

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Four - William & Mary vs High Point

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Austin, Texas, USA

Moody Center

High Point Panthers Chelsea Banbury

Media Conference

MODERATOR: Coach, we want to congratulate you on your two Big South regular season and tournament championships this year, and we would like to start this press conference by you making an opening statement, please.

CHELSEA BANBURY: Yeah, thank you for having me. Obviously we're excited to be here. The girls set these goals out for themselves to start the season, that we wanted to be regular season champs and tournament champions, and they made it happen.

So I'm just so happy for the players that they get to experience this; we get to come in, we get to continue to play basketball, and it's the greatest time of year.

MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach. We don't have any questions or raised hand functions here on Zoom. So we're going to turn to people here in Austin.

Q. This is your second time bringing this team to the NCAA Tournament. What does that experience do for you as a coach and how do you instill that into your players?

CHELSEA BANBURY: Yeah. I mean, I guess as many times as you can go, you know, you get more familiar with it and you know the level that you have to play at to be successful in March. And, you know, that's just what we talk about a lot. We've talked about the level of execution that it's going to take to come in here and give us the best chance that we can to hopefully win tomorrow.

You know, you can't have a bad day in March. Disciplined teams are the ones that win, and we have to be disciplined in what we do, and we have to execute at a high level.

And I think the girls are ready for it. They've prepared



themselves all season for this, but just the level of execution that it takes, I think the more you get here, the more you kind of understand that.

Q. And obviously the Moody Center is a little larger than the average arena you all play in throughout the season. How do you make sure your players play where their feet are and not get a big head about making it to the tournament, playing in this massive arena, that kind of thing?

CHELSEA BANBURY: Yeah. I mean, we also play against tough competition throughout the year. We went down and played in the Gulf Coast Showcase, and we played West Virginia, and we played in a big arena down there; and we played at UCF. And we try to put them in those situations so that if and when we make it to March they're ready, you know, we've played tough competition. And we try to do that to challenge ourselves and know what it takes to get to where we want to be at the end of the year.

So I don't think they'll be overwhelmed with the size of it, but I think they're just excited, and there's a lot of nerves going, but hopefully we'll get some of those out here in practice and shoot-around tomorrow.

Q. Y'all are coming off that conference title. What does that do to fuel and motivate your team to keep it going and win more?

CHELSEA BANBURY: Yeah. I think the biggest thing coming off the conference title was one of our starters and guards broke her leg in the semifinal game, and a lot of what's been talked about is continuing to play for her. And I know she'd give anything to be out there. She's a senior, and this was her last chance. So don't take anything for granted. We have a great opportunity here, and take advantage of it.

Q. You have two players averaging 10 or more points. How do you think you can use them and be successful in this tournament?

CHELSEA BANBURY: Yeah. I think in conference we had



four or five people averaging from like 10.6 to 11.4. And I think that just came with a lot of -- we have a lot of transfers and people are getting more comfortable with how we want to play and seeing where their opportunities are.

I think when you have even scoring across the board, you know, you can't take away everybody. And it could be anybody's night, and we talk a lot about sharing the ball and working for the best shot that we can get, and if Nevaeh is hot, like let's feed the hot hand. If she's not open, let's keep the ball moving so we can get the best shot that we can. And I think we have a lot of good players, and being able to spread that out hopefully will give us an advantage.

Q. Obviously it's a lot of these girls' first go around with this, minus a few. With Ky going down has there been like a leader trying to -- I don't know about give examples, but just push everyone through this experience of coming to the tournament, flying down, coming to an arena like this? Has there anybody been stepping up in that department?

CHELSEA BANBURY: Yeah. I think there's been a few people that have been stepping up in that department, and they understand that Ky was a vocal leader for us, and she kind of kept everybody together, and they understand that it's going to be a team effort to continue that and make up for what she gave us all year.

So I think it's been quite a few players, and they understand that we are missing that and that they're all going to have to step up and they're all going to have to mature very quickly and be ready for the moment.

MODERATOR: Coach, you talked about being disciplined and execution being so important tomorrow evening. What is your overview of William & Mary and what they bring to the floor and what you'll need to do against that, against the team tomorrow night?

CHELSEA BANBURY: Yeah. I mean William & Mary is playing very good basketball. They ran through their conference tournament, and they have a lot of capable scorers, and it's tough to take those away. And they know how they want to score, and they know how to get those shots. So talking about being disciplined and taking them out of what they want to do. We can't do anything crazy, take ourselves out of position where we can give up easy points at the basket.

And then we have to rebound the ball. We can't give them second-chance points.

And on the offensive end, we can't force anything. We have to take what they give us, and we have to execute on a high level on the offensive end. The ball has to move. We have to be willing to set screens for each other, and we can't stand and stare, because that's easy to guard.

MODERATOR: Any other questions for Coach Banbury? Seeing none, Coach, just congratulations for your successes to date this season. Best of luck tomorrow night.

CHELSEA BANBURY: Thank you.

MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us.

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