

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Holy Cross vs Iowa

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Iowa City, Iowa, USA

Carver-Hawkeye Arena

Holy Cross Crusaders

Maureen Magarity

Coach

Bronagh Power-Cassidy

Janelle Allen

Media Conference

Iowa 91, Holy Cross 65

MODERATOR: Okay, we are joined now by Coach Maureen Magarity, Janelle Allen, and Cara McCormack. We'll start with an opening statement from Coach Magarity. Oh, I'm sorry. It's Bronagh. (Laughter) Sorry, Bronagh.

BRONAGH POWER-CASSIDY: It's okay.

MODERATOR: Go ahead, coach.

MAUREEN MAGARITY: You know, just coming out of the locker room, I promised the girls. I would hold it together but how unbelievably proud I am of them. I mean, on this stage, to play the way that we played against a perennial power, the face of women's basketball right now, I just can't put into words how proud I am of our fight, how we competed. We just stuck to the game plan and we were in it. I really felt we were in it, you know, for the first half for sure and we just -- we were trying to take it from them. We really world, so I'm just obviously so proud and to do it with the four seniors that we have, they've just had so many milestones here at Holy Cross and we'll go down as one of the one time great senior classes in the history of Holy Cross women's basketball and I'm really sad to see it come to an end, but I'm just so, so grateful for their effort today. I'm just so proud of them.

MODERATOR: All right, we'll go to questions for the student-athletes. Mike here in the front.

Q. For both of the players, if you don't mind, why were you not intimidated?



BRONAGH POWER-CASSIDY: I guess one thing the coaches always tell us is just to be present and to be in the moment, but we just worked so hard to get to this point and the season we had was never easy, so I think we just never took anything for granted and at the end of the day, we've played basketball our whole lives and I know especially for me, Callie, Cara, and Janelle are, like -- I just don't want this season to end and I just want to keep wearing purple. So, I think we just wanted to be in the moment and give everything we had every shot because they're a phenomenal team, but we just wanted to go out playing our style basketball and we just knew we celebrate each other, we enjoy playing with one another so I think that was the most important thing and just play fearlessly and I think we do that as a team, regardless of stage, that's how we want to play.

So I think that's why we just didn't go in with too much fear. We just wanted to play our game and play together.

Q. Janelle, your thoughts?

JANELLE ALLEN: I don't think there was a reason to go into this game intimidated. I mean, obviously, you can be nervous but intimidated is another thing, and I think all season, we've never had a reason to be intimidated, so I think this game is just another game. I think every day we come in with confidence. We shoot the ball with confidence. We play with confidence, and when you don't play with confidence, that's when things don't go your way. I think today, despite the circumstances and despite the end score, we did phenomenal and I'm very proud of how we played today and I think that, you know, I don't think we have any regrets in how we played or how things turned out, but I don't think there's any reason to come out intimidated.

Q. Brayden Roberts, Iowa Rivals. For Bronagh, you guys have talked about what you thought the crowd might be like for a few days now. Did it live up to your expectations?

BRONAGH POWER-CASSIDY: I mean, yeah. It was great. It was such an unreal atmosphere, I think. As much



as the Iowa fans were amazing, I have to give credit to the Holy Cross fans. I think no matter where we go, they're always there supporting us and you can always hear them. So, I think just knowing we had our own little corner there, just kind of made the atmosphere that much better and no matter what, yeah Iowa is scoring, their fans are going to cheer. But when Holy Cross scored, we had our own corner, too, so I think just being in that atmosphere was incredible.

Q. Go ahead, Janelle, same question.

JANELLE ALLEN: I mean, our fans have been very ride or die since our very first game, since the very first time we put on these jerseys our fans have been there for us through and through. So, of course, the Iowa fans cheer but that kind of becomes white noise and whenever we put the ball in the basket, you look over and our little section of purple was cheering for us with smiles, so it kept us going and it kept -- it put smiles on our faces so I'm very thankful that everyone showed up, got tickets, made time out of their day to come support us.

Q. For both players, you did a great job on Caitlin early. Really, she was just very frustrated, turning it over a lot. You guys were physical with her. Can you give me an idea how you guys were feeling at that point and how you felt about sustaining that through the rest of the game?

JANELLE ALLEN: I think we did a good job of executing our scout. I think our coaches did a good job of helping us understand the game plan and shouts out to Simone and Kaitlyn Flanagan. You know, even Cara. They worked hard today. They worked really, really hard and I think they deserve a lot of credit for what they did and on the flip side, you know, we had our rotations, we had our help. I think today we just -- like I said, despite the outcome, today we really, really worked hard and I think a lot of the credit goes to them.

Q. Bronagh, go ahead.

BRONAGH POWER-CASSIDY: Yeah, I don't know if I can say out much better myself. I think she draws just so much attention and we went in with a game plan and, yeah, it wasn't perfect at times and we didn't execute everything perfectly but our team did our best and just credit to their whole team. I think getting her frustrated, she has several other great teammates who are able to step up and it makes it difficult, but you know what? We worked hard, we hustled to try to get to shooters, rotations and ultimately I'm really just proud of the effort our whole team put in today.

Q. Todd, 1600 ESPN. Question for Bronagh. Caitlin

said the foul was unintentionally and you apologized to her. I don't know if you're aware, but it's kind of gone viral. Just curious what your reaction to that is. (Laughter).

BRONAGH POWER-CASSIDY: I haven't looked at my phone yet. It was totally unintentional. I broke my hand in our playoff game at BU in our final and so when I was moving, I was just very conscious of keeping it out of too much contact and unfortunately it just happened that way. I would like to apologize. It was not intentional at all, and, like, she was a great sport about understanding that I know it always looks terrible if someone gets hit in the face. It really was unintentional. I was trying to not get too much contact on my hand. It was unfortunate the way things worked out, but, yeah. Apologies on that one. It wasn't meant anything.

MODERATOR: Go ahead, Dennis.

Q. Dennis Dodd, CBS Sports. Not to beat a dead horse, but totally unintentional, I understand that, but did you hear the reaction of the crowd, and especially when they saw it on the scoreboard, I was wondering if it wasn't called an intentional foul.

BRONAGH POWER-CASSIDY: Yeah, hopefully I didn't look rude but I did think it was a little funny just hearing the boos. (Laughter) I'm going to be honest, just being in that environment as much as you hear them support, that was quite a loud chorus, so, yeah, just soaking in the moment, but, yeah, I fully I understand how it looked and it was not unintentional whatsoever, so it's just one of those things that happened.

Q. Thanks.

MODERATOR: Any other questions for our players? All right. Thank you.

MAUREEN MAGARITY: Good job, ladies. Just to go off of that, Bronagh has been playing with a broken hand. Yeah, she broke her hand in the championship game, so we haven't been able to really say anything about that for a lot of reasons, but just another reason why she is just the most incredible player I have ever coached.

Q. How did she break it?

MAUREEN MAGARITY: It happened in the first quarter of the championship game. She just landed on it funny and she was able to, thankfully, play on it. And honestly that is why I think it looked as bad as it did. We have been trying to, even in practice, okay, stay off. She just didn't want to get it hit and so, but I'm glad Caitlin's okay.

Q. (Inaudible).

MAUREEN MAGARITY: No, thankfully. It's her left hand.

MODERATOR: In the middle there.

Q. Coach, in that first half, especially the first quarter the good job you guys did on Caitlin, how physical you were, denying her, frustrating her. I mean, could you have drawn that up any better in how you want to start keeping her quiet?

MAUREEN MAGARITY: Oh my gosh, no. I was standing there just kind of in awe of what we were doing consistently. It wasn't just for the first minute or so. I really felt in that first half, except for that one three-point play where that was tough. But besides that, we were just doing a great job on her, giving her ball pressure. I thought we were in the gaps, just making her feel really frustrated, not being able to really see her vision of being able to make the passes that she's normally able to make, but, you know, that's our team. We just seem to always find a way defensively and we've been here before. We have a lot of really, really great guards in our league, in the Patriot League and a lot of our game plans are very similar to what we had to do with Caitlin so I think that helped give us a little bit of confidence going into today but to actually do it was very impressive. I'm really proud of the team.

MODERATOR: Go ahead, Todd.

Q. Again, Todd, Camp 1600 ESPN. Maureen, Lisa mentioned you guys have been here since Tuesday. Did that maybe help calm some nerves or lead to your team not playing like a 16 seed. You guys looked pretty comfortable out there.

MAUREEN MAGARITY: Yeah, absolutely. We've been able to practice a few days. We obviously played and shot the ball really well the other night and we were able to win a game on this court, so absolutely, a thousand percent, that really helped us with how comfortable we were. Obviously the crowd and the noise were much different than our game against UT Martin, but, yeah, I think we looked like we were ready and we belonged here and it wasn't kind of our eyes weren't all in the lights. We were really focused.

MODERATOR: Towards the back?

Q. Brayden Roberts, Iowa Rivals. Coach, your team has talked about being excited to come to Iowa city like all week. Did the experience match your expectations?

MAUREEN MAGARITY: Oh, absolutely. What a great host Iowa has been as a city, as a whole, as a university, has just been so gracious, the hospitality has been amazing. The staff at our hotel has been incredible. Our bus driver. I mean, everybody to here when we did the tour the other day of the football facility. Everybody was just -- really made extra time for us and really made us feel welcome. We're so appreciative of that and it's just been an amazing experience from when we left and fly and landed here, we were greeted by the hosts and we really want to say thank you to everybody. It's really just made this truly a once in a lifetime memory and I will forever be really grateful, thank you.

MODERATOR: Any other questions for Coach? All right. Thank you.

MAUREEN MAGARITY: Thank you so much.

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