

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - South Dakota State vs UConn

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Storrs, Connecticut, USA

Gampel Pavilion

**UConn Huskies**

**Aubrey Griffin**

**Paige Bueckers**

Media Conference



match-up in the same conference. So there was a lot of good match-ups. It was always a great game when we played.

Just to be able to play at the next level where we dreamed of playing as a kid in March Madness, in the tournament, trying to compete for a national title, it's everything you dream of. So to continue to play against her, obviously we want to represent Minnesota well. So we hope to do that.

**Q. Paige, growing up in Minnesota, I'm curious how familiar or aware of the South Dakota State program you are or have been?**

PAIGE BUECKERS: Growing up, I've always known they're a very successful team, especially in their conference, and they've made a couple tourney runs where they've gotten a couple of wins. They're always great. They're very disciplined. Well coached.

They have a great offensive tempo and they're very disciplined in their sets and what they want to run. Very well fundamentally. They're just consistent in the way they play and their style of play.

They've always been a team that's been great, especially in the Midwest growing up.

**Q. Aubrey, Brooklyn Meyer, she's been great all season. Had a good game last night. Just what do you think about that match-up and going up against her?**

AUBREY GRIFFIN: Obviously she's a great player, and I think that our team is going to do the best to defend her and just follow our game plan.

**Q. On the other side, Kallie Theisen, she played against you in high school. What do you remember about those match-ups? And how cool is it to meet again on a big stage, kind of representing the state of Minnesota?**

PAIGE BUECKERS: Hopkins-Wayzata was definitely a rivalry growing up. We used to play each other, I think, almost every year to go to state. So it was always a big

**Q. Both of you had to suffer through some injury in your time. Talk about the versatility and depth you have this year. Yesterday you got to play a lot of players as well, just adding that to your repertoire this year where previous years you maybe didn't have all that depth.**

PAIGE BUECKERS: Yeah, it's definitely a different feeling than we had the past couple of years, having depth off the bench, having different people who can contribute and who can help us win.

I don't think we have a person on the team that place alike to another. I think we have a lot of versatility in terms of what our lineups want to look like, our mismatches, our match-ups. I just think we have a lot of different people that can do a lot of different things at different positions.

AUBREY GRIFFIN: Same. I think the difference between this year and last year is we have depth and we have a lot of great players. Everyone just sticks and plays to their role. And I think we do a great job of that as a team.

**Q. A 2-versus-10 match-up, that's the kind of game when people talk about March Madness, a Cinderella, a big upset, that's what they're talking about. You've had very few slipups in that area. How do you do that? How do you avoid suffering one of those upsets?**

PAIGE BUECKERS: I think because we never look at it as what number, who versus who, what's their record prior. Everybody's trying to go undefeated in the six-game tournament.

Anything you did previously doesn't matter. On any given



night it can be a team's night and you've just got to be hot at the right time. Trying to stay disciplined and what we've looked the entire season but up it another level during the most important time of the season, not worry about who we're playing.

Obviously you have a scout. You have things that you work on to prepare for the other team. But how do you look like that night and how do you prepare best to be the best version of yourself as a team. So I think just focusing on that rather than the match-up, necessarily.

AUBREY GRIFFIN: Bouncing off what she said, I think we just come to play each game no matter who we're playing, and I think that doesn't matter. We just show up every day.

**Q. Paige, you guys played a pretty tough non-conference schedule, played a lot of great teams. Have you guys talked about how maybe they're not the typical mid-major that you would see, that they're going to come ready to play?**

PAIGE BUECKERS: Yeah, we talked about they're a really great team. I mean, their record speaks for itself as well, obviously. Just knowing their history and how well they played in the tournament and how well they played in their conference, they're a really great team regardless of what conference they played in.

We know they played a tough non-conference schedule. So they've seen opponents of higher stature -- higher major, at that point it doesn't even matter. But we know they're a great team.

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