

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Murray State. vs Iowa

Friday, March 21, 2025

Norman, Oklahoma, USA

Lloyd Noble Center

Murray State Racers

Ava Learn

Katelyn Young

Trinity White

Media Conference



She has a season-ending injury, but she's been a great supporter of the team. What is her role on the team and how has that impacted performance, or will impact this weekend?

TRINITY WHITE: Definitely bringing energy. She's been one of our biggest cheerleaders. Since I've had to take on some of her role, like, on the court, she just helps me and I look to her for advice and she's just really been helpful throughout the whole season.

KATELYN YOUNG: Destiny brings a ton of energy on the bench. She did on the court. It translates. Having her on the bench makes everyone happy and brings tons of energy.

AVA LEARN: She's the core of our energy and I think it's so important that she is here and how much she hasn't let her injury really tear her down. That's such a horrible injury to have happen, and we miss her so much. But we're so happy she's here, and she's one of the best people on the bench because she's always talking to us individually, telling us what we need to hear because we're all different. And we can say we love her so much and are so happy she's here.

Q. This one can kind of go for any of you guys. So you are obviously an incredibly high scoring offense, very fast-paced. How do you think it will translate against a team like Iowa that is also fast-paced and can score a lot of points?

TRINITY WHITE: I think we're just both really, like, fast-paced teams and we have to focus on defense, really, and just playing our game and just building off of the energy and then just scoring.

KATELYN YOUNG: I think it's going to be a high scoring game, especially with them running in transition as well as us. So should be a lot of fun.

AVA LEARN: I definitely agree. I think it's going to be such a fun game, and it's true we're both very fast-paced -- our games are very fast-paced, and I think it's going to come down to our defense and how quickly we can do our offense because that's what we're good at. As long as we do what we're good at, we should be able to have a good game.

Q. Katelyn, Iowa has more size than you guys do. How do you plan to combat that?

KATELYN YOUNG: Since we are smaller and everything like that, it's going to be a physical game no matter what. We're just going to have to try to stand our ground as much as possible and just be physical.

Q. I want you guys to tell me a little bit about what it means to have Destiny Thomas with you.

Q. This is Murray State's second time in the tournament. How do you get over the happy to be here stage and transition into competing and trying to win this ball game?

TRINITY WHITE: Coach Turner reminds us that, of course, we celebrated and enjoyed that time. But she said we need to get back to work and we need to focus on going 1-0 and take each game one at a time.

KATELYN YOUNG: I think the biggest thing is getting settled in the game. I think everyone's going to have nerves, especially being the first time. So just settling into the game, kind of getting the ropes of what's all going to happen is the biggest thing.

AVA LEARN: It's going to be important to enjoy every moment. It's a once-in-a-lifetime thing. There are so many people who wish they were in our spots. It's going to be an



amazing game that we have to enjoy every single minute of it.

Q. Maybe all three of you can go with this one. Watching Iowa on film, what stands out to you?

TRINITY WHITE: Obviously, they're big. I mean, they can match our pace. I feel like it's just we have to focus on just being physical and just focusing on what we do best and defensive stops.

KATELYN YOUNG: They're a great team. They have 3-point shooters who can knock down shots and bigs who can make some moves down there too. They're just really good. It's kind of just focusing on what she said, on defense as much as we can stop them. They're a great offense. They're going to score. We have to keep it in mind, not to get down when they score and keep the pace going.

AVA LEARN: For us, we're a very high-scoring team. We've accepted the fact they're going to score. It's going to happen. They're a Power 5 team. They're good in their league. I think, like they said, focus on the defense. One of our coaches keeps telling us always make sure you hit first with the post players. That's big for every one of us because they are bigger than us. Just take of the 3-point line too because they can all shoot it well. That's something we have to take care of.

Q. So you guys, I think the starting five, you guys are in the headlines, in the stories all the time, but you guys also have some good depth off the bench as well. So tell me a little bit about the importance of being able to have depth off the bench and being able to have such talented young players that can come into the game.

TRINITY WHITE: I think it's great we have such a deep bench and everybody contributes something and it's not all focused on one player. Coach Turner says that, like, we have, like, people that come in, they do their role and they give us extra points and do the little things. I feel like it's really good we have players that can come off the bench and, like, produce good performance.

KATELYN YOUNG: Yeah, I think we have people coming off the bench who just have minutes, honestly. It might not show up in the stat sheet, but they're able to make differences, boxing someone out that can't get the rebound and that kind of stuff. The little things are what they impact our game with.

AVA LEARN: I think they said all that needs to be said. Everyone does what they need to do. Coach Turner says

it all the time. We all have a role and do it really well, at this point in the season especially. I'm proud of, especially, the freshmen that come off from the bench because I know it can be an intimidating thing. But they all do so well, you don't even know that they seem to be hesitant, if they are at all.

Q. I know it was a long time ago, but you guys played LSU really well earlier this year. Had quite a bit at halftime. What did you learn from that game? You played with them but obviously didn't come up with the result you wanted?

TRINITY WHITE: It just really showed, like, just us as a team that we can play with anybody and we just -- if we work together, play hard, that we can really just show out and compete with anybody.

KATELYN YOUNG: Definitely think it was a confidence booster, just kind of like we can do this. And I think we've kind of carried that into just later on in the season, building up through conference and then obviously postseason.

AVA LEARN: I really think it's a confidence thing. The fact that we were able to hang with LSU, who has been ranked for a very long time -- years, honestly -- is an amazing thing. That confidence carried over. Heck, we can hang with them, we can hang with anyone. It's good for our team.

Q. Kind of piggybacking off what he said, Iowa played both Drake and UNI. Both teams were very competitive with Iowa. Obviously, you had good success against both those teams. Some people, ESPN included, say that this might be a possible upset pick. Does that give you guys a little bit extra confidence going into this one too?

TRINITY WHITE: Yeah, I definitely think it gives us more confidence just, you know, coming in and obviously being the underdog team, the lower seed. It gives us more of a boost to play harder and just go out and show everybody that we can play with these top teams.

KATELYN YOUNG: Kind of what she said, but also just, like, the mindset of coming in this game and being who we are. I think that's the main thing of what we need to do is just be who we've been the whole entire season and see what happens at the end of the game.

AVA LEARN: Yeah, confidence thing because it's really amazing to see that there are so many people that think we can actually do it for our little small-town school. It's an amazing thing. But I also think it's something that we need to take, put in our pocket, and not let us think too much

about it. Because if they let us think it won't be an easy game, it won't be an easy game.

This will be one of the hardest games of the season because of the environment, where we're at, both very fast-paced teams. I think it will be something of a challenge almost because, like I said, don't want it to get to our head. Like what she said, an amazing thing to hear for someone to have confidence in us.

Q. Head coach Rechelle Turner says it's always about five minutes, five minutes, five minutes. How much does that actually impact you guys on the court? How much does that help?

TRINITY WHITE: Honestly, that helps a lot because there's 40 minutes, and we just play so fast and hard that it helps me -- I think it helps everybody not to get overwhelmed and think ahead. We're focused on those five minutes. It helps us dial in.

KATELYN YOUNG: I agree. It helps us if we set goals like, okay, say we're up a few points. Let's make the lead even higher. If we're down, let's get it closer. In small increments of time and stuff like that, just having the five minutes, it just keeps you in the moment instead of looking ahead.

AVA LEARN: I agree. It comes back to what Coach Turner has been saying it since day one. Win the day. That's as simple as it should be each day and for how long the season is, how many months we're in it. I think breaking it down even smaller than that for the five minutes really gives us all a chance to, like, take a deep breath, realize what we need to fix. There are some times where the other team has the better five minutes. Coach has said that in the huddle. They won those five minutes, but we've got to win the next one. It helps us and the coaching staff too.

Q. Katelyn 3,000-point scorer, what is your scouting report on Katelyn Young?

KATELYN YOUNG: I would probably say a three-level scorer because I'm able to make damage in the post, 15-footer and 3-pointer. Probably, would probably be like I'm not going to, like, just force anything. I'm going to let the game come to me. If I'm getting doubled or something like that, which I've seen pretty often this season, just pass it out to teammates who are able to knock down shots.

Q. Ava, you spent the summer abroad. Did you think about what kind of senior season that you might be able to have, and was this part of what you thought could happen this year?

AVA LEARN: No, definitely not. I was definitely hoping for the best, but I think that my hope for the senior season is that I just gave it my all, that the rest of the team gave it their all, and I was definitely hoping for a good season.

But the fact that we've come this far is truly amazing, and it's so crazy to go back to the summertime and think what was happening during that time, what everyone was even thinking, what could possibly happen. It's just so amazing to see it all come true.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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