

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

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Reynolds Coliseum

NC State Wolfpack Coach Wes Moore

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Coach Moore is here. Questions for Coach Moore.

Q. How much of the Michigan State-Harvard game did you use to scout versus what you used from previous Spartans games, films, prior to the tournament, and what stands out with them on film?

WES MOORE: Yeah, again, we had a couple of scouts put together of probably three or four games each or something like that. And then watched the game yesterday. I'll be honest, I watched it in my office, you know, for the most part, just watched it on TV, and we had coaches down there trying to pick up any calls or anything maybe that you can catch when you're there live.

But, yeah, I mean, what is it the football coach said? They are who we thought they are. Again, the press is something you've got to worry about. They do a great job of applying pressure. They're balanced. Got several people out there that can take over a game. And VanSlooten, somebody that we recruited out of high school, and so she actually visited here some unofficially. So very familiar with her.

And, again, well-coached. Play really hard. And, again, you got to take care of the ball. They force turnovers. That's going to turn into offense for them. They're going to get a layup or open three. So we're going to have to be really smart with our decision-making and taking care of the ball.

Q. Coach, what team does this -- you play in the ACC, they have 12 teams, and from the Big Ten in the tournament, what team in the ACC do they remind you of? I asked the same coach that question when she was here.



WES MOORE: Great, Ernie. You know, yeah, thanks Ernie. I mean, I don't know. I haven't really sat down and thought about that. So you caught me often guard on that.

Again, they just -- there's not a ton of teams out there that press consistently like they do. So I don't know that I would draw a comparison really. Again, like I said, we're worried about that, worried about their post play.

I mean, both their posts are averaging 15, 16 points a game. And so with us being young inside, that's going to be a concern. I know VanSlooten yesterday drew 10 fouls. And so they go inside to her, and she's really good at getting you to leave your feet and draw in contact.

And then I thought -- and I could butcher the names here, Hallock, obviously, she didn't have her better game yesterday, but we obviously seen a lot of film so we know what she's capable of. Really quick and explosive off the bounce, can shoot the three.

But I don't know that I can really compare them to anybody. You got me on that one.

Q. What were you able to learn from yesterday's game moving into tomorrow?

WES MOORE: Yeah, again, we've prepared for them, watched film on them before. So, you know, what we've done the last couple of years is since we have a little more time between your tournaments, once we find out who we're playing on that Sunday evening, we spend Monday and Tuesday preparing for possible opponents in the second game, and then we had a day off, and then we spent Thursday, Friday focusing on Vermont.

So we had a little jump start on them. Like I said, they're what we've seen on film. They're super talented. Play really hard, well-coached, they press you. Offensively, they're aggressive. They're getting post touches, getting you off the bounce.

So really, again, those things that we had seen on film were pretty true yesterday as well. I don't think there was a whole lot of new things. But seeing it in person is always

good too, though.

Q. Robyn Fralick mentioned that -- I don't know if you're aware of this, she played at Davidson when you were coaching at Chattanooga. I don't know if you remember her, and she said you were a good coach then and now.

WES MOORE: Yeah, I remember Robyn well. To be honest, it kind of slipped my mind, but then when I thought -- about it, yeah, because obviously her last name has changed. But, yeah, you know, very smart player. And Davidson had some really good teams back in that period.

And, but, yeah, she's -- for a minute I thought, wow, she really moved up the ladder quick. But then after looking at it, 2004, okay, maybe it has been 20 years. You know? So you kind of lose track there for a pin it.

But, yeah, it's a great accomplishment for her to be at a Power Four school like Michigan State, and she's done a heck of a job with it. One of her assistants, Dean Lockwood, was at Tennessee with Pat Summitt for a long time. And with my ties with her and with Chattanooga and Knoxville, all that, very familiar with Dean as well.

So they've done a heck of a job.

THE MODERATOR: She did quickly point out, by the way, they didn't win many games, Davidson against Chattanooga.

WES MOORE: It's a new era. We'll see.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned the physicality that Michigan State likes to play with. Obviously post players love that, but even their guards like to be physical. How do you allow your team -- or tell your team not to let that get to them because not all fouls are going to be called?

WES MOORE: Again, like I said, they're going to apply a lot of pressure, whether it's full court or half court. In the half court, they deny passes. They're going to pressure the ball. And they do a great job of rotating and helping each other.

You're right, you got to keep your composure and not let it get to you. I think the best way, to be honest, to handle pressure is to attack it. You can't shy away from it. The same way with the press. You can't be satisfied with just getting the ball across half court. You've got to try to score and make them pay for pressing.

And in the half court, when they get up in you and applying that pressure, you've got to try to take them off the bounce

and put the pressure back on them.

So hopefully we can handle that. But, again, they're turning people over at a great rate, and that's what they do really well.

Q. Going off their pressure, how much are you able to draw from playing Duke, the way they play defense and using that as a learning tool going into this game?

WES MOORE: Yeah, Duke is another team that especially in the half court they apply great pressure. And they also are great on the boards. And so you could draw some comparison there between those two.

And, again, Duke a lot of times with their press, they're more true man to man. This press that Michigan State runs, run and jump, they're flying around, they're doubling the ball. And then they're rotating up. So if somebody goes and traps, somebody else is rotating up, looking to make us play on the ball.

So I just think, again, the way they do it is a little different from a press perspective. But in the half court, very similar.

Ernie, I hope this is better, Ernie.

Q. The time of the game tomorrow, it's a noon game, people are working, students. Do you feel it is has, you know, some type of lacking in the home-court advantage because the crowd and the people and the parking and, you know, here? Can you talk about that?

WES MOORE: Yeah. Yeah, again, it's all how you look at it. Try to explain to our team today, hey, first semester we practiced in the morning. So let's spin it that way. You're getting -- we're starting three hours later than we normally start practice in first semester.

It is, it's a little frustrating because I know there will be some people that are having to work and it makes it hard for them to be here. I know I've ran into that in my situation a little bit.

But, yeah, there's nothing we can do about it. So just got to thankful to be at home and, hey, let's wake up in the morning and let's get ready to play. And don't have to wait around all day, so that's good. Let's get after it.

Q. (Off microphone.)

WES MOORE: Unfortunately, we don't have anything to do with that. So it's all based on TV. And I guess maybe

I'm not sexy enough so they didn't want me in prime time, you know?

THE MODERATOR: But you're on ESPN.

WES MOORE: Yeah, that's great, thank you.

THE MODERATOR: You've got two players that will be manning the post that you've probably had to have a conversation with this year that they're probably not playing in their natural position. Even Madison talked a little bit about that earlier. You've got her playing the four, she'd probably prefer to play if three. You've got Trygger playing the five, she would probably prefer four or three. What were those conversations like to get them to accept those positions?

WES MOORE: My goodness. We need to get some new local talent in here. My gosh. I hope you don't talk to them.

You know, we play four guards. Madison is not a four player, she's a guard. We play four guards. You choose whether you want to play four guards or three guards and two posts. We're playing four guards.

And that does mean sometimes she gets taken inside and they try to post her up. But Madison is pretty physical girl and can handle that.

As far as Tilda goes, there's not a whole lot of 6'6" kids just laying around. So when you can get one, and in our situation we had a need. It's called team, Jeff. It's called a team. You do what's best for the team.

But, again, we still look for Tilda. She still has opportunities to shoot the three and keep her happy. And Madison definitely can shoot the three.

So I don't know we've had in-depth conversations about it. But, again, if I'm a player, I want to get on the court. So if that's the quickest way for me to get on the court, Hey, Coach, I'll do it. So let's leave it at that, Jeff.

THE MODERATOR: You got it, Coach.

Q. To speak to that need, obviously with Caitlin and Lizzy being stricken with injury, Tilda and Lorena have had to step up as freshmen. How have they embraced that role early on in their collegiate careers?

WES MOORE: Again, I think Tilda's grown to accept it a little bit and sometimes even maybe savor it a little bit. I think she's doing fine down there. I think both of them, you know, they're freshmen. So it's not ideal. I like veterans.

But I also don't look at your driver's license. I'm going to base it on talent.

And they were our best options, and I think they both have grown a lot. I owe that to my assistant coaches, Nikki West, Kevin Leatherwood, Kayla Jones, our GA. They work with our interior players, and I think they've done a heck of a job bringing them along, and they've grown up in a hurry.

So I feel blessed to have them. Don't know where we'd be without them right now. So -- but, again, they're going -- VanSlooten is a grad student -- I'm sorry, a junior, and then the other one, Ayrault, No. 40, you know, she's a grad student.

So they're going to against veterans, and so they'll have to try to play smart.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach Moore.

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