

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Regional 3 Final - TCU vs Texas

Sunday, March 30, 2025

Birmingham, Alabama, USA

Legacy Arena

Texas Longhorns

Rori Harmon

Madison Booker

Elite Eight Pregame Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Okay we're ready for the Texas players.

Q. Rori, Coach was just in here talking about how TCU has some players that can make plays, but you guys do as well. How do you feel like y'all match up against them and do you like your chances?

RORI HARMON: Yes, TCU does have great players. They're in the Elite Eight for a reason. They have great coaching and everything. So I would say the same thing about my team, though. We have great players, great coaching, great preparation. But when talent meets talent, talent doesn't matter anymore. So it's going to come down to the tougher team, the team that prepares the best, the team that's able to translate that preparation.

But, yeah, this is a game with some players that are very competitive. So it will be a competitive basketball game.

Q. Rori, Coach was in here talking about how special it is that when Madison came into Texas she was number 1 on everyone's scouting report even as a freshman and still shined. I'm curious what you see from then and now that still stands out on Madison that they can still be the number 1 on the scouting report?

RORI HARMON: It's just about being humble. You're picked to be the Player of the Year and anyone could relax and be like, okay, yeah, it's going to be me at the end of the year but that's just a preseason pick. What she did was she continued to go to work and understood that she doesn't want anybody else to get that. So she worked really hard and I'm just really happy and proud of her to be able to come in like that and develop and go through some



adversity, and go through some challenges, but that's what all builds her into the player she is today.

She can attest to like the mental challenges and the physical challenges of playing here and playing for these championships that we're playing for, but she would not trade that for anything in the world. I think playing with her and understanding that she just wants it so bad, that just makes it easier to play with her and easier to win more games like that.

Q. Rori, you've talked about how mentally taxing it is to rehab and come back from a major injury. I'm curious what outlets or resources you leaned on during that process. Was there a therapist you talked to, sports psychologist, what did you do to take care of your mental during that time?

RORI HARMON: Yeah, you lean on your teammates and your coaching staff. I didn't talk to a specific sports psychologist during that time, but sadly there's a lot of people around me that have been through that.

I talked a lot with Shaylee Gonzales from our team last year. She truly was there for me a lot and someone who has previously tore her ACL, it was a while ago but things like that stick with you. Like it's hard to really let go, even though it's happened four or five years ago for her. But, yeah, it is very mentally taxing, but it's just not something you can do alone.

I think even sitting here talking about it, I want anybody who is going through that to understand that you can't do it alone truly and always reach out, always ask for help, whatever it is you need, always ask for help, because no one is going to turn it down. Everybody is here working as a team and I'm just glad to be in the position that I'm playing basketball again, and I'm grateful to be in the Elite Eight.

Q. Madison, you're obviously SEC Player of the Year, last year Big 12 Player of the Year, now Hailey Van Lith Big 12 Player of the Year. There are people tuning in to watch you play. Do you look forward to match-ups like that when people are going, there is the spotlight,



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you gotta watch that?

MADISON BOOKER: I think TCU is a great team that we saw in the Big 12 last year when we were Big 12, and just seeing them now how they're a completely different team, I think just, one, our teammates are just looking forward to that match-up. It's a new team. Like a different conference, too, but for me, I'm just ready to play, I'm ready to win.

I kinda don't look at the accolades, because everybody is great here for a reason, everybody on this team. Both teams are talented and I heard a great comment, when talent meets talent, what's there to bring?

But, no, I'm looking forward to it. I feel like in high school I watched her, too, at Louisville, LSU. Stuff like that, but, yeah, I'm looking forward to it.

Q. Rori, Hailey came to the Moody Center and gave you guys some problems a couple years back. Coach Schaefer always talks about toughness and he brings you up when he says it and she brings that to TCU. What problems does she present and how are you guys going to try to slow her down?

RORI HARMON: Fortunately that was two years ago, so hopefully a lot of things have changed, which they have. The team is different and she is now on a completely different team so you can't really kinda look back at that. I don't. I'm looking forward to just playing Texas's team this year playing TCU's team this year.

But she is a great basketball player. Like I said, the eight teams remaining in this tournament are here for a reason. They have great basketball players on them, they have great coaches, and great coaching staffs that are preparing them for these games. But, yeah, she is going to bring that playmaking ability. Obviously she is going to be a focal point in our scout.

We're just going to do our best to prepare and understand, like, we need to limit some of those things that she brings to the table.

Q. Madison, I know there has been some dialogue between you and Kevin Durant in the past. What is the story between how you guys met and what is your first memory of talking and connecting with Kevin?

MADISON BOOKER: I think it was the first time when I committed to Texas. He's a Texas alum. He played at Texas. I wear his number. And he was happy someone who is a fan of him commit to Texas, it was support from there.

Last year he came to our second round game against Alabama. I just think after that it was more like of support, like a family support. Like a cousin support. And then this year I saw him and basically he just told us, me and my teammates, keep going, keep winning, keep doing your thing on the court.

But that's really it, it's really just support from both sides.

Q. You're favored tomorrow to win the game. Your thoughts on being the favorite?

RORI HARMON: Well, we're always going to pick ourselves. You wouldn't find an athlete that would pick another team to win. So, yeah, we're always going to choose ourselves when it comes to Texas, and I think that's kinda the thing that matters most. Throughout this whole season we're going to always pick ourselves. We trust in what we're going to do. We trust in our preparation, and we understand that this is a great basketball team but, yeah, we're always going to choose ourselves at the end of the day.

MADISON BOOKER: I second that, for sure. I'm with her.

Q. Rori, I know that you pride yourself on defense, and I know you love that side of the court. Just how excited are you for this match-up to prove to the world about your defensive effort against Hailey Van Lith and the other scorers out there on the perimeter?

RORI HARMON: I feel like I don't really have to prove much. I've been doing this for a while, ever since I was a freshman, even before college I've been playing defense the way I do. I'm just more fundamentally sound at it now. I'm excited for that match-up. I'm excited for the competition. I'm always going to take on whoever their best player is. I love that, I take that with responsibility. And like my teammates say, my coaches say, like, how I come out and attack and punch on defense, that's basically how the team is going to play. So how hard I play is how we're going to play, and I'm always going to take that responsibility.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies.

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