

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Villanova vs Michigan

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Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

Villanova Wildcats

Coach Denise Dillon

Brianna Herlihy

Maddy Siegrist

Media Conference



Q. Yesterday you guys held BYU, who was one of the top 10 offenses in the country, to 57 points. What can you guys learn from that game that you can take from Michigan's offense, per se, with Naz Hillmon who is one of the top 10 scorers in the nation?

BRIANNA HERLIHY: Yeah, obviously we went into the game with the goal to keep their top scorers, especially No. 2, from getting the ball or scoring. And I think the fact that we were able to do that just kind of shows that whoever we're playing, it doesn't matter. If we set our mind to it and we have that goal, we'll be able to stop whoever we put our mind to.

Q. You guys had the huge win over UConn to end their streak earlier this year. You have to play in a tough environment on the road tomorrow. But that result, does that give you confidence that if you can beat them, you can beat anybody?

MADDY SIEGRIST: Yeah, I think we've had the underdog mentality all year. I think it's fun to play in an arena like this in front of all those people. You just pretend they're cheering for you. But definitely playing in the UConn environment and again at Mohegan Sun, you're ready for it. It's not that big of a difference I don't think.

Q. Michigan is known for their inside, their rebounding. How have you planned to stop that rebounding and to combat that?

BRIANNA HERLIHY: I think our plan is mostly -- we know on the inside they have a couple big rebounders. So just mainly getting them out of the paint and then relying more on our guards to kind of come in and pick up the rebounds if we get the big people out of the down-low area.

Q. Brianna, you were here a few years ago, you were on the team when Villanova came here and played in the WNIT. Do you remember much about Michigan from that game and what they do and sort of -- obviously you got a win on this floor the other night, so a little better trip than last time already?

BRIANNA HERLIHY: Yeah, so unfortunately I wasn't on the trip because I had a redshirt so I had to stay back or we would have missed too much class. So unfortunately I wasn't here. I don't remember much from that.

Q. From what you've seen in the scout or watching it, other than the obvious, who do they remind you of as a team, teams you might have seen this year?

MADDY SIEGRIST: I mean, they're definitely big and strong like Marquette. I feel like besides UConn that's one of the most physical teams from our conference. So from a physicality standpoint that's what they reminded me of.

BRIANNA HERLIHY: Yeah, I would agree with Marquette. And then they're just really sound defensively, and I think Marquette is pretty similar to that, as well.

Q. What's the plan against Naz Hillmon?

DENISE DILLON: You don't think they gave it to you? Obviously she's a force. She's so impressive, seeing on film but then watching her live yesterday just gave you a full version of her ability on both ends of the floor. I'll just say that great offensive players like her don't commit to defense like she does, so you talk about an all-around great player, she certainly fits that role.

Yes, do we understand what our task is at hand? We're going to rely a ton on the two who were just in here, Brianna and Maddy, to take up some space. But it is the rebounding factor. Shots from other players for them, she just finds herself in great rebounding position. As Brianna had mentioned, putting a body on her, counting on our posts to get some boards, as well.

It's not going to be a matter of stopping her, it's just a matter of containing, contesting some shots and then getting some stops of other players, as well.

Q. Your players mentioned Marquette being a team that was similar to Michigan. That's a Michigan assistant, former Michigan assistant under Kim who coaches there, she's got Joe at St. John's, Melanie at Xavier. Do those schools have tentacles of what Michigan does that give you some kind of a look to prepare for this, or is there not much carryover between those three and what Michigan does?

DENISE DILLON: Well, I think as they mentioned, just the physicality and the defensive mindset that Marquette has. Obviously the awareness of the level of play that Michigan offers is comparable to what we saw with UConn, just players in every position, and then just the force inside.

Yeah, you see it in -- as we say Marquette right now, I think what Mel is doing at Xavier is identifiable and similar, wanting her team to do that, just finding the players to do so. I think Joe, they have some really talented players who can score the ball, so you're seeing Michigan do that, as well, but the defensive mindset you're seeing a lot more with Xavier and Marquette.

Q. Kim was comparing you and Harry and just mentioned a difference, that Harry controlled virtually every second of the offense coming up and down and a little more loose under you. Do you kind of remember when either of you were going in, what you weren't going to be complementing? Of course Harry coached you.

DENISE DILLON: Yes, obviously you teach a lot of what you were taught, and similar in offensive schemes. But we know, Mel, it is too exhausting to control every pass and possession. We left that to Har. I can't do that. Thankful that we have players that are in position, working well together, and making plays for themselves and each other.

A little different I think you could say. A little different than Harry.

Q. I'm always curious with coaches especially at a school like yours and Michigan where the men and women are both having success. Your men play today. How close will you and your team follow that? And with Jay Wright, how is that relationship with you and him? I know Kim and Juwan are very complimentary and talk about what they do to support each other. I would assume it's similar at your institution?

DENISE DILLON: Yes, it really is. I think Villanova in general is a special place, but that was one of the first things getting there, returning, and Jay just immediately reaching out, phone calls, in the office, and always -- he offered advice as to pave your path. This is now your program. Throughout games I hear from him regularly. Just texting back and forth.

I know the girls are a little antsy because we have a little watch party back at the hotel, as well. Definitely supporting each other.

As I said, if we can talk to our team about we know what the men have done, you have a great vision for your program, and our men have proven that it is a possibility.

Yeah, Villanova allows us to be successful. They put us in that position, and everyone supports each other, and Jay has been tremendous for sure.

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