

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - Wofford vs Tennessee

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Lexington, Kentucky, USA

Rupp Arena

Wofford Terriers Jackson Sivills Corey Tripp Kyler Filewich

Media Conference



THE MODERATOR: We are joined by student-athletes from Wofford.

Q. How much has Coach Perry talked to you about his experience in this building, and could you tell it means a little more coming back here this week?

JACKSON SIVILLS: He's mentioned it a couple times. I do think it means a lot to him. Obviously he has a lot of history in here and has a lot of pride playing at Kentucky. So it was very special for a lot of people to be able to come back to Lexington, definitely for him as well.

Q. You all have played some schools from big programs. When you are at this stage playing a 2 seed like a Tennessee that's spent five weeks ranked No. 1 in the country, what's the mindset as you get ready to take the court tomorrow?

COREY TRIPP: Just be out there, play loose and confident. They're a great team, and I think we're a great team as well. So go out there and play together, play hard.

KYLER FILEWICH: Go out with that confidence. We have a chip on our shoulder, being the lower seed. But we know what we're capable of. It's a phenomenal team over there, but we have to come out and not think about that, do our job, play hard, play together and play tough. So just focus on what we can do.

JACKSON SIVILLS: I think the unit has a great opportunity, great mindset for us. I agree with what these two said, they're a great team, it's going to be a great challenge. But we wouldn't want it any other way.

Q. Jackson, the way that your high school career ended, having 2020 taken from you in this building, to get the opportunity to play here now as a fifth-year guy, what does that mean to you as a full-circle moment? And can you touch on the proximity to Paducah, any family and friends making the trip over?

JACKSON SIVILLS: Yeah, it's pretty cool, my family is going to be able to come up, obviously more people from Paducah, my high school coaches, which is very special to me.

I think it's just a crazy, like you said, full-circle moment. It took me a little while to get over not being able to finish my season here, my senior year of high school. But it's crazy how life works in mysterious way, and now I'm back. I'm just blessed to be here with these two guys and the rest of my teammates, and it's a dream come true and a blessing for sure.

Q. For you guys, talk about the brotherhood this team has and what it means to play for each other.

JACKSON SIVILLS: Well, I think for me, man, especially with these two guys up here, we've been through a lot of trials and tribulations in our time at Wofford, a lot of times where a lot of people didn't believe in us. But we kept faith in each other, most importantly. Even this year, no one really had us written in to win the SoCon tournament, and we got it done.

So I think keeping that brotherhood, like you said, through anything, man, we're going to stay together and give it all we got.

KYLER FILEWICH: Alluding to what Jackson was talking about, we've been through a lot together. With that being in the past years and especially this year. We had games in the SoCon Tournament where we were suiting up eight guys. That's all we had left. But everyone that goes out there, they give it their all because we have a special bond together. We're super tight-knit on and off the court. I love these guys, and I'd do anything for them.

COREY TRIPP: They said it best, it's easy to wake up every morning knowing that these guys have your back



regardless. So I'm just blessed to be able to play with a group of guys like this.

Q. How much does it help your last game was March 10th, you're taking on a team that played on Sunday and, talent aside, they have a quick turnaround, and you have a little bit of familiarity with them, if I'm remembering correctly, playing them in the '23-' 24 season. Is that, at this point, any advantages you can get, you use?

COREY TRIPP: I mean, everyone at this level is in great shape. So I don't think them playing before us would take too much of a toll.

But like you said, we did play them last year, and we can take a few things from them. They're a different team. But regardless, I know we're going to come out there and play hard regardless of what the circumstances are.

Q. Do you have a story about Coach Perry, his personality, how that has helped you throughout the season?

JACKSON SIVILLS: There's a lot that comes to mind. I would say his continuing embrace of everyone on the team. I think that's one of his very prominent skills as a coach. He's always there for you to put his arm around you. He's always going to make you feel welcome.

And I think he does that to everyone in the program, whether you're a trash custodian or manager, player, starter, bench player, freshman, senior, he treats everyone the same. And that's one of the qualities I really love about him.

KYLER FILEWICH: Going off of what Jackson said, him just developing from when Corey was here his whole first year and then me and Jackson our first year here, he took over as the interim halfway through the season. And seeing him develop through that season and his first full year last year, and then obviously this year, making it to the Big Dance, it shows who he is as a leader and a man.

He's someone that has a large amount of care for everyone. And he's grown, being more able to get honest, we're not doing stuff right. It's made us better in every way possible for sure.

Q. Kyler, as somebody who did it in her very, very brief playing career, when you made the change on how you shoot free throws, where did that suggestion come from? The chance to work with Rick Barry on that, the master, to get that down, especially during the season when every point matters, that confidence that

you can now take to the free-throw line, how big has that change been as you finish off this year?

KYLER FILEWICH: It's been huge. It's something that the coaches brought to us after the game, I think it was end of January, early February. So it's relatively new. Only been about a month, month and a half of me doing it.

Something I'm still working on. I haven't necessarily always had the success that I wanted. But I feel like I'm pretty confident in it. When I needed to, less than five minutes left in the SoCon title to tie the game, I was able to step up and make two when it mattered.

So that's something I need to continue to have confidence in. I know I can make 'em. I make them at a high clip in practice. It was great working with Rick Barry. I'm super thankful for him taking his time out to show me how it's done and kind of taking on the mindset of doing whatever it takes to win.

Q. Jackson, I know Wofford was in your initial final five when you first chose to commit to Murray State, but just when you went into the transfer portal, what appealed to you about Wofford? And also what made you stay? There was a coaching change, and you didn't necessarily commitment to Wofford to go play for Coach Perry. But what went through the second opportunity to commit to Wofford and then stay once the coaching change did occur?

JACKSON SIVILLS: Yes, sir. Coach Perry was the one who recruited me initially. So I always had that relationship with him. There are a lot of qualities about Wofford that align with me, I think tradition, obviously they had built up a very, very good program before I got there. The school is amazing.

But overall just the community and how -- we have some Wofford people in here in attendance right now, and just how they treat you. Everyone there is connected with each other toward the same goal. You feel like when you are on campus, everybody is there for a reason, as cliché as that may sound.

I just fell in love with it. And I knew once I went in the portal and I got on the phone with Coach Perry, they wanted me, it was a done deal from that moment. I just knew what was there, and I was excited to get on board. And now you see where we are, so it paid out.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys.

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