

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Green Bay vs Tennessee

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Raleigh, North Carolina, USA

Reynolds Coliseum

Green Bay Phoenix

Natalie McNeal

Bailey Butler

Media Conference

Q. Ya'll went on your run through the conference tournament. What's the key to continuing that momentum into the NCAA now?

NATALIE McNEAL: I think our conference tournament run was really special to us because obviously we're very familiar with the teams that we're playing, so it's easy to have, you know, the momentum going through and to get excited and know who you're playing.

This is a new experience for us and something that we don't want to take for granted. It's an opportunity to play a bigger school at a bigger place, so I think that gives us a lot of momentum and a lot of motivation moving forward.

BAILEY BUTLER: Yeah, definitely for our tournament, that got us really going, and I feel like it helped us play a little bit better like together, and I feel like that will help us in the tournament.

Q. Obviously getting to play in the NCAA tournament is an exciting time. Playing a storied program like Tennessee, probably upset a little bit. What does it mean to be playing a team like them in the first round?

BAILEY BUTLER: I think it's exciting. Playing a big team like that we're the underdogs and gets us a little fuelled up to play the game like that.

NATALIE McNEAL: Yeah, I think any team we were going to play we were going to be excited no matter what. It's a very unique experience. You play college basketball so you can play in the NCAA tournament. That's the dream.

I think obviously Tennessee is a very historic program, but we have -- I mean, we're the underdog, like Bailey said.



We have nothing to lose going in, so might as well play as hard as we can.

Q. As you mentioned, this is a dream for everyone, your first tournament. Do you have any memories of watching the women's NCAA tournament growing up?

NATALIE McNEAL: Yeah, I feel like it's just -- it's been really cool to watch it grow over the years. And then I mean, I feel like growing up I had no really concept of how big after deal it was to be in the tournament and what it meant to play in the tournament.

Then as we've come to college and experienced the heartbreak over the last couple years of not being able to be in the tournament, now like it puts it in perspective.

And also just there are so many great players, so many great names in women's basketball. That was so cool to grow up and watch and now we're here.

BAILEY BUTLER: I think a few memories I have is watching Green Bay get to the tournament a few years back. I watched Jen Wellnitz play, and that was really exciting. Gets us going to like, hey, I want to get there. We did, so it's exciting.

Q. This is for both of you. Seems like the other three teams here everyone knows someone or knows something about each other. What are we going to learn about your team and your program for the next couple days?

BAILEY BUTLER: One thing I think you guys are going to learn, our defense, we really strive to get better on defense each day.

We hustle. We are aggressive. I feel like that's what gets us playing really well together. We always are aggressive on defense, offense, and just it's really nice.

NATALIE McNEAL: Yeah, I think like Bailey said, something that makes us stand out, you're not going to look at us and think we're a very big or tall team. You'll see that right away.



What you will notice about us is we hustle and play together and we play hard for each other, and a lot of that comes on the defensive end, like Bailey said.

And then playing together on offense, yeah.

Q. Ya'll played a challenging non-conference schedule. This isn't your first time playing high major teams. What are you going to take away from the wins over Creighton and Washington State? What did you learn from those games that you'll take into the tournament?

NATALIE McNEAL: Yeah, I think at the time when we played our non-conference schedule, that's what our coach said a lot, just take it in. Use those games as motivations, because we're going to need them later. We are going to need them later when we win the conference tournament and when we go play in the NCAA tournament we're going to see big teams like that.

Now after we played our conference schedule with all the familiar team we've always played that we know a lot about, we can look back and we have some confidence going into these games knowing we can compete outside of the Horizon League and we did and we were successful in it in our non-conference season.

So it gives us the confidence that we have all the ability.

BAILEY BUTLER: Yeah, I agree with Nat for the confidence part. I feel like it gives us composure. We been in the big games before and know what it feels like, what helps out in this situation.

Q. Just to follow up, just to make sure, do you know any or have a relationship or background with any of the other players that are in this region, for any of the other three teams?

BAILEY BUTLER: No, I don't think so.

NATALIE McNEAL: Yeah, honestly, no. I haven't played with any of them, but obviously have a lot of respect for the big names. They're really great players. But we're not personal friends or anything. I wouldn't say that.

No, no.

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