

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Tennessee vs Ohio State

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Columbus, Ohio, USA

Value City Arena

Ohio State Buckeyes

Cotie McMahon

Eboni Walker

Madison Greene

Media Conference



how we have practiced it for a little longer.

So we kind of have a little bit better of a flow. What makes theirs good is that they work with each other in a sense and it's whoever can get their the fastest, type thing. I'm excited for it. I think that we have a pretty good offense that will help us get fast and transition points. I'm excited for the game, especially with them pressing as well.

Q. Cotie, chance was talking about yesterday a message that you sent to -- I first want to ask, was it to the whole team and second can you just talk about that message that you sent to them?

COTIE McMAHON: Yeah it was to the whole team, and you know, I kind of just said, basically just leave it all out there. Nobody wants to go home first round or second but I just said, like let's make it out of here. And let's just give it our all. We are capable of a lot and just make sure that I instilled confidence in the team, yeah.

Q. Over the past few seasons, you guys have met up with Tennessee and now you have them in the NCAA Tournament. How are you looking forward to this matchup and what are you expecting?

MADISON GREENE: We are looking forward to it. They are a great team just like they have been in the past. We are excited. We have been preparing pretty well for them this past day. I think we'll be prepared as much as we can be tomorrow.

Q. How different are you seeing your press compared to Tennessee's press in the tape?

COTIE McMAHON: Honestly I feel like there's a lot of similarities more than differences. I feel like they are very aggressive; so are we. I feel like they trap really well; so do we. Yeah, I wouldn't say there's much difference.

EBONI WALKER: I think they are an athletic team. I think that's what makes our press what it is, as well. I think what makes ours a little different is more of our camaraderie and

Q. The Tennessee players have talked about how much they get motivated by the other team getting tired but now they are playing a team where you are all very well conditioned in the last few years to play in this style of game and go against this style of defense. How crucial that conditioning now that you are in March Madness and how are you all feeling going into the game?

COTIE McMAHON: I think it's very crucial, not only because it's March Madness, but also they sub five and five. As soon as the one five gets tired, there's another five coming in. So it's like fresh legs. They always have fresh legs.

I feel like for us, we are used to having to play tired. We don't sub five and five. So we have had to grind it out through tiredness and through exhaustion. So I feel like that's what's prepared us for this moment, for this game specifically and March Madness in general.

Q. I don't know if you guys popped your head out or came out into the stand to watch the second game but as you looked out there, Tennessee it seemed had about a two- to three-inch advantage across the board against Florida. You've played longer and taller teams this year. How will that impact your ability to get into the paint and finish the plays in the lane, beating the press, all those different aspects when you're going against a longer team like that?

COTIE McMAHON: Yeah, I've expanded my game, as everybody can see. So it's not really a problem for me if I'm not getting into the lane, or if I'm not capable, I'll shoot the pullup or three or kick the ball out.



I mean, I don't think their height will affect us as much. We have a lot of people who can do a lot of things, especially when we are not thriving inside, just moving the ball, because eventually we'll get an easy shot. I think if we make the easy plays and make the right reads, we'll be fine.

Q. Coach always talks a lot about this year, playing really consistent for all 40 minutes, playing defense. How well did you guys think you did of that yesterday, and if you didn't do well, what did you guys have to do differently against Tennessee to win the game?

MADISON GREENE: Yeah, I think in the first half we did okay but we could have done way better. I feel like once we came out in the third quarter, that's when the game started to flow, and we really were pushing on offense and getting fast breaks and stuff like that, and I feel like it carried on in the fourth quarter, as well.

We need to have more of a full game. We did well yesterday, but just playing against Tennessee, we are going to need more of that.

Q. For any of you, the Ohio State football team welcomed Tennessee to campus a few months ago and got a playoff win over them. Do you draw any inspiration from that, wanting to keep Ohio State over Tennessee going?

COTIE McMAHON: It's basketball. That's it.

Q. You've talked about the defensive approach, Tennessee is one of the highest-scoring teams in the country. What do you think it will take for you all to slow them down on the defensive end?

COTIE McMAHON: Staying poised. I feel like our 22 will slow them down a little bit. They do the pressing. Not sure if they have been pressed as much as we press. And just making sure that our defense is where it needs to be.

Today that was our focus, but making sure that we just carry that on into the game, and we'll be fine.

EBONI WALKER: From the three years I've been here and stuff like that, and just the Ohio State way, we have our pride and joy and our bread and butter is playing our own game. The more we focus on what we do and how we are going to press and how we are going to play with each other; that's what's helped get to where we want to be.

So regardless of the talent, the length, all those things, we focus on ourselves and make sure that we bring the best that we can bring for each other out to every game.

When it comes to March Madness and the NCAA, I feel like you are why talent and all those other things and height kind of get you there. What keeps you there is how well your team has prepared and just your mentality. Because you are going to be tired. Things aren't going to go well. You're not going to get calls. It's your mentality that keeps you here.

So just keeping that mindset moving forward, since what's really going to help us move forward into our next game as well.

COTIE McMAHON: That was goooood.

Q. Talking about Ohio State's date, and Madison, you come off the bench and a lot of team's depth, you come in with that veteran presence. How does knowing that they are switching out five at a time change out you prepare to come in whenever you know that they are also going to be fresh?

EBONI WALKER: I mean, for me, I'm excited. I do my best to come out on fire. I mean, that's what we want to do. I think from all the years of playing, I kind of get excited with teams that do a lot of subbing, just giving you new looks, a new way to score, and just having that flow of basketball.

I think that's what makes basketball great. Find different ways to do it, kind of like what Cotie was saying. If they cut you off on the baseline, you go the other way. If somebody else is open, you pass the ball. I think it's simple. But I think it's going to be fun and like you said, our team loves to play fast.

Like I said that's kind of our bread and butter, especially with a younger team, they have in a energy. Me and Madison are a little older. I'm not saying we can't run, you know what I'm saying, but our team likes to run. I think we are going to really have a lot of fun with this game coming up, especially knowing the history of our two teams playing.

Yeah, I'm excited. I really don't have anything else to say but just excitement.

Q. During that 24-0 run yesterday, it felt like the whole starting lineup was just hitting offensively. How much does that help your game when everyone else in the starting lineup is able to score in the zone like that?

COTIE McMAHON: Yeah, I wouldn't say it really impacts me personally. I feel like it impacts the whole team. When we have our starting five or just five people in general who

are scoring double-digits, that's usually when we have a positive outcome on the games.

So when we can get the ball moving and have confidence in each and every single individual on our team and know that we pass the ball, you shoot that shot, it's going in, it's great. I feel like it would be great for anyone regardless if it's me, Madison, Eboni, whoever.

But I feel like everybody getting touches and scoring the ball on that 24-0 run, it's really cool. Not many teams can do that but we are definitely one of the teams capable.

Q. Coach has been talking about consistency throughout the whole season and you kept that whole run after halftime and the third quarter. How important was it to keep the momentum going after halftime?

COTIE McMAHON: Yeah, yesterday somebody asked me if I feel like we've played our best basketball this year, and I said no. I don't know if yesterday was our best basketball but I feel like that it was definitely up there.

That was the closest I think we've played to 40 minutes this whole season. If we just carry that on into tomorrow but actually start in the first quarter and get going and just carry it on to the fourth quarter like we did yesterday, we're going to be fine.

Q. With the game being played at 8:00 on ESPN tomorrow, does it add pressure playing on such a big stage in primetime?

COTIE McMAHON: I didn't even know it was on ESPN, so, no. Also we are very good at just worrying about what's front of us.

Q. You know it's the last time you are going to be playing at home this year. What does that mean to you, and what kind of show do you want to put on for your home crowd?

MADISON GREENE: Yeah, it means a lot. It's a big day tomorrow for especially me since I've been here six years and I know it is for Eboni, she's been here a little less. But all the seniors here, this game means a lot. It's win-or-go-home and we need to come out there tomorrow and just give it our all, and just have fun at the end of the day.

But you want to put on a show for the team, for us, and then also the crowd and try to get that win, of course. So, yeah.

EBONI WALKER: What makes this year unique is yes, it

being our last but we also have a team full of kids that it's their first.

I think that's one thing that drives our team is because we have a lot of people driving from the front, and then you have people like me and Madison and TT and all the seniors that are graduating this year that are kind of driving from the back; Cotie kind of drives from the middle.

We have a lot of driving force and I think that's what keeps our team, in a way, centered and keeps our team motivated, and we have high energy all the time. We want to win and we want to do it not only for ourselves, of course but for each other, and the coaches.

And then for the fans. I think it's almost unfair for us to be here; they give us a lot of added energy, and we definitely feed off of them. So if anyone is listening, come to the game tomorrow, 8:00, after church. You know, church is early, 8:00 is late. Perfect time for us.

It's going to be special, thinking about how long we've been here and the kind of history that we've been able to build, especially with this leading us into the Sweet 16 and things of that nature, but with it being Tennessee and all those good things. I'm excited. I'm excited.

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