

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Michigan State vs Oklahoma

Saturday, March 21, 2026

Norman, Oklahoma, USA

Lloyd Noble Center

Michigan State Spartans

Robyn Fralick

Marah Dykstra

Grace VanSlooten

Media Conference



going to Ohio State and playing, I know how much it means to be a team like that, a lower seed, and want to beat a team like us.

So I was kind of speaking about that experience and just how much we need each other and need to rally around each other. We're so blessed that we got away with that game, just because we rallied around each other and played like a team.

Q. To follow up on that, you talked about your experience, where you're at Montana State as a mid-major. You hit the buzzer beater in the Big Sky Tournament Championship game to get to the Big Dance last year. So you talk about that appreciation and the degree of magnitude that maybe you feel and understand March Madness comes with. How do you share that perspective that you've lived through that and you know what that is?

MARAH DYKSTRA: I think March is just a time like no other. It's so special for so many communities, groups of people, like just to rally around something and be a part of something bigger than yourself.

To me that was something that was super special last year in Montana, and now I get to experience that again in my senior year. We know how much weight that carries, and we want to keep that journey going as long as possible, especially for us seniors. We want to rally around each other and make it to the Sweet 16.

Q. Can you both just talk a little bit about the matchup tomorrow and what you guys know of Oklahoma?

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: We talked a little bit during breakfast and going over film and stuff like that. Basically a completely opposite game of what we played yesterday. Yesterday was a little bit more slower paced, and after watching the first half of Oklahoma game, they just like to get it out and run.

It's going to be really up-and-down. They're not the type of team who uses most of the shot clock. Got to kind of flip our brain from yesterday to tomorrow. Yeah, they're a

Q. Grace, Raegan just talked about how you two are old friends and you've played against each other for a long time. Talk about that matchup. I think this game is going to center around you guys a lot. What do you think about this matchup? You know so much about her.

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: It honestly goes back to my senior year of high school, McDonald's All-American game, and then Oregon State versus Oregon both my freshman and sophomore year, had to guard her a little bit at USA back this summer.

She's just so tough to guard. She's just really, really great. And you know what's even better, she's a great person, and her family is amazing too. I just have a lot of gratitude that I got the opportunity to spend some time with her this summer and kind of build a friendship. I'm just really proud of her and happy for her and everything she's doing.

Q. Marah, your teammates today talked a lot about what you had to say at halftime yesterday to kind of galvanize the team. I'm curious what compelled you to say something at halftime yesterday, what did you have to say, and what does it mean to have that kind of respect from your teammates?

MARAH DYKSTRA: I'm super grateful for my teammates. They look to me as a leader in the locker room. Even though I'm not the one always there on the court. I try to just always bring a light and an energy to the spaces I'm in.

I was kind of just saying, from my experience of being on the other side, being the lower seeded team last year,



great team, super physical, and it's going to be a really competitive and big game.

MARAH DYKSTRA: Like Grace said, it's a super interesting matchup for us overall. Just playing two polar opposite styles of play, going from a team like Colorado State who wants to slow you down and use the whole shot clock, to a team like Oklahoma who's one of the fastest in the nation of putting up a lot of shots and playing fast.

Definitely shifting gears, and we worked on that a lot on the court today of being able to just switch on a dime in transition and be ready for whatever shots they take at us.

Q. This one is for both of you. I know Coach Fralick and the staff really make it a priority to share the kind of historic success that your squad has had this year. When you think about Michigan State women's basketball, 53 years in total, only three Sweet 16s. Now your team is 40 minutes away from being one of the few that have ever made it to this point. Is that a point of motivation for you and the rest of the team?

GRACE VanSLOOTEN: Absolutely. All through the season we've talked about things that we've done that we haven't done in a while at this program. I think making it to a Sweet 16 would just be the cherry on top, and then hopefully continue to play further from that.

I think we're all just really motivated to get to that. We like to kind of set new records in this program and show that we're putting this program back on the map and just a really strong program.

MARAH DYKSTRA: It's cool playing for something bigger than yourself, playing for a legacy, Spartan Nation. It's such a cool atmosphere to be a part of because we've got a community that's really rallying around us and we're really rallying around each other.

Like Grace said, we're doing things with this program that haven't been done in a long time. It's exciting, and we want to keep that momentum rolling for our community and our team.

ROBYN FRALICK: Thrilled to still be playing. As we know, it was a heck of a game last night with Colorado State, a lot of credit to them. Proud of our group for finding a way to survive and advance.

Quick turnaround to prepare for a really good Oklahoma team. Very, very grateful for the opportunity to continue to compete.

Q. Oklahoma has such a unique style of play. Talk

about that matchup and how difficult it is to try to get ready to play that.

ROBYN FRALICK: They're one of the fastest teams in the country, and it's pretty interesting because I think we just played one of the slowest. Really contrasting styles, but that's what this time of the year is about.

In our league we play a lot of different styles of play too, and I think with a quick prep, I think it is what it is. There's things that we know that are going to be important in the game.

Yeah, their pace, their aggressiveness, their offensive attack is unique and effective.

Q. Robyn, we were just talking with the players a moment ago about this too, but you bring up history and the context of what this year's team has done in Michigan State women's basketball history. Only three Sweet 16s ever in the school's history in 53 years, and now you sit 40 minutes away from that. It would be the first in 17 years. Just the appreciation for the opportunity in front of you?

ROBYN FRALICK: That's something that, as a staff, we really tried to do well with our team this year is remind them of some of the things they've been doing that haven't been done in a while. You can lose track of that, especially in a really challenging Big Ten schedule and the NCAA Tournament because the task at hand is still a great challenge.

We know that. We know the history. We know the tradition. We know the opportunity ahead of us, and we know the challenge. So I think our team has done a good job.

Any time we felt -- you know, you've got to have this mix of a season of continuing to push your team but encouraging them too, because of how challenging the schedule is throughout. That's something that we've definitely tried to make sure they have an appreciation for.

Q. Jennie talked a little bit about how y'all's paths have crossed the last couple of years. Can you expand on that a little bit?

ROBYN FRALICK: Jennie and I were both mid-major coaches. She was at Drake when I was at Bowling Green. We both played in the NIT. We both had really good teams. Then recently this summer we both had an opportunity to coach USA basketball together.

I was a court coach. So I was just there for the week. She



was with the team for the whole three weeks. She had an opportunity to coach Grace and Raegan.

Definitely a friendship forged. She's somebody I look up to and respect. We have a lot of overlap even in sort of how our careers and somebody that I just really admire the job she's done wherever she's been.

Q. You mentioned Grace and Raegan, two of the best centers in the country, and yet for some reason I think this is going to be an up tempo game, but talk about the impact of the centers in this game and how the post players can influence the game.

ROBYN FRALICK: Both really good players. We know Raegan is really efficient, a tough matchup, and Grace too. Grace has been a really, really good player on our team and in our league. Different styles, but they're both really effective.

It will be an interesting matchup, kind of how it plays out.

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