

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Fairfield vs Kansas State

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Lexington, Kentucky, USA

Memorial Coliseum

**Farifield Stags**

**Kaety L'Amoreaux**

**Izabela Nicoletti Leite**

**Meghan Andersen**

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by student-athletes Kaety L'Amoreaux, Izabela Nicoletti Leite and Meghan Andersen.

**Q. A year ago I saw you guys in this position at Indiana. Now a year later, another successful season, back in the NCAA Tournament at Kentucky, what makes this group this year different?**

IZABELA NICOLETTI LEITE: I would say experience. Like you just mentioned, we were at Indiana last year. For a lot of us it was the first time being in a position like that. I think experience and playing with each other, having a back-to-back kind of similar team, we just lost a couple key players from last year but the main team stayed together, the same coaching staff. I would say the experience we have, it's incredible and I think that's what makes us different this year.

**Q. Meghan, you have to play against Ayoka Lee tomorrow who definitely has a size advantage on you, is pretty aggressive in the paint. What have you seen from her on film and how difficult is it to play against a player like that?**

MEGHAN ANDERSEN: She's an incredible player. I think from watching her on film, she's obviously, like you said, she's got the strength, she has the height advantage on all of us. I think just sticking to our game plan is going to be a huge strategy for us tomorrow. But I think just sticking to our strategies and just playing together is going to help us.

**Q. The team struggled in the first games of the tournament but then had 15 3s in the championship**



**game. What does it say about the team that they can have that great shooting night under the brightest lights?**

MEGHAN ANDERSEN: I think it just goes to show how we push through adversity and how we have confidence in each other no matter what. Yeah, we didn't have our best two shooting games, but we kept putting in the work no matter what, kept taking those shots. You saw Sydni Scott 6-for-6 for 3s.

For us, it's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when. We have the confidence in each other and we trust each other.

**Q. You guys are a great 3-point shooting team, on rate with Kansas State, I believe 38 percent in the country. How are you guys approaching this game, in particular, on the offensive end realizing that this could very well be a heavyweight shootout?**

KAETY L'AMOREAUX: I think we're both incredible shooting teams. I think there's so many other things we do offensively. I think playing to whatever is working that night is going to work out best for us.

**Q. Kaety, second time around, second tournament appearance in two years. What are the emotions like this year, and are they different from last year?**

KAETY L'AMOREAUX: I would say it's very similar to last year, very exciting experience, but like Iza said, we're a more experienced and we've added to the team, had more time together. But I feel like this year we're more comfortable here and, like, more ready. I think having that under our belts from last year, that we just know what to expect.

**Q. Meghan, can you speak to your development and attitude going into tomorrow's game after all you've learned this season?**

MEGHAN ANDERSEN: Throughout the whole season we've had a lot of different opportunities to build individually, like, our strengths and our weaknesses. I think one of the biggest things I've worked on was defense.



We've done a lot of, all of us, have been in different groups before practice, taking as much time as we can to focus on the things we know we aren't maybe the best at at the time, and I feel like I've made a lot of strides through that.

Then I just think, overall, my confidence has just grown throughout the whole season, especially like because of my team and knowing I have such a great support system behind me.

**Q. You guys were well tested during non-conference play. I know it's a long time ago now, but how did those games, like the Richmond, the Oklahoma State, the Villanova help you when it comes time for the tournament now?**

IZABELA NICOLETTI LEITE: I think just being able to see, some of you mentioned, the size difference. When we play in the MAAC, sometimes we don't see those tall players.

I think having those non-conference games helped us a lot early on just seeing the competitiveness and the difference in athleticism, if you say so, and I think it helped us learn what Fairfield can do to stop players when we play against them. So I think that's going to come big time, especially we know some teams in the same conference and things like that, they had the same match-up. I think that's going to help us a lot coming in with a lot of confidence.

**Q. I know this time last year you guys were a 13 seed, this time you're a 12 seed. Obviously a big difference here now is that it's a neutral court, and this first game with this type of atmosphere, what a slight difference does for this team's confidence and potential to move on to the round of 32?**

KAETY L'AMOREAUX: I think getting the 12 seed was huge for us. Getting a neutral side is definitely very helpful, a lot less people and the fans just cheering for the team we're playing. That's definitely helpful. Knowing that we can take this opportunity and capitalize on it is huge for us.

**Q. Iza, you've had a long journey in college, seventh year here. What does it mean for you to be in this position to cap your career? Kaety, what does the senior class mean to you and how have they helped you through your experience here?**

IZABELA NICOLETTI LEITE: It means a lot for me, of course. Like you said, I've been in college for a while now. But this is a different position, just in terms of the amount of minutes I'm playing, the amount of contribution that I bring to this team. So, of course, the whole different issues here.

I think our team is ready and we're super excited. So this feels completely different than the past few years. Last year, of course, being in the same position but this year also being a 12 seed and being able to play -- playing against a team on their court, looking at Indiana and their crowd there was a little tough. I think it's very exciting. It's my last one, so I'll definitely leave everything on the court for sure.

KAETY L'AMOREAUX: This senior class has been unbelievable. They have such a huge impact on and off the court for us. Seeing them go is going to really suck and it's going to be really sad. But I think that's kind of our motivation in this. We're just extending the season to be with them as long as possible.

**Q. Kaety, just to follow up, if you can hear me, you mentioned the part about the neutral court. So why should Kentucky fans root for Fairfield and not Kansas State?**

KAETY L'AMOREAUX: I think Kentucky should root for us because I think everyone loves an underdog story. I just think we're a team that anyone should root for. We're such a family-oriented team. I think it's something that a lot of teams like to see and that you don't often see in many schools when you watch it, especially at this time of year.

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