

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - Lipscomb vs Iowa State

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

Fiserv Forum

Lipscomb Bisons

Gyasi Powell

Will Pruitt

Jacob Ognacevic

Joe Anderson

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: We have Gyasi Powell, Will Pruitt, Jacob Ognacevic, and Joe Anderson. Questions, please.

Q. Jacob, I'm just wondering. Had you ever played in this building? How many times did you attend games in this building while you were growing up?

JACOB OGNACEVIC: Yeah, so I had a high school game here once when I was a freshman in high school so I played here once. I've come to a couple games.

I'm excited to play a college game in this building and be back home in Wisconsin.

Q. How many friends or family or anybody have asked you where's Lipscomb? What do you tell them? What are your favorite things to say about your school?

JACOB OGNACEVIC: My friends and family know where Lipscomb is. A few people back home don't know. I tell them it's in Nashville. I tell them it's a small school but with great people, great community, great city too. We're excited to be here.

Q. Uniquely, your high school team is headed to state. How much are they following you and the guys and how much are you following them?

JACOB OGNACEVIC: Our high school, we're a tight-knit community. They play at 10:30 tomorrow. We've got a group chat we text in. Every single game they play, I get updates on the box score, who did well with the score, and



all that stuff like that. So, I mean, we follow each other. We both follow each other, and I'm super excited for them. I hope they can win tomorrow, and then I hope we can follow it up by winning tomorrow at 12:30.

Q. Jacob, when you got the news on Selection Sunday you'd be playing here, can you walk me through the emotions? What was that like for you?

JACOB OGNACEVIC: Yeah. So throughout the whole week, when we got done with our conference tournament, I kept hearing we were going to Seattle or Denver. Milwaukee would be a long shot. As we got closer to Selection Sunday, Milwaukee became more of a possibility.

When they announced us, it became a reality. I was super excited we were coming here and I was able to play in Wisconsin.

THE MODERATOR: Talk about the challenge of facing Iowa State and what, in particular, you've seen on tape that you have to take care of tomorrow.

GYASI POWELL: The focus for us is just to be ourselves. We know they'll come out and try to pressure the ball and get into us. Ultimately, just to play our game and just be us.

WILL PRUITT: Another emphasis is they've got some size, the 3 through the 5. So to be physical, walk up to the line for 40 minutes and play our game, like Gyasi said. We're going to have to play different ball screen coverages and things of that nature, so we'll have to be locked in with those things as well.

JACOB OGNACEVIC: I think Iowa State is a really good team, obviously. They're a 3 seed in the tournament. From the tip to the end of the game, we've got to come out ready. Room for error is small. We've go ahead to play physical, we've got to know the scout and hit shots too.

JOE ANDERSON: They hit the main things, but taking care of the ball is a big thing for us and playing with confidence while we're out there.

Q. Tamin Lipsey is the school's all-time leader in



steals. Kind of what unique challenge does a guy like that present when he is just all over the place and kind of can just disrupt offense the way he does?

GYASI POWELL: That goes in what we said about taking care of the ball. Ultimately, the goal is to limit our turnovers to have a chance to win. We understand he's a great defender. Our goal is to not turn the ball over against him.

WILL PRUITT: Any time you play a guy like that, it's going to definitely provide us with challenges. But like Gyasi said, we'll have to take care of the ball, get to our spots, and really just home in on the details of our offense.

JACOB OGNACEVIC: I agree with what these two said. We've got to take care of the ball and just be ready for that too. We can't let them get steals and then they're out on the fast break and they get momentum. We've got to do a good job of taking care of the ball.

JOE ANDERSON: They pretty much hit it all.

Q. March Madness is all about upsets, right? You guys, I think, won the regular season, right? Was the pressure then to secure your bid with the tournament? And that kind of pressure, does that help kind of get you ready for what's about to come this week?

JOE ANDERSON: I think we all just really like playing with each other. We've got a good group of guys. Coach tries to recruit good guys. We want to play with each other as well as we can. He tells us to take it one play at a time, one game at a time. That's what we'll keep doing.

Q. There's three fifth-year seniors on the team. Jacob specifically, what are the emotions behind, in this last year, coming back after that broken foot injury and winning the conference tournament, the ASUN conference tournament and making it to March Madness? What are the emotions with dedicating yourself to come back for the fifth year.

JACOB OGNACEVIC: Last year was a tough year, having to sit out the whole year. It was actually a knee injury. Having to sit out last year and come back this year and winning the regular season and conference meant a lot.

If you watch the end of the game, I was crying when I figured out that we actually won. It just meant a lot because I've been here four years now, been through a lot of struggles here. Just to be able to finish it like that meant the world. It was awesome that we won it on our home floor and our fans and family could be there for us.

Q. Jacob, there's a big Wisconsin connection with

some guys on the Iowa State team and the coaching staff. Wondering if you had a history playing against Momcilovic or know the coaches?

JACOB OGNACEVIC: I haven't played against Milan, but I know that Grant has in high school and I know of him too.

Q. How many friends and family members will be at the game, and what's it like to wrangle tickets from teammates?

JACOB OGNACEVIC: I don't know the exact number. There's going to be quite a few. I was lucky enough to get a few extra tickets to get people in. Like I was talking about earlier, my high school team has a game at 10:30 in Madison. A lot of those guys can't come, but a lot of people are coming and are excited to watch.

THE MODERATOR: Good luck tomorrow.

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