

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Harvard vs Michigan State

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Raleigh, North Carolina, USA

Reynolds Coliseum

Harvard Crimson

Carrie Moore

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Coach Carrie Moore, receiving glowing remarks from her players. Questions in here.

Q. Coach, I want to first get your thoughts on not just being here, but having an opportunity to do something that Princeton hasn't done in a long time, and that's win a game in the NCAA Tournament. To get here, how difficult was the challenge, and what's the process like? For you?

CARRIE MOORE: First of all, just watching three of our players up here, I think just speaks to the growth over three years for Elena and Harmoni and two years for Abigail. I've given everything to this program, our staff has given everything, our players have given everything to this program to really get to this point.

So I think we're just incredibly overjoyed to be here, to compete in this tournament because I think we have shown that we belong here all season long.

It's funny because I'm the only one on staff and players that has been in this tournament before. So really just trying to step back and just watch their joy every single day with everything that is happening. I think that's just so special because you never forget your first time, really in anything, but this specifically, you've worked so hard for it.

It just makes me so incredibly proud of where we're at and the growth, like I said, and just excited about what's to come for this team.

Q. How do you try to calm them that it's just another game but it is the NCAA Tournament?

CARRIE MOORE: I think it's the same approach that we've had all year long. Every game is the biggest game because it is the next game on our schedule, and this



game will be no different, I guess. That will be my approach with it.

And I'm sure with two seniors that are leading the way and a lot of upperclassmen that play, I hope that will be their state of mind as well.

Q. Two quick ones for you. First, just for you kind of getting off the plane, walking into this environment again, but now as a head coach, how meaningful was that for you to experience?

CARRIE MOORE: So meaningful. I think this moment is just very full circle for me. Obviously this is my first time as a head coach in the tournament, but doing it at Harvard in this state where I used to coach as an assistant and have played here many times before and playing against Michigan State, who is a hometown team that I grew up watching.

There's just a lot going through my head, I feel, and I'm trying to process it all and write it all down and journal and get it all out before game time. I think the most important thing is just our circle of team, staff, players, support team that are here with us and really just making sure we're soaking this up and enjoying the moment.

You know more than anyone how hard we've worked to get here, and it just means the world that we're finally here doing this.

Q. Just wanted to ask you about Harmoni real quick, with the roll she is on this month averaging north of 30 points a game, are there things you're trying to fine tune with her this week or plan to emphasize before tip-off, or is this kind of a time where you just try to stay quiet and hope she keeps rolling here?

CARRIE MOORE: I think it was kind of business as usual this week with her. We did our usual two individual workouts. We had our film session, three practices, including today's practice, on the court. Talked about last weekend. Didn't talk too much about it, really turning the page and looking forward.



Talked about what worked, maybe what didn't work as well, and areas in which we feel like she can be successful against Michigan State and that we feel like our team can be successful against Michigan State.

What I saw last weekend was nothing that I don't see on a typical day in practice, so it wasn't overly shocking, but I'm hopeful that she has another one, but two games in her to do that as well.

Q. Two questions. Xs and Os, how have you been -- what's your satisfaction level with how the defense has performed in postseason play, especially in the tournament when you look and it's like everybody who's here can more or less guard and is kind of leaning on it? In what ways do you think you might have to dial up or adjust to somebody else's? It just feels like that's what games come down to as much as people like scoring and big numbers.

CARRIE MOORE: For sure. The competitor in me is a little bit upset because after giving up 60 and almost 70 points in our Ivy League Tournament, we're now sixth in the country in scoring defense rather than first. I feel good obviously with where we're at. We ended those games getting major stops, both the semifinal game and the championship game, getting huge sideline, out of bounds stops multiple times, not just once.

I think that speaks to where we've been before this season in a lot of close games with the schedule that we put together, but also just our ability to put five players on the floor that can really sit down and guard multiple positions and rebound at a high level. That's what wins championships. That's what wins games in this tournament and in this month.

We will need it tomorrow against a really good Michigan State team that plays a lot of guards, that can get downhill, and do it all from 3, midrange, and at the rim. But it's nothing that we haven't asked them to do any other day this year, so nothing new in terms of that category.

Q. The second one is I just wanted to fact check this, the story you mentioned the other day, they said that Dawn Staley sent a little snippet of the net to all the other coaches. I wonder if she sent you that or not?

CARRIE MOORE: That actually happened three years ago before I became a head coach, and I was a little sad about it. Maybe I'll shoot her a DM or something. She's got a couple, I think. Maybe she's got a net for me.

Q. You've been here as a player. What are you specifically saying to the seniors, particularly Harm

and Elena, about sort of energy levels, how people show up to the tournament, fans, players? What are you talking about to them specifically?

CARRIE MOORE: I've never played in a tournament. I've only coached in it at the different places I've been in. They're experiencing something as a player that I never did, but I think from a coaching standpoint, just really trying to keep them steady. Like enjoy the moment, be present, and be where your feet are, but also understand the task at hand and not getting too high, not getting too low.

Just be about the process. Take it one second at a time, one day at a time, one possession at a time.

Fortunately, these are conversations that we've had with them all year long, like this is not new stuff that's coming out of my mouth. So I think it allows us to show up and really take this all in, but also show up at our best come tomorrow.

Q. When Robyn was in earlier, she suggested you guys had kind of a unique relationship at western Michigan and maybe you weren't too fond of her officiating in practice.

CARRIE MOORE: Oh, boy (laughter).

Q. What can you tell us about that?

CARRIE MOORE: First of all, don't tell my players because I get on them about complaining to us about being refs. That's interesting.

Again, I think this is like just very full circle to have Robyn as my grad assistant my senior year and to now be playing her team, who's so good, my first time as a head coach.

Yeah, she was great then. I think the grad assistant role is one that is kind of that in between of an extension of the staff but also really close with the players, and I thought she handled that really well.

I looked to her for a lot of coaching, but a lot of guidance, a lot of support, and a lot of inspiration in moments because there was a lot going on that year for me.

To now see her success in the business from afar, have always been rooting for her, and now to be right here alongside of her on the sideline is really special.

Q. First of all, welcome to Raleigh. I hope everyone is treating you well. I am interested about the Ivy League and Harvard. Obviously there's a duality with it. A lot of people don't perceive it as a strong league. You got

three teams out of eight in the tournament. Then of course Harvard is a national brand. It's not just a local brand. Can this thing grow? First of all, how proud are you of where it's at right now, and can this thing grow and expand in the next coming years?

CARRIE MOORE: Yeah, definitely. First of all, for those that don't think that the Ivy League is a strong conference, I mean, the fact that three of our eight teams are in this tournament and one just getting a win yesterday for the first time in program history, I think speaks volumes about how good our league is.

There are great players in this league. There are great coaches. It's only going to continue to get better because we've worked so hard as a league to get to this point.

I can say that because I've been around for a while in the league, and I've seen it grow over time. This is just the starting point. I feel like with what we have and what we have coming back. It's just where we're at in terms of recruiting.

Like you said, the brand is the brand. Fortunately, I can pick up the phone and call a top 100 kid and they'll respond because it's Harvard, and that's one of the reasons why I'm excited to be here as the head coach because I feel like we can recruit at a high level and we can compete against anybody in the country, even with the ever-changing landscape of college athletics.

Just like our players said, the ball stops bouncing at some point. So if you're smart, you need to be at a place where you get a great education and you can also play the game at the highest level. That's exactly what we're showing you that you can do.

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