

Atlantic Coast Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Sunday, March 10, 2024

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

NC State Wolfpack

Coach Wes Moore

River Baldwin

Madison Hayes

Postgame Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: It is a pleasure to introduce NC State coach Wes Moore as well as River Baldwin and Madison Hayes.

WES MOORE: Yeah, just give credit to Notre Dame. Defensively we just struggled to score the ball. I thought the third quarter we did a better job of getting in attack mode and getting post touches, and then we just, again, I think we were 3 for 17 from three at some point against the zone. You'd like to knock down a couple more of those.

But like I said, give them credit. I'm proud of our team for not only what they've done this week but overall on the year.

The good news is even though it's hard right now to think about, the good news is we still have an opportunity ahead of us, and hopefully we can take advantage of that.

Q. Coach, you talked about being preseason ranked No. 9, and then to go this far, and to do so well, I know it's tough right now, but can you comment on the progress that you all have made over this season and this weekend?

WES MOORE: Yeah. You know, I'm proud of that, but again, I think it was actually No. 8, and I didn't have us No. 8. But I did know this league is so competitive that really if you -- I can understand why we were picked eighth. There was a lot of really good teams picked ahead of us, and they were also looking at where we finished a year ago.

I can understand why. But yeah, I'm proud of the fact that this team achieved, thus far, a lot more than what people gave them credit for, and hopefully we can continue to do

that here in a couple of weeks.

Q. You said previously that you're going to give the players a few days off with spring break coming up, but when you're all back together as a team, how crucial is that period before you find out who you're playing in the tournament to refocus and recuperate?

WES MOORE: Yeah, the great news is we'll have two or three practices where we can really focus on us and try to clean some things up and execute a little better before we ever find out who we're playing.

It'll be good to have that time to kind of analyze ourselves and self-scout, so to speak, and try to get better at what we do, and then we can focus on taking away what other people try to do.

Q. A really close game of basketball throughout; is there any solace in your team was right there until the very end? This team didn't quit.

WES MOORE: Yeah, again, I wouldn't expect anything else from them. We've won three games in overtime this year. I think we were 3-0 in overtime games. We've had a lot of close games. They've found a way to get it done.

Again, a couple of possessions here or there today were the difference, and as a coach, that's hard because I feel like maybe I could have done this different or that different and put them in a better position.

But until we watch the film, then we'll have a better idea of what we could have done better.

Q. River, you dominated in the third quarter. Was there anything specific that was working for you or was it just that the shots were falling?

RIVER BALDWIN: I think I was down in the first half and my teammates just picked me up at halftime and just saying, use your body, use your physicality, because I had a size and strength advantage, so just using that to benefit myself.



Q. For either of the players, what are the emotions right now and how does that affect how you prepare for the NCAA Tournament?

MADISON HAYES: I mean, it sucks. I mean, getting all the way to the championship game and obviously losing, it's not a good feeling at all right now.

Like Coach Moore said, we've got to refocus when we come back and get ready for the bigger one. I feel like we have a team right now that we can go really, really far in the tournament.

But yeah, I feel like we've just got to refocus and get back to what we do.

Q. For either player, the other two teams here in the triangle talked about how important it is really to let their losses sting going into the tournament. How important is it for y'all?

RIVER BALDWIN: Yeah, I think obviously it doesn't feel good right now. You've got to feel it the next few days, and when we come back together, we've got to look at the film and see what we're lacking in and take that to heart and change it, because we're ready to make a run in the dance.

MADISON HAYES: I mean, yeah. We've got to take it to heart. I feel like Notre Dame played really well today. They had a really great game. They hit a lot of threes today.

But we've just got to come back, like I said, focus and be ready to go, be ready to host at our gym, and we'll have the fans there, 5,500 people that are ready to support us. So we've got to do it for us and for them.

Q. It obviously didn't end how you wanted it to today, but you did win two games to get here. Is there anything that you learned about yourselves or the team over the past couple days that you can take positively from this run?

MADISON HAYES: That we fight to get -- we fought to get here. It's not like at the beginning of the season before the season even started we were eighth in the conference. We were picked eighth, which we knew we were a better team than that, and we wanted to prove to everybody that we were better than that. I feel like we did that.

We beat a lot of top 10 teams. I think we have the most wins against top 10 teams or top 25 teams. They know about us now. Obviously this hurts, but I feel like we are fighters. Obviously it's going to sting for a while, but we've just got to get back to work.

Q. Coach Moore, is there anything differently you plan on doing in terms of preparation for the tournament in comparison to last year?

WES MOORE: Our preparation?

Q. Preparation for the NCAA Tournament in comparing to last year's tournament.

WES MOORE: No, I've always done pretty similar thing, given them a few days off and letting them have a little bit of time to recover. It's our spring break, so they actually get a few days completely off, and I think that's good for them.

I mean, really what we've done in the past is what we'll try to go with.

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