

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Washington vs TCU

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Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Schollmaier Arena

TCU Horned Frogs

Mark Campbell

Olivia Miles

Marta Suarez

Donovyn Hunter

Media Conference

Q. In between your bites there, when you look at this team -- enjoy your snack. Obviously you had the triple-double yesterday, but you weren't alone. A lot of people were doing a lot of things yesterday. What does it say about this team playing together and contributing?

OLIVIA MILES: I think that's what I was most proud of, everyone being bought in and everyone being confident. There were some games where only a few of us showed up, and you know, maybe a few of us had an off-game.

But when we are clicking on all cylinders and our chemistry is flowing like it did yesterday, we're really hard to stop. Because even if somebody wasn't having a good shooting night, someone else is there to pick up the slack. And like I said, the confidence will carry us far in March, as long as everyone stays together and everyone plays as confidently as they did yesterday.

Q. This is going your last game Schollmaier. Can you tell me what your favorite memory is here playing in Schollmaier and what this arena and this home crowd has meant to you guys throughout this journey?

OLIVIA MILES: I have one.

MARTA SUAREZ: What do you have?

OLIVIA MILES: Baylor, easily.

MARTA SUAREZ: Oh, yeah. That was the best game of



the season. That was a special weekend overall. Not only we had the opportunity to host college game day, so bringing attention to the Big 12 and to TCU and this team, but it was also senior night. There was a lot of important people, our families and friends here, and then as the last game of the season, the community really showed up. It was packed.

The energy was intense, and the team really showed up. We had a great game. We had a lot of fun playing in it, especially against such a tough team like Baylor and once again a rivalry. You know, that always means a little bit more. And then to end it, also, being like the Big 12 Champions, certified and all that, it was just a celebration of a season. It was a great weekend. We had a dinner the night before, too, to celebrate the seniors. It almost felt like a wedding a little bit. It was great.

DONOVYN HUNTER: I would say the same. Yeah, cutting down the nets for sure and watching the seniors have senior night. Enjoy the moment, all their families were here, their friends. The community was great that weekend. I think it was cool to see them hoop on their last senior night.

Q. When you look at Washington, their backcourt is really good. We saw what Avery did yesterday. She apparently likes the rims at Schollmaier. Can you talk about the challenge of defending them, and you as the spear of the point defensively, what do you think you can do to get them out of rhythm?

DONOVYN HUNTER: Yeah, I think if we are just intentional with being in our spots, making sure we have our hands in people's shot pockets, just the small little things we have to go on defense.

I think, ultimately, it doesn't matter what team you are playing. If we are focused on the intentionality behind, Okay, we are going to make sure we are in our spots all the time, we're running back, we're defending transition and we're doing all these other things, I think our team is able to put together a game worth of good defense.

So I think what's that we are focusing in on, not focusing



on, you know, you have to do X, Y and Z but making sure we are focused and locked in. Washington does very well. It's just moving the ball. There's a lot of screen actions and stuff. Making sure that we are talking a lot on defense is kind of the main thing that we are focused on.

Q. I'm sure you remember what it was like to wait so long to get this program back to the NCAA Tournament. To get this program back in the NCAA Tournament, do you see any similarities to the Washington team that had not been there in a long time?

DONOVYN HUNTER: I'm sure that they were stoked to get that win, a throwback to the Pac-12 days. I was able to play them there. They have been a great squad still. It's pretty much kind of the same girls. They have just added new girls in. So it's cool to see them be able to have games in March and be able to get that win and advance.

Kudos to them, but it is a cool experience for anybody when it's your first win in a March Madness tournament. That's like an all-time high.

Q. You said yesterday people called your decision to bypass the draft and transfer to TCU a dumb decision. Now that you've had this extra year, what do you feel like you've gained from it, and at the time, did that move feel like a risk to you?

OLIVIA MILES: To me, no. To the outside world, yes. And I can't blame them. To the leave what I left on the table seemed stupid and seemed like, What is she doing?

But I knew deep in my heart I needed one more year to be ready, physically, mentally, whatever that may have been. This year has paid off for me in ways that I can't even describe in that regard. As I said yesterday, I found my joy back, my love for the game, and I found a sisterhood and a family that I'll have forever.

I've grown in my leadership. I've grown in my game, obviously. I'm having a career year across the board. But also I've grown in just trusting myself and knowing that I can play at a high level, and I didn't quite think I was not there last year or a ready enough to be a pro at that moment but now I feel ready.

Q. I know you're in March Madness mode, but with the CBA being sign, have you had time to reflect on what that will mean for your future and how it will impact you?

OLIVIA MILES: It means money, thankfully (laughter). Thankfully. Hopefully we can stay in the States, too.

It's just a win for women and it's a precedent set and moving forward, it will only get better and it will only grow. That means women's basketball and women's sports in general is headed in the right place.

Q. Yesterday you came out as locked as you had been after a 12-day layoff. Anything did you over that week and a half that you helped spark that start in the first quarter?

DONOVYN HUNTER: I laughed and giggled when you were saying that because I'm wearing my 40 jersey. Kind of just focusing on -- you guys can say your part but 40 minutes is ultimately what we have been wanting to play together, and we know we could as a team.

We knew just knew that we have to be -- again, I keep saying the word "intentional," but that's a big thing, especially in March. I was proud of our team, especially that long gap of time, you can start a game off slow or not have as much intensity. I was proud of how we came out and we were very aggressive.

MARTA SUAREZ: Yeah, me as well. 12 days without playing, it had us like -- we missed it. We're a team that has so much fun together, especially in Scholl. You can tell, we play a very joyful basketball and I think we missed it.

I remember looking around before tip off, like, "Okay, let's go!" (Showing eager expression).

Especially in March, it's a fun time. It's what we've been talking about, what we've been working for. And so now it's a time that the preparation has been done, it's a time to let go and enjoy the game and play together and enjoy each other and have fun.

OLIVIA MILES: We lost. And I think that's kind of what fueled me, the fact that we lost, just pissed me off.

Other than that, no, we just love hooping together. We are excited to be out there and home one last time.

Q. As you look at your last time to play here, we see the one-and-done men's era in men's basketball, and a lot of times they leave and they are gone. To have the opportunity to have one year in a place and to have made the impact you both have made, Olivia, you own several TCU records now in your single season and Marta, it's clear how you have adopted this community and how it's adopted you. To have this impact in a short amount of time what does that say about the opportunity for players to do this and the way that it's

been so symbiotically effective for both of you?

OLIVIA MILES: Yeah, I think my only goal coming here was to leave it better than I found it, and I think I have done it and will continue to through these next few weeks.

But no, it's just a blessing to be out here, and to have a community that supports you the way they do. They make it easy for us to go out and play our best basketball, and when you're playing with such amazing girls it, makes it easier, as well.

Like I said, my main goal was to have an impact somewhere and I'm glad I did and I hope I've influenced these girls in a positive way and have a long-lasting legacy here.

MARTA SUAREZ: A lot of times we talk about the transfer portal and the negative aspects of it or the uncertainty of it, but the reality of it, for example, us three, to be honest it's given us an opportunity to rebrand, to find our place. You're not always going to get it right, but sometimes those "not getting it right" are also necessary for your journey.

I think the way that it's moving towards now, you're going to have an opportunity to grow at schools and create relationships at schools, and then be able to go compete. You don't have to choose one or the other. The transfer portal allows you to get all those experiences.

Still, I don't think we are going to be one-and-done like the men do. We are still going to get degrees, create relationships and build teams but you're also going to the opportunity on that one last year, those two last years, get a chance and exploit the NCAA women's basketball where it's at right now and go compete at that deep level and do it -- I think it's only going to increase the level of the highest teams, but it's also going to give a different meaning to the mid-majors and those other types of conferences.

Q. I'll try not to use any big words like Melissa just did. Building off this, when you see these two players you're up here with, talk about the relationship. We see how much they seem to like each other. We talk about the relationship you've seen and how they kind of come into this program, and what that's meant to them as a group and for you as a whole team.

DONOVYN HUNTER: Yeah, I mean, everyone from the crowd standpoint, us as teammates, you can see the bond that they have, and it's super special.

I think I'm very much of a relational person and it's cool to watch other relationships build between teammates and friends, just especially with the love that they have for our

team. They have all the pressure on them to make things shake for us. The coaches are looking at them to do something for us all the time.

I think to have a bond together separate from just the main team, in general, I think has been super important and it's cool to watch, especially as I'm trying to gain some little tips and tricks, as I'm watching them in that realm of learning how to lead teams and speak and communicate, as I'm going to be a senior next year.

It's cool to see the way that they are working together, and they have had such a big impact on all of us girls that are younger than them, even those the same age as them. They are special people, special humans. They buy into all of us. I'm just extremely blessed that I was able to play with both of them.

MARTA SUAREZ: Awww.

OLIVIA MILES: Awwwww. That's so cuuute.

Q. Did you have a chance to watch Washington and South Dakota State last night, and what are your thoughts on the Huskies and Avery as you guys go into your matchup?

MARTA SUAREZ: Yeah, we stayed and watched the first half together all here and then we had some film sessions. I think a few of us are already know Washington a little bit from Pac-12 and those days. Nolan is putting together an amazing scout.

I think they have a very talented team. They know what they want to do. They have had a great competition all year long. They have good pieces.

So for us, we are in a great position where we just have to take care of our basketball. We just have to do what we've got to do. We don't have to do anything special. Keep them in front and contain. That's what we've done all year long and that's what we are capable of doing, and then let's see what they have got for us. They have got to play defense on us.

OLIVIA MILES: Good point.

MARK CAMPBELL: One, I'm just excited that we get a chance to play another 40 minutes. I thought we played a fantastic game yesterday, and just finished a good shoot around and film session and scout. Going to be a tremendous game. Washington has a great ballclub. Coaching staff is doing an incredible job with their personnel. And they have had a fantastic season.

So really, really excited to go play and advance to another Sweet 16.

Q. Do you see similarities? Like last year, you guys made the tournament, it had been a while and you won a game. Do you see similarities to Washington and what they have accomplished this season?

MARK CAMPBELL: You know, I'm not sure how many years they took over the program, but they have done a great job building towards this. I know they have a senior class that's kind of come through the program, and last year, I believe, was the first time that they made the NCAA Tournament for that group. Their seasoned veterans. They did this a year ago.

So there are definitely some similarities. Again, it just helps any time you've done something and you've got a nucleus back. For us, because we have done it through the portal, it's really a reset. For this group, it's their first time doing it.

No, they have done a great job, but they are an old veteran group that has been through a lot of battles together and they are doing a great job.

Q. You said this many times. Obviously as this team goes as Olivia goes, so many times. But when you have the team together like yesterday, both biggs had double-doubles, and Taylor having the game she had. What does it mean to be in March and having everything playing like that for you guys?

MARK CAMPBELL: That's the goal. You nailed it. In March, you want to be playing your best basketball. The process of getting to that point is the team understanding each one of their games and trusting each other, and Olivia truly trusting her teammates and knowing where they want the ball.

And for us to be able to, as a coaching staff, use our pieces and figure out how to do it. It's all coming together, which is the journey of each season is can you get your group to that point where you're playing your best basketball at this time of the year.

This group is doing that. They have been so coachable throughout this process. And you guys, it's just -- I talk about it but in the portal era, that process, that journey, is hard. Everybody's attempting to do it. Everybody is attempting to get it right but not many do. And so it's a credit to our kids for them being coachable and navigating this with us. It's awesome. It's awesome.

But right now, I felt it. We've had it but we've been playing

our best basketball the last month. And so even the West Virginia game was a part of that learning process and a growth opportunity. So it's pretty fun.

Q. You guys are heading into what is going to be your last game at Schollmaier. What are the emotions going to be like?

MARK CAMPBELL: Yeah, it's bonus basketball. We did the senior night and that's very emotional and that's a special day, and then you end up getting to host. It's kind of bonus basketball for those guys, but it's a celebration. It's going to be packed.

It's going to be an amazing environment and it's an opportunity for us to punch our ticket to the Sweet 16. So there will definitely be emotions but I don't think it's the same as senior night. That's just different.

But I'm thankful that we get one more crack and that we get to be at home, and we've earned it. We truly have. This group earned the opportunity to play at the Scholl with the Sweet 16 game on the line.

Q. Is there a defense that's after 30-plus games now, is there a defense that you and Olivia just haven't seen yet, and what are you expecting from Washington tomorrow? Are they going to throw a lot of stuff at you, or just what do you think might happen?

MARK CAMPBELL: One, I've got no idea. I've watched a lot of film. But they haven't changed things up. They are pretty consistent with what they do.

This time of the year, I'm speaking for me. I can't speak for them. You have one day prep. The first game, you have all week to put in a game plan and really figure out how you want to play and attack that team.

The second game, you have one day, a film session, a shootaround, and you know, for us, we've got to go be the best version of TCU. There might be some little things that we've got to fine tune on either side of the ball but I think it's really challenging and really difficult to make a massive game plan of how you've played all year on one day.

Who knows? I have no idea what they will do. We're preparing. We'll watch the film and we're preparing for them over what we've witnessed over the back end of their season.

Q. Earlier Donovan was wearing her 40 practice jersey on the podium. How does it feel to see your team embrace that message that you gave to them and the performance yesterday?



MARK CAMPBELL: It's awesome. This group, they are really mature. They are a veteran group. But they understand the moment. They really do.

And so you know, when I try to -- I try to always find something that's a rallying cry but that's not a gimmick. That's something that will resonate who they are and their maturity level.

We have been preaching and talking about putting 40 minutes together, but that's part of our process to get all these new players to understand that, and March kind of forces it on you because if you don't, you'll go home and your season's over.

And so I thought it was the right time. I'd kind of been sitting on that, and it was the right time to use it. And they have been all in.

And this group wants to win, and this group has big goals in March. They have had that since June. And now it's here.

Yesterday, I'll say this: It's as complete a 40-minute game as we've put together this year. I don't think if it's because of the jerseys or not but the team was locked in from the beginning to the end. And so, hey, whatever it takes.

Q. What stood out to you about this Washington team that you've seen?

MARK CAMPBELL: They know each other. They play really well together. You can tell they have been around each other a long time and they have been through the battles.

They are unique. They have got four guards and a forward. They don't really start a true center, and then they have Princeton principles with the way they play. Love how they share the ball.

But it's a group that's together and knows how to play and knows how to win, and they are a really good ballclub. They are great in transition. They are great on the glass. So the coaching staff has done a tremendous job putting that team together and figuring out a style of play and a system that works for them.

Q. Circling back to the practice jerseys, how did you come up with that idea and will those be here to stay throughout the rest of the tournament?

MARK CAMPBELL: Yeah, great question. They are here to stay. We'll wear those all the way to the finish line.

Hopefully we get another couple weeks with them.

And I'm big on trying to find -- I love motivational stuff, whether that's a video, whether that's something to inspire them. But we have been -- it's ten months. You start in June. You're in Month 10 together. Throughout that journey, you have to find ways to help inspire the team. And so it's what this team needed. It's one of their challenges. They are so gifted as a group. They are so talented as a group.

In some ways, this season has come easy to them. But March isn't easy. And so I just felt it was the right time, the right message for this team.

And I was in the office late at night when it just kind of -- you know, can clicked. Yeah, just kind of organically unfolded.

Q. You're going from the earliest possible starting time to the latest possible starting time. What impact does that have? What's your reaction to that?

MARK CAMPBELL: I don't even know how they pick the times. I don't know if it's TV. I don't know if it's the NCAA pick it is. I don't know exactly.

I'm a little confused or, you know, 11:00 a.m. tip on a weekday isn't ideal, and then a 9:00 p.m. tip on a Sunday isn't ideal. But you guys, I will never complain; I don't want my team to complain. It's March. We will play at any game time on any Courtney location any opponent. It's March. And these are young people. So there will be no excuses.

It's a head scratcher. You're like, gosh, dang, how do we get the 11:00 a.m. and the 9:00 p.m. But at the end of the day we are going to show up and we're going to be ready and we're going to compete, and there's going to be no excuses coming from our team or our program.

So that's how I would address it. But I've never -- I'm going to learn: What is the process and who is choosing these game times? And you know what I hope Fort Worth comes regardless of that 9:00 p.m. tip. It is late. Most people have work Monday morning.

But these opportunities to host March Madness here in Fort Worth at the Scholl, it's a rare and special occasion. I hope our community and I hope our student fan base, man, they are back from spring break. I hope we have the biggest student turnout that we've ever had in the history of TCU.

Q. You talk about the group coming together and every year it's been different for you, what does it do



for you as a coach to see the personality of the team develop? It's clear they like each other and have a good time together but they know when to get to work.

MARK CAMPBELL: It's not an exact science, you guys, putting portal teams together. I think we are as intentional as you can be as a staff of identifying players, baseball players that fit us and our system. But trying to get the locker room right, you guys, it's not an exact science but we study it. We are so intentional and trying to be thoughtful of making sure the leadership piece is right, the personalities, the egos, all of it. We try.

But again, it's not an exact science. Just look at pro sports. They have an entire department on drafting players and evaluating them, and they study them and their families and their background, and they whiff on draft days, all the time. And literally, they have multimillion departments that are trying to get it right. And you've got us up here, you know, speed dating. They go in the portal, you've got two weeks to try to figure out -- put this whole roster together.

So I don't know how we've done it but it's worked and it's worked really well. I've got news, we are going to be right back at it really soon. I think it opens April 5th, and we have a whole new roster rebuilt.

I do believe after three years in the culture and the joy and the journey that these kids are on together, you guys, I have no doubt it's going to attract the right kind of kids, and it keeps kind of snowballing and builds on itself. I think our product is our best sales pitch. I think the people around country have taken notice and what we have done and what we have built.

I think yesterday, we are one of five teams that's won 30 games in the last two seasons. To say the list and then to be a part of it: It's UConn; it's Texas; it's UCLA -- and who is the fourth one I'm missing -- and South Carolina and TCU. It's incredible what we have been able to accomplish here.

You guys, thank you, thank you for covering us and it's going to be a great game tomorrow. Go Frogs.

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