

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Creighton vs Illinois

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Austin, Texas, USA

Moody Center

## Illinois Fightin' Illini

## Shauna Green

## Genesis Bryant

## Kendall Bostic

## Adalia McKenzie

### Media Conference

Illinois 66, Creighton 57

SHAUNA GREEN: Just want to give credit to Creighton. We knew this was going to be a really, really hard game. As soon as I saw their name pop up, I'm like, we've got to guard all that action.

But since Monday, we've been preparing for it. I think our defense was just unbelievable. They were locked in. These guys get all the credit. They executed the game plan to perfection.

We struggled the first two days of prep, and we struggled, but they kept at it, kept at it, kept at it, and the last two days of practice, we were elite guarding it, and I thought we were today.

Our goal in losses, they make seven threes, and we held them to six, so that was a big key for us was trying to hold them under -- to six or seven threes, and we did that.

Just every single person that played for us made plays. I can go down the list of the six guys that played. You talk about toughness, only playing six guys. They were resilient. They've been resilient all year, and this group deserves it. I know I wanted this so badly for this senior group, and they wanted it pretty badly, too, and went out there and got it done.

**Q. For any of the players, Coach was talking about how hard they are to defend and stopping the threes. What makes them difficult, and what were you able to**



**do to limit them to such a low percentage?**

KENDALL BOSTIC: You know, there's not a lot of teams in the Big Ten that run an offense like that. They're very five-out. They basically are all guards, so you don't really see that a lot in the Big Ten, so it's not something we're super familiar with. We knew there was a lot of screens, staggers, flares, all that stuff.

So just really getting the reps at it, I think, and just being able to see it for ourselves, and I think that's where the four days of prep really came in, is we got used to it after a while, and I credit our practice guys. They did a great job of preparing us for it. They were running it ten times faster. Creighton was running it tonight. So I think that really, really helped.

**Q. Kendall and Gen, this is the first postseason win in 25 years. How do you sort through of emotions of what that was, and why was this group able to do that?**

GENESIS BRYANT: It's a great feeling. I'm just so blessed to be able to be that team that did it after so long and just how we did it, how we've been doing it all year. We've just been doing it together, we've been connected, and it's been such a fun time. I have enjoyed this whole season. Just to know that we are surviving and advance and this is our last game is just a blessing.

KENDALL BOSTIC: I just feel like it's kind of a testament to the season and how it's gone. We've fought through a lot of things this season, playing low numbers, injuries, and different things like that. So I really just feel like it's kind of a testament to the season, and it's so rewarding to kind of be able to see that, especially for, like, the Dal and I, who were here before, and Gen and Makira and Brynn when they came in. It's just a complete 360 of this program, and it's really cool to see and be, like Gen said, to be the team that's doing that.

**Q. For any of the players, just the accomplishment when you think about it. Did it measure up to what you would have envisioned when you get a chance to get an NCAA Tournament win?**



ADALIA McKENZIE: Yeah, honestly, I like to say this is a dream come true, just being here first, but then getting a win, something we worked hard for is really rewarding. I definitely think the game exceeded the standard of what we thought it was going to be, and it was very fun to play in it, and I'm just very proud of us.

**Q. Kendall, your first year here, you won seven games and now you've won a postseason matchup for the first time in your career. What does that mean for you, and what did it take to get your career to this point?**

KENDALL BOSTIC: I think it's huge, and I think it's a great way to kind of tail off the end of my career is just getting some wins in the NCAA Tournament. I think it's just the work, and obviously, I transferred in my sophomore year, and we weren't very good, but I wanted to -- I saw potential in this program, and I had the resources, the people, the support, so we could turn this program around. We got Coach Green in here and it happened a lot faster than I think anybody thought.

We brought in all the right people, from staff to players, and it's just everything has gelled really well. It's been so fun to be part of the team that's changing it and seeing it develop in front of your own eyes. You're not sitting back and watching, you are the one making the change, so I think that's the coolest thing.

**Q. Adalia, now that you guys have broken that 25-year drought, how hungry are you to maybe spring a big upset potentially against a No. 1 seed?**

ADALIA McKENZIE: Yeah, we're very hungry. It's all about surviving and advancing, and we want to keep playing. We're not done yet, and we're really excited to see the next opportunity to get in the Sweet 16. We're super hungry and we're really ready for it.

**Q. You like to rebound, don't you?**

KENDALL BOSTIC: Just a little bit.

**Q. If you do play Texas, and are you rooting to see Texas if you had a preference?**

KENDALL BOSTIC: I mean, we'll root for whoever wins. We're going to be prepared for any team that we come across, so we'll see tonight.

**Q. They've got a noteworthy front court. I wonder what the challenge will be like and if you've seen them play?**

KENDALL BOSTIC: I haven't really watched them much,

but we're going to get to watch them a little bit. I feel like the whole Big Ten season is full of loaded front courts, so I feel like -- to Brynn and I, it's just kind of another game. They obviously are very talented with Madison Booker and their 5s. So we'll take care of business, and we'll watch film, evaluate, but we do know they are very talented in that area. But yeah, we're excited for the matchup, and we look forward to the opportunity.

**Q. I just wanted to piggyback off of his second question right there. I know you guys are excited to move on to the second round. It's something to celebrate and be anxious about. What are some key things or adjustments you guys are going to have to make in order to make it on to the next round?**

ADALIA McKENZIE: Yeah, I will say we have the best coaches in the country, so they're definitely going to prepare us and give us what we need to do. We're kind of a smaller team, so we know we've got to be physical, but we have really good principles, which is the simple things, being in help, being in gap, guarding one-on-one. If we just stick to our principles, we'll definitely be ready, but yeah, Coach Green is going to have to answer that question.

**Q. You missed those two free throws and Berry gets the offensive rebound and scored. What did she give you tonight, and what was the feeling to watch that unfold after that?**

GENESIS BRYANT: Yeah, I did miss those two free throws. I was trying not to relive that moment. But it was amazing just for her to be a freshman, to have the poise to get in there and then finish because she had two people to get it over. She's been making plays like that all year. She's a freshman, but we don't treat her as a freshman. Even Coach Green said, you're not a freshman anymore. I think she's just rising above the level that we set for her, and I just can't wait to see what she does the rest of this year but also in her years to come.

**Q. Coach, every game for every team is a full team effort, but with all the injuries your team has suffered this year, what has it taken and what have you had to pinpoint to get your team to this place?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Our players, their resiliency, the toughness. I said, when you go through hard times and tough times, you either can pull apart or you get tighter. This group is just such a special group. We just continued to get stronger, more together, more connected, and just continued to really just show the toughness, the resiliency.

That's what I want this program to be about. I talk all the

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

time about being tough and fighting through stuff, and this year is just a great example of life. Life is not always going to go the way you want it to go, but what are you going to do, are you going to sit and feel sorry for yourselves or are you going to get back up and keep fighting. That's what this group has continued to do.

Even all of our guys that are out. I was looking on the bus and they just keep walking by, I'm like, she's not playing, she's not playing. We've got like eight people that aren't playing. We've got six that played.

But every single person is so 100 percent in. They're all in. I mean, everyone -- you see our bench, the energy they bring every day, the communication. This is a whole team effort, even though only six guys played tonight. We need every single person, and they've just been amazing in terms of their energy level and the engagement and the buy-in.

**Q. Shauna, just to be in another fourth-quarter game but then to finish it off this time around, how rewarding for the team, and do you almost feel like it was going to be this kind of game?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Yeah, I knew this game was going to come down to the fourth quarter. I thought it would come down to the last battle, the last five minutes. You know I talk all the time, we work our fourth quarters, our last battle every single day in practice with a scrimmage, and I give them different scenarios. We lost our last two games, and we lost them because of our last five-minute battle, and we were not going to lose that. Everything we've been talking about for this break has been about finishing and learning from our mistakes in the Nebraska and the Michigan game.

Even in the time-out, I kept telling them when it was under five minutes left, I'm like, we just did this yesterday in practice. I had us up five with four minutes left yesterday, and we talked about just doing what we do every day and just really proud because we did what we did tonight in the last battle, what we've been doing, and when we went on that eight-game winning streak. We made plays when we had to. We made stops when we had to. Every single person did their job, and we finished.

**Q. What's the 25-year thing mean to you, and to do it with this group, the ones who either followed you or bought into your vision?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Yeah, everything was about finding a way. For me personally, I wanted -- obviously I want to win every game. You know that.

But this game was really, really important. It was really,

really important. We came here to get to the NCAA Tournament, to compete for championships. This group, I wanted this group to be the one that won that first game in a long, long time, especially after the last couple games of just being a little disappointed.

But as we all know, when you get to March, everything is new. That's what we just kept talking about the last couple weeks.

So yeah, this group is special. You guys, you've heard me talk about them all year. I personally just wanted it so badly for them. So, so much. It feels really good to get it. There's steps to building a program. There's steps to building a program when you take over a program that, again, was really, really down and out. 25 years is a long time. It's a long time. But now we want it to be the norm.

**Q. Assuming Texas wins, do you feel like you'd be the underdogs in a packed arena against the co-champs of the SEC?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Oh, yeah.

**Q. How do you pull off a win like that?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Yeah, we're going to obviously be the underdog, and that's okay. We've been the underdog really all year. I understand it's hard. It's hard to -- in the women's game to make a Sweet 16 because you're going to have to pull off a win on someone's home court. I've done it before as an assistant coach at Dayton. We had to beat Kentucky on their home floor in front of a packed place, and it's hard. It's really, really hard.

But the good thing about that is, there's no pressure on us. There's no pressure at all. Everyone thinks that -- I mean, we're already saying Texas is going to win and they still haven't played the game. So, you know, everyone thinks Texas is going to beat our butts. That's fine. Texas is really, really good. Obviously, Vic does an amazing job. They have guards. They have their big. It's going to be a really tough matchup if that's who we play and this place will be full cheering against us, and we're used to that in the Big Ten. We go and we play in front of 10,000, 14,000 pretty much every night.

I'll worry about Texas or whoever -- no disrespect for William & Mary. We'll worry about it, dive into them tonight and into tomorrow, and I want our players to just enjoy this win tonight.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.

