Ten, be the best.

Q. Who have you played against that you feel like gave you the most of a challenge?

CHLOE CHICOINE: I'd say everyone in the Big Ten is really hard. It's hard to choose one game. Even people who aren't at the top we've lost to. It's hard every night you go in you know it's going to be a battle.

But I'd say we lost to Oregon. We got swept by Oregon in the Sweet 16. That was the one team that really kind of swept us and beat us down. But probably them.

LOURDÈS MYERS: I feel like every team is good. So we just go in, step on the court, and we have to compete because everyone is coming to compete as hard, as well as we are. So I think everyone's good.

Q. What inspired you to play volleyball?

LOURDÈS MYERS: I would say my mom. She's the one that introduced me to volleyball.

CHLOE CHICOINE: I would say my mom, too. She

played in college. She introduced me to volleyball, too.

Q. How excited are you to coach Allie? What's the separation between Uncle Dave and Coach Shondell?

DAVE SHONDELL: We'll find out. Allie is my niece. It's John's daughter. I've watched her grow up and play the game. She's become great because of her work ethic. She just spent a tremendous amount of time in the gym being one of the most highly recruited setters in the country in her class.

Her expectations are high, which is good. They have to be if you're going to play in this league. But we have a really good relationship. She's a really neat kid. I want her to outwork everybody in the gym. That's the only way she's going to be successful is continue to doing what she's been doing. She delivers the ball great. She's a little undersized in the Big Ten. She's 5'9", about your height?

LOURDÈS MYERS: A little taller.

DAVE SHONDELL: A little taller than that. I'm looking forward to it because again she's a tremendous person and we want as many of those in our gym as we can get.

Q. How did you all feel in your first NCAA Tournament game?

CHLOE CHICOINE: My first game was Fairfield last year. I was a little nervous because you know if you lose you're done. But it was super exciting. Just being able -- they hang up NCAA volleyball banners inside our gym, it's a pretty big deal. It's fun to compete with your team in those moments.

LOURDÈS MYERS: I was super excited to be able to go on the floor and compete with my team.

Q. The two new rule changes, the two libero and the double touch, your perspective, your thoughts on those?

DAVE SHONDELL: The two libero situation is one I haven't got figured out. I don't understand why we're doing it, for one thing. But we'll see how that works. I don't know that we'll utilize it a whole lot. That's not in my plan to do that. There are some things we might be able to do to incorporate a really good server into that. So we certainly have given thought to it.

But I just don't know how it will actually play out. I've always been in favor of eliminating the inconsistency that we get in that there's nothing -- not bad mouthing officials -- it's impossible for you and me to see and determine the

same call on a double hit violation. Nobody gains anything if the setter double hits the ball. It's not going to be a good set.

It's like football/quarterback, throwing a ball, it wobbles out of his hand, they're not throwing a flag up there in the air and stopping play.

One of the things people like about volleyball most is the rallies, that the game continues to play out. I think this will help that and allow officials to take the whistle out of their mouth a little more often, which I think is a good thing.

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