

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Drexel vs Texas

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Austin, Texas, USA

Moody Center

Drexel Dragons

Amaris Baker

Hetta Saatman

Chloe Hodges

Media Conference

Q. Amaris, what changed for you during the conference tournament? Practically doubled your scoring production for the season be consistently?

AMARIS BAKER: Just confidence. Having confidence in myself and my teammates backing me and having confidence in me as well.

So that definitely helped level up my performance during the conference tournament.

Q. So you guys are the only team from the Big5, men's or women's, representing Philly in the NCAA tournament. Have you guys thought about that at all and what that means?

HETTA SAATMAN: It's definitely really exciting and I think it really just shows us proving ourselves. Going into this year we were kind of branded as a rebuilding year. Weren't picked to finish very high in our conference, but we've shown the opposite and came out dominant in our tournament and proved what we can do.

AMARIS BAKER: It's definitely awesome to represent Philadelphia as well. Even though the other collegiate teams and programs didn't make it, we know we're here and going to do our best to represent the city.

Q. This was your first season in the Big5. Do you think that added motivation for you guys to really make your mark?

CHLOE HODGES: I think in one way. Obviously the men had the Big5 tournament. Ours is really starting next year.



We did play some Philly teams in LaSalle and St. Joe's. That's always a great matchup for us. We understand playing them they're always huge games and super fun.

Q. This is for any of you. I guess you touched on this a little bit just now, Hetta, but how do you feel about the underdog role? Do you enjoy being in it? Do you not like kind of being labeled as that?

HETTA SAATMAN: It's definitely something that we embrace, especially this year. Like I stated, we were selected to finish 7 in our conference, and we ended up winning our tournament. So we're ready for the challenge. I think any challenge. Nothing is too big for us.

Earlier we were talking about David and Goliath, and I think we're up for anything.

CHLOE HODGES: Just to add to that we've been the underdogs all year, like Hetta said. Coming into this tournament it's fitting. It's nothing new for us and we have kind of nothing to lose. That mentality is also what we brought into the tournament and we came out successful. We're bringing that same mentality in here.

AMARIS BAKER: Also just like with the underdog you never see it coming, so we're just focusing on us, just sticking to our principles and what we do. We know if we do that, we'll be successful.

Q. Texas lost here last year. Hosting and lost in the second round. They were the four seed and lost to the five. Is that something you guys were aware of, kind of knowing that they've been in this position as well?

CHLOE HODGES: No. I think we're just trying to attack it as a brand new year, brand new season, and kind of just taking it one game at a time. Just focusing, like Amaris said, on ourselves and control what we can control and sticking to what has made us successful, especially in the last week.

So sticking to that and letting the rest fall into place.

Q. Any of you, what are your impressions from what



you've seen on film of the Texas team and the challenge tomorrow?

CHLOE HODGES: Yeah, obviously the size piece is something that's undeniable. We're undersized somewhat in the CAA, but that's something that we embrace. I think it's a part of Drexel is that we're often undersized in the post and we always find a way.

Watching the film it's something that's definitely evident is the size piece, and the full court pressure that they bring. That's what they're known for, the way they're able to turn teams over at such a high rate.

Definitely the two things we're conscious of heading into tomorrow.

Q. So you guys have played in really big games before. What are some things that you've taken from that, lessons that you can apply to tomorrow's game?

HETTA SAATMAN: Just as a team being on the same page. And like Amaris said earlier, focusing on us, what we're going to do. Not really listening to noise. Focusing on the opponent as much, but knowing what we can bring to the floor and doing that and having each other's backs through every step of the way is a big thing.

AMARIS BAKER: Definitely just staying calm through the storm. We know everything is not going to be perfect. Each possession won't be perfect. Things happen. We're just worrying about being a unit and getting through what we have to do each possession to be successful as well.

Q. Amaris, you won the CAA Most Outstanding Player Award. How does winning that award help going into Friday's game?

AMARIS BAKER: It's definitely a blessing and I'm super grateful, but I wouldn't have been able to do that without my teammates having confidence in me. I'm just focusing on this game and doing what we do.

Q. At the conference tournament you won a lot of games in the last minute by small margins. What is so good about the Drexel Dragons that makes you so clutch in the final final minutes?

CHLOE HODGES: Yeah, I think it's a characteristic of Drexel basketball. Always has been. We win by possessions. We don't blow people out and win by 20. Just understanding that about ourselves and knowing we drill in practice different situations when we're down by two, up by one, what we're going to do if we have no timeouts and if we do.

So understanding the strategic piece and what's been working throughout the game, who has been scoring and been able to capitalize. I think just being able to capitalize down the stretches is something we were able to do at a high level last week and be able to win in those possessions like you said.

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