

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - SIU Edwardsville vs Houston

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Wichita, Kansas, USA

Intrust Bank Arena

**Houston Cougars**

**Kelvin Sampson**

**Ja'Vier Francis**

**Milos Uzan**

Media Conference

Houston 78, SIUE 40

THE MODERATOR: We have head Coach Kelvin Sampson and Ja'Vier Francis and Milos Uzan. We'll ask Coach to start off with a statement and then we'll have questions.

Coach.

KELVIN SAMPSON: I thought our defense and our rebounding, two of the things that we really emphasize...

(Zoom feed audio disruption.)

This tournament is something his kids will remember forever. Congratulations to him and his team on a great year.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. Coach Sampson, you seem like you just answered my question, but some have suggested maybe small to mid-major conferences shouldn't receive automatic bids. Some might look at this game as a reason why not. You just said it's something they'll never forget. Do you still stand by the tournament formula?**

KELVIN SAMPSON: Yes. This game is bigger than any individuals. There are the people that sit in these back rooms and try to make decision on kids' experiences. Some of those people forgot where they came from.

I remember I coached at an NAIA school in Washington State. It was one of the only jobs I could get when I was a



young coach. Having conference tournaments and having a chance to play for this tournament is great incentives for teams. It keeps teams in it.

Most of these low, mid-major conferences are in one-bid leagues, and you never know if you can catch lightning in a bottle. Win three games, and you're in. Once you get in, you never know.

I hope we never get to the point where we not allow everybody a chance to just to be involved at this and make memories for them. I was looking at -- I got tired of looking at us. I was really focused on their kids there in the last four or five minutes, and I was thinking, what a great memory for them. It's something they'll be able to have this tape and to edit and be able to show to their kids one day. You know, we played in the greatest event in the world, which is March Madness.

**Q. Milos, you had 22 minutes. You had 16 points. Can you kind of talk about your second half of the season so far.**

MILOS UZAN: I've been playing a lot more aggressive than I did at the start of the year. Credit to the coaching staff and to my teammates. They just made it a lot easier for me. Yeah, we've been having success, so have to keep going.

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