

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Lehigh vs Duke

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Durham, North Carolina, USA

Cameron Indoor Stadium

Lehigh Mountain Hawks

Maddie Albrecht

Ella Stemmer

Media Conference



opportunity. I think we're all really excited to get to experience it together.

Q. You guys won your conference, and then you're coming here. What is that momentum like, and how are you guys keeping that momentum after winning that conference title?

MADDIE ALBRECHT: I think we come in playing with a lot of confidence. We played really well throughout the playoffs. So we're just trying to continue that and continue competing with each other in practice and having fun, which is what got us here. So just trying to keep that going.

ELLA STEMMER: Honestly, I think we're a team that thrives off of momentum. So taking what we've done kind of just the ability to do us in practice, like Maddie said, but we choose joy and effort each and every day, and we're going to continue doing that.

Q. Ella, I saw that you had an ad for Celsius on your Instagram this week. I want to know if that an opportunity to came up because of the NCAA Tournament? How did that work?

ELLA STEMMER: Definitely it was because of our success during the Patriot League Championship and that started that connection. It was just kind of a fun bonus to being here.

I will say that there have been some other opportunities, but honestly just trying to take it in for what it is and enjoy this experience with my teammates.

Q. As a follow-up, Maddie, I saw you're private on Instagram. Is that on purpose? Do you want to -- what are your thoughts on that? I know a lot of players feel the pressure to be on Instagram and things like that.

MADDIE ALBRECHT: I would say I'm just not a huge social media person in general or on my phone in general. I wasn't really going to let that change anything.

Q. For both of you again, I know it's probably not high

THE MODERATOR: Welcome into this 2025 NCAA Women's March Madness pretournament press conference.

We are now joined by the Lehigh Mountain Hawks. We have with us student-athlete Maddie Albrecht and student-athlete Ella Stemmer.

Q. Good afternoon, ladies. We previously spoke with Duke, and we talked about the rival. What is the rival with you all coming into this March Madness?

MADDIE ALBRECHT: I don't think we really see it as too much of a rivalry. We're just going to come in and play our game and play the best that we can and hopefully have the outcome that we want.

ELLA STEMMER: I'd say kind of similar lines, the toughest team that we're going to play is ourselves. So just showing up each day, practicing, and honestly practicing really hard against ourselves, and that will prepare us just to continue doing us throughout the tournament.

Q. For both of you, what does it mean to be playing in the NCAA Tournament this year and what you've done at Lehigh this season?

ELLA STEMMER: It means a lot. I honestly treat this as a once in a lifetime opportunity just because, as my final year, I'm a senior on the team, and especially coming here and winning the Patriot League at home my senior year, it means a lot, and I wouldn't want to do it with any other group of girls. So just super honored to be here.

MADDIE ALBRECHT: I think it's a really special opportunity for our team. Like she said, a once in a lifetime



on your list, but this is the first year that the women's tournament is making financial units for the schools, so you're bringing money into Lehigh by playing here, and every game that you win or get to play in. How cool is that that finally the women are getting equality with the men as far as financial units?

ELLA STEMMER: Definitely, I think it means a lot. As kind of the name of the women's game rises, I think honestly it's just another opportunity for us to get to show what we're made of, and it's really cool to see how all the big players are making a name for themselves.

Honestly, just finally getting equal respect as the men's game and like with the branding and everything, it means a lot for us to finally see some equity there.

MADDIE ALBRECHT: Yeah, just along with what she said, I really think it shows just the growth of women's basketball in general, which is great.

Q. For both of you, as you finish up your senior years, what do you want the legacy of your senior class to be at Lehigh?

MADDIE ALBRECHT: I think we want to be a team or a class that competes with each other and has fun. I think we want to be known as great teammates and great people off the court too.

ELLA STEMMER: I think we have a unique set of people within our senior class. We're pretty large with six, so we do make up a large portion of our team.

But coming in early this season, honestly it began in the summer. We named resiliency as one of the key components of this class and what we wanted this team to look like. So I think that's really shown with how we respond, coming after a bad quarter, a bad half, even if it's a bad practice, I think we've responded really well. I think our senior class has definitely left that legacy.

Q. You mentioned that you guys have six seniors on your team. How were you all coaching and preparing your freshmen as vets on the team?

ELLA STEMMER: I think that's a really good question just because player-led teams are so much more successful and effective and impactful than led by coaches. So we have the ability and the power within our program to call huddles, kind of get the team regrouped when we see fit.

Honestly, I think it comes from a lot of respect of our underclassmen. I think there's a lot of mutual respect and trust that goes both ways. So developing that trust has

definitely taken some time, but this group this year has made leaps and bounds within that area.

MADDIE ALBRECHT: I would say we have a lot of people that have different leadership strengths. I think I'm someone that leads more by example, but we also have people who are better at vocal leadership or things like that. So I just think trying to pass that along to underclassmen as much as possible.

Q. I was thinking about what you said about not a rivalry or anything, but a lot of people in this area are familiar with Lehigh because of the big upset over the men's team. Have you heard from any of the men's team that carried on that upset or any of your other alumni who have memories from that? What kind of inspiration has that given you going into the game?

ELLA STEMMER: I think there's been a lot of mention of it, but honestly we're looking forward to making our own path and kind of setting our own story.

We definitely heard, oh, you know, Lehigh beat Duke or whatever, and the selection show was on the anniversary. So there's definitely some connection there, and it's a lot of fun to continue that, but we're really looking forward to the opportunity to kind of make our own path.

MADDIE ALBRECHT: Yeah, and I think we've just had a lot of support from the Lehigh community and the alumni in general. So that's been really great.

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