

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

Monday, March 24, 2025

Raleigh, North Carolina, USA

Reynolds Coliseum

Michigan State Spartans Coach Robyn Fralick Grace VanSlooten

Media Conference

North Carolina State 83, Michigan State 49

ROBYN FRALICK: Obviously a really tough finish for our season, but a lot of credit to NC State. I thought they played outstanding. I felt like we kind of ran into a buzz saw. They shot the ball really, really well.

What I shared with the team after is this game isn't our season. I think it doesn't feel great to finish with a game like this, but you know, there are things that are happening in our program that we're really proud of. We feel like we keep building. We made it a game further this year. I think it was the first NCAA Tournament win in the Michigan State program in six years.

Really proud of our collective season. Really proud of our girls. Seniors that we love so much, so it's hard to have a last game with them that have meant so much to me personally and to our program, but really proud of our team and the work that we've done over the course of a year.

Tonight I wish it went a little bit differently, but a lot of credit to NC State. They're a team that was in the Final Four a year ago and lots of luck to them as they keep moving through. They're a really good team.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for our student-athlete, Grace VanSlooten.

Q. Grace, to kind of follow up on what Coach said, where do you see the program going? A tough day today, but where do you see the program going?

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: I think I only see it going up, just how hard everybody works in the program, the culture that surrounds it. I mean, the only way we can go is up. So I'm



really excited to put in a lot of work this offseason and really get better so that overall the whole program can get better.

Q. Grace, did it just seem like an avalanche hit you guys when they were hitting those shots and they just wouldn't miss? What was the feeling there?

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: I mean, a little bit of frustration. Obviously, like coach said, it's not the way that you want to go out, but all credit to NC State. They played a great game. Yeah, I mean, we're knocking down all their shots. I don't know. I mean, it's kind of, like, speechless.

You don't really know what to do when a team is doing that, but really happy to be here with this team and happy that we got to a Round of 32.

Q. You switched to the zone a few times this year on defense. Is that something you found out in the scout, and what allowed you to find some holes in the defense there?

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: I think the scout was kind of we need to own the paint, and we went in and it was kind of the opposite is what happened. It's unfortunate, but they played a great game.

Q. Obviously so soon after the loss, but looking back at this season, what are you going to take from it overall?

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: I think, first and foremost, the relationships I made. I mean, I have some really awesome teammates. I'm really, really grateful for them. I think coming from the season, I've learned a lot. I've improved so much, both mentally and physically. I think my game has just gone to a new level, and I'm really, really grateful for that.

It all starts with the coaching staff, with recruiting players that want to work hard because that is the culture that's at Michigan State. So just really, really grateful for the season and the people that I met. I had a lot of fun.



Q. Reynolds Coliseum is a tough place to play. You had a sizable Spartans presence come down here. What did it mean for you and this program to have that representation on the road in a tough environment?

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: It means a lot. Our fans all season have been amazing. I've never played in front of people who care so much for women's basketball. They always show out no matter who we're playing.

Credit to NC State. I've never seen a crowd like that. I've never played in an environment like that. Their fans really showed out today. It makes it a little bit of fun to play in front of a crowd like that. I love our fans and expecting the same next season.

THE MODERATOR: Grace, thank you for your time. Questions for Coach Fralick.

Q. Robyn, you were facing a deficit, and it looked like you had not been in those type of holes for the most part this season. Did that just add another element of something else you have to kind of conquer here for the last couple of quarters?

ROBYN FRALICK: The first quarter really got us on our heels. You know, we've been a team, though, that's been behind and worked our way back many times. We've been a team that's been able to go on runs. We've typically been able to do it with our defense and being able to kind of be disruptive. Tonight we never got that run.

I thought the start was hard. They made a lot of shots, and we had some early that we missed. Those feel critical, especially with just sort of the momentum of the game.

We're a team I never feel like we're down and out. We've played against top teams in the country and battled our way and fought our way back, and tonight we never had that sort of momentum shift.

Credit to NC State. I thought they played really, really good basketball. When you make all your shots, the game gets a little bit easier too.

Q. Yesterday North Carolina State talked about how they didn't want to have a physical game like they did in their loss to Duke. How much of a difference did it make that they made so many early open shots that it was going to be more their type of game?

ROBYN FRALICK: Honestly going into the scout so much of NC State's success has been being efficient in the paint. They're a team that makes seven threes a game, so it's a part of their game, but it's not like the main part. So tonight

when they were just hot, hot from three, all of a sudden the game becomes really hard because they're also hard to guard in space.

It started early, so I thought that got us spaced out a little bit early too. You know, credit to them. Good team. Their guards are very dynamic. That also made it hard for us to pressure them in the full court just because they have three guards that can really kind of whiz up and down the court and were hard to contain.

Q. Obviously y'all played a lot of large crowds playing Big Ten basketball. Reynolds is also a good environment. How much preparation went into preparing for this environment, and how do you think your team handled it?

ROBYN FRALICK: I mean, I think our Big Ten season prepares us. We do play in sold-out crowds and huge fan bases. Reynolds arena is the same. They have a great fan base.

We went in knowing we had to be really sharp with making sure we had nonverbals, but no, the fan base made it fun. I think that's what this platform is for. I love that the top 16 teams host. I love that for our game. I think it makes you really work to earn that.

Then I think it makes the competitive environment -- it's a challenge if you are on the road, but it makes the game very much a tournament atmosphere. I think we've played in tough environments all year, but we had that again tonight.

THE MODERATOR: One of the stats that stood out to me is you create 22 turnovers a game. Today NC State only turned it over 11 times. With them that might be a high number. Four your defense that's a low number. Why was it so difficult to turn them over?

ROBYN FRALICK: They have great guard play. So that makes it tricky. They don't have a primary ball handler. They have multiple.

Then they shot it so well, so all of a sudden it's really spaced out, which it's harder to be disruptive. Then the same thing, we didn't score, so when you don't score, it's hard to get your defense really set or press set or get into your spots.

Q. Talked to Coach Moore. Him going against you when he was coaching and you were still in your playing days, what was kind of the -- what was it like facing him now as a coach-on-coach matchup, and what was that post-game conversation like?

ROBYN FRALICK: He congratulated us on a season. He also said he thought they played great. It felt like we ran into a little bit of a buzz saw, but he's one of the best coaches in our game. He's won for a long time at every level, at a high level. Yeah, I think he does a great job, and he's done a great job for a long time at a lot of places. I think they've got a really good team that can continue to make a run in the tournament.

Q. This was a season low in scoring for you. What was the difficulties in why you guys couldn't score against NC State?

ROBYN FRALICK: Well, our defense didn't create offense, which means a part of our offense. It's not the whole part, but it is a part, so I thought that's probably the biggest part of it.

Then when you're not getting a lot of stops, it's also hard to -- it becomes a little bit more challenging to score when the defense is always set.

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