

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Oklahoma vs Indiana

Sunday, March 24, 2024

Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Simon Skjodt Assembly Hall

**Indiana Hoosiers**

**Coach Teri Moren**

**Chloe Moore-McNeil**

**Sydney Parrish**

Media Conference



does a really good job keeping us in the gym and watching film as much as we can. Right after our game yesterday, after we showered and got ready, we were right out there trying to watch every possession and take as much information in as we can. You know, it's going to help us prepare for the next game.

And recovery is big deal for us, too. Just trying to get our bodies right in such a short notice of time.

CHLOE MOORE-McNEIL: Yeah, Syd hit it right on the head. Taking a lot of mental reps when it's in film. We understand we don't have a lot of time like we're used to on the court, so just being mentally prepared and taking advantage of recovery and treatment.

**Q. Mackenzie yesterday during the game was emotional on and off the court. You could see her on the bench screaming some things, making some motions. She said you guys play a lot better when you're emotional. What was it like kind of watching her from that perspective in her emotions?**

CHLOE MOORE-McNEIL: Yeah, it's a lot of fun. It gets us hyped when we see our teammates excited, whether it's her or even Sara. She came out of her shell a little bit yesterday, so, yeah.

SYDNEY PARRISH: Yeah, it's a lot of fun. Sara just is really competitive, so it's really fun it see. I don't think we saw it a lot last year on the court, but we always saw it last year and this year in practice. Coach tried to challenge her this year to bring it from practice to the game, and we've been seeing that this year so it's been a lot of fun to see.

**Q. On Sara, what's it like when she's playing like that? Do you just kind of get the ball to her and get out of the way?**

SYDNEY PARRISH: Yeah, when Sara is in her zone she's in her zone. When other people -- I would say when the other team starts talking to her, getting in her head, I don't think there is any getting out of it.

So kind of get the ball to her, and once she hits a

**Q. I guess I saw a bunch of you watching the game last night. What do you think is the biggest thing you learned from Oklahoma so far?**

CHLOE MOORE-McNEIL: Yeah, 60% of their shots come within the first ten seconds of their transition. We know we have to get back, whether to make or a miss, and lock in on our transition D.

SYDNEY PARRISH: Yeah, they have two tremendous post players who can also play on the outside, so we have to have high hands for their shooters and make a presence on the inside.

**Q. Chloe, for you, yesterday coach keeps talking about how you're very vocal, and especially obviously in that first half when Fairfield was making runs, you know, you definitely were speaking up. How have you learned from just the fact that you're now able to be such a vocal leader from your time here?**

CHLOE MOORE-McNEIL: Yeah, just coming from an understanding of what this team needs. We have great leaders in Sydney Parrish and Mackenzie Holmes, and I think the combinations of us using our voices, whether in practice and games and in timeouts, is really essential to this team.

**Q. For either of you guys, with the month of March it's game after game, quick turnaround. Anything you do specifically as players to take in the information and just kind of get ready for the team on a short notice?**

SYDNEY PARRISH: Yeah, Coach, our coaching staff



step-back three, it's end game.

**Q. Yesterday and today the Oklahoma players have talked about how this is going to be a tough environment for them, and of course playing in the Big XII at places like Texas, Iowa State, Kansas State, they're getting ready to prepare for it. How cool is it for you guys now knowing you have the big home crowd prepared tomorrow to get ready to go against Oklahoma?**

CHLOE MOORE-McNEIL: Yeah, obviously to host it's a big advantage that not every team is fortunate to have. We're blessed to have that. We realize our fans have willed us through wins a lot of games, so...

SYDNEY PARRISH: Just we're really, really grateful that we do get play in an environment like this. We played in environments like this also at away games. Iowa, that's a tough plays to play. Same with Nebraska. So we've been in those situations as well and it's not easy to win at other places that are packed 17,000 fans.

So hopefully Hoosier Nation shows out tomorrow and gets us through the game, and hopefully we can celebrate after.

**Q. Last year you were in the same position. Most of this team was in the same position. What do you take from last year to this year to get you over the top?**

SYDNEY PARRISH: We try not to think much about last year, but I think it's always in the back of our mind. This is a new team, a new season. We have a lot of returners, but still can't compare ourselves to the team we were last year.

Like I said, it's still going to be in the back of our mind. Still have the chip on our shoulder and never want to feel like we did after our lost last year.

Keep the main thing the main thing. Just survive and advance. Get to the next game. That's what we're focused on.

CHLOE MOORE-McNEIL: Yeah, I agree with Syd 100%. Having that chip on our shoulder and realizing we're not the same team we were last year.

**Q. I know you had the assignment on Janelle Brown most of the game yesterday. What were the adjustments at halftime that allowed you guys to have more success against her?**

CHLOE MOORE-McNEIL: I think really the only adjustments was to her speed. She's a really quick guard that likes to get downhill a lot, so kind of just retreating

when I could realize she's trying to get to the rim.

TERI MOREN: Well, we got off to a good start I thought yesterday, especially after we got our feet wet in that first half with the pace. But I thought our second half play was really good. Was great to rest some of those starters. Our bench was terrific.

Started our preparation on Oklahoma last night. Got the kids out of here early. So they looked rested today. We just got done with our practice. We're rested and very focused, and so we're excited to be moving on.

We know that we have a challenge ahead of us and a very, very good Oklahoma team that is going to pose some challenges for us.

But we're excited to be in this position to play tomorrow night.

**Q. Coach, how does it feel to be back at the stage where you guys had an early exit last year? How does it feel to get a second chance?**

TERI MOREN: Yeah, well we don't look backwards. Only look forward to what's ahead of us. So we feel really good about being where we are right now, great about being at home and able to host once again.

So we've only looked forward. We don't tend to look backwards. At least I don't. We're in a great position to be at home and play in front of our home crowd, and understand that we have -- there is a task at hand. Business to take care of.

**Q. I saw you guys all watching the second game last night. What did you learn about that in your preparation so far?**

TERI MOREN: Watching it, I don't know that any of us could have determined who was going to win it. It was two really, really good teams. I thought -- which I don't -- we don't expect this, Oklahoma's pace was a little bit slower than we anticipated. Just watching them on film and realizing that 60% of their scoring comes in the first ten seconds of their shot clock.

Talk about pace. We anticipate it being a faster pace tomorrow that they'll want to play at. What we can't do is can't become a track meet for us. If we come down, we miss a shot, we go back down, and don't want to trade misses with them. We want to understand what a good shot looks like for us.

But, again, impressive play. I think they're a well balanced



team. Have great guard play. Also really good post players that are going to play with their back to the basket, more traditional post players than what we saw with Fairfield.

Something we'll be used to just from our experience if Big10 play, happened to play against traditional bigs. But really, really good team and great offense. A lot of body movement, a lot of ball movement.

But I will say this: Going into the weekend we felt like the three opponents that -- we knew we were obviously going to play Fairfield -- but the other two, I think Fairfield helped us kind of get ready for either one of the teams, whether it was going to be Florida Gulf Coast and/or Oklahoma in terms of their motion offense and them playing five out and all the cutting that we're going to have to guard.

I thought the preparation for Fairfield probably put us ahead of our preparation today for Oklahoma because we've been repping a lot of that last week.

**Q. (No microphone.)...your history with Jennie. Played each other five times in two years.**

TERI MOREN: Yeah, probably. Yeah.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

TERI MOREN: Yeah, again, she was a terrific college player, too, at Iowa. You know, very offensive minded. I also got to spend time with her this summer with USA Basketball. She was one of our court coaches.

So very intense. Very -- like I said, very smart. You know, very, very good offensively. So that's what I remember of all of her teams. Not that they're not good defensively, but I think if she chooses to spend time on one side it's probably more offense than it is defensively.

So I consider her a friend, but -- and a very, very good coach.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

TERI MOREN: Yeah, just the motion. You know, not a traditional set oriented offense. Read, react. I think that there is probably called plays inside of their motion that they're trying to pick on whether it's a matchup they like, whether they want to get a post touch.

But it's been hard to pick up play calls, you know, and that's how you know that what they run is -- there is some freedom inside of that.

But I do think there is specific people that she wants to get a touch from. That's what's been hard to figure out, what that call is from the sideline. I think we have in watching all film we watched and even watching them live yesterday maybe picked up on two play calls and that makes it hard. It makes it hard when we go into preparation to say this is the call for this action.

So that's where they make it a challenge.

**Q. Obviously this is the last game tomorrow for Mackenzie and Sara at Assembly Hall. You have seen how that moment went for Ally a couple years ago and on the other side how it went for Grace last year. How important is it for them and ya'll to leave Mack and Sara with one last positive memory?**

TERI MOREN: I haven't really thought about that. Again, we've been so task oriented on what we have to do starting yesterday. Again, I think we're all just -- and I've said it -- we're working off just being grateful right now that we're playing, but understanding that we're entitled to nothing.

Just because it's Mackenzie and Sara's last game and Arielle's last game, that doesn't entitle us to wanting the script to be that they won their last game here in Assembly Hall.

We were not entitled to that. We understand we have to work for that, we have to earn it. So that's really been our focus. We haven't got caught up in the feelings of it being their last game.

**Q. At this point of the year everybody is good, right?**

TERI MOREN: Uh-huh.

**Q. So wins or losses, sometimes comes down toward the mental aspect of game. As the coach, how do you go about teaching your players really to stay level headed at this point of the year when it's really a lot of chaos going on and the pressure is on?**

TERI MOREN: Yeah, we talk about distractions a lot. We talked about it going into this week. We are trying to keep them as a minimum and understand that we -- you know, it's a privilege to be in this tournament. In order to advance you have to -- every game has to come one at a time.

But there has to be a certain level of focus, too, whether you have just the blinders on and just that laser focus that we've had. You know, I've tried to be very intentional about how much time we've been on the floor managing that, but also like today, you know, we're -- we watched film last night, watched film again this morning. We took

advantage of our time while waiting for media to watch position film with them.

And so I call it mental reps. So although we may not be getting physical reps, which we did earlier, but, again, kept that short and really tried to take advantage of the time and get the mental reps in watching that offense that I'm speaking of because of all the movement that's going to be required and the discipline, but also the communication that it's going to take.

And so I think there is -- when you have leaders like Mackenzie, leaders like Chloe and Syd, there is a seriousness about this group right now. Just listening to them, whether it's before we start, whether it's after we get done with a certain drill and we know we're going to talk about -- as I call it, we're going to talk about them; they know who the opponent is.

Just the chatter that goes on with dial in, focus in. You know, that's the kind of conversations they're having. They were very serious today in our walk-through. We didn't go 100%. And so I think there has been a great focus about this group and a seriousness about that group with how they prepared for Fairfield and certainly how we're preparing right now for Oklahoma.

**Q. Kind of within that same realm, the seriousness before leads to the emotional playing. In talking to the players, especially Mackenzie was emotional on and off the court with some hand motions and some yelling.**

TERI MOREN: Sure.

**Q. She said you guys play better when you have that emotion, free, fun. What's it like watching them?**

TERI MOREN: I love it. I love every moment of it because we talk about joy a lot in our program. I want them to play with joy. But we talk a lot about, you know, playing with emotion but not being emotional. There is a difference between those two things I think.

Right now, I think that from Sara yesterday to Mackenzie, when things get going in the right direction for us and feeding off each other, there is a tremendous amount of joy that they're all playing with.

And I love it because it's a game at the end of the day and you want them to enjoy it. I get tickled at watching them feed off each other, the bench and all of it, how excited they get for one another is really cool.

**Q. You're now kind of experienced with the**

**tournament. I think sixth bid. In terms of your experience, is there anything earlier in your career that just didn't work when you were doing tournament prep that you have thrown out? You talk about being more intentional at practice time. Something you changed? I know you're very habit based.**

TERI MOREN: Right.

**Q. In terms tournament prep, what have you learned through the years as you gained experience?**

TERI MOREN: Probably Mike, that less is better. You know, when I say less, I don't mean -- I mean duration of practice time. I've really tried to cut back probably in the last month, three weeks, but especially the last two weeks of really the duration of practice.

Really hitting them with maybe an hour, hour 15 be 75 minutes ever hard, intense work, whether it's -- again, a combination of both offensive, defensive work, but trying to do more in our preparation like today really giving them those mental reps of film will do it again tomorrow because we will have a gap between or shootaround I'm and I call it our eat-around time.

We'll watch more film that will but up to their eat-around and then they will go home and come back.

I want to try to keep it as routine as we can in terms of our normal prep time. Even though it's not. But probably that. Just less is better for this group, especially because you can lean on their experience and trust in their experience that they can watch film and still get really good information from it without having to go on the floor and do to physically.

**Q. Coach, you were talking about the experience. How much does that allow them to stay dialed in while also showing that emotion on the court?**

TERI MOREN: I think, again, at least in my experience, I think when your team feels confident, right, that there won't be any surprises in their preparation I think it gives them, not just confidence, but I think it puts them sort of at ease also.

And then when you find -- when you start having some success, whether it's on the defensive side of the ball and/or offensive side of the ball, I think it sort of snowball. Right, for us at least.

When Sara gets hot you feel like you watch Syd hit a few shots and Yarden hit a few shots and we're sharing the ball and putting the ball inside to Mack and scoring and going



down and getting the stops we need.

I think that brings us -- it's fun to play that way. It doesn't always happen that way. I think both pieces of it with the confidence, but knowing that they've done the work and now it's just a matter of getting on the floor and trying to execute the game plan as well as they can.

**Q. I know you said before when asked about last year that you are not looking back, only looking forward. Obviously your team has experienced disappointment from last year and made deep runs in this tournament. Having experienced both sides, does that perspective give you any benefit going into another big game like that?**

TERI MOREN: I think so. I think any time you fall short on a goal -- I mean, I think you've heard Mackenzie and I think Syd talk a little bit about having a chip. I think that all can be good to an extent.

Yeah, I go back to the fact that we're prepared for this moment. We would love to win all of them, but we know that that's probably not going to happen during the duration of the season.

But I think all of our times we've come up short on our schedule has taught us a lesson that we can take into this tournament but also having this tournament experience we understand how important the start is.

I talked to them a lot last year. I felt like in that Miami game we felt like we got off to a slow start, and so tomorrow night I think our start is going to have to be -- it is going to be critical to the game, how we'll do.

**Q. I know you already talked Oklahoma stylistically. They were the best team in the Big XII this year. So far the Big XII has had the most success in the tournament, 7-0. As a basketball conference as whole, what is it that makes the Big XII unique or what is it that special about them?**

TERI MOREN: Yeah, I don't know. I just think there is so much talent and parity right now in women's basketball. I don't know that you can just chalk it up to a particular conference.

They got great teams, right, in that league, but so does the Big and so does the ACC and so does the SEC. Yeah, so I don't know if you chalk it up to that conference as much as you caulk it up to women's basketball right now.

The parity, the madness that goes on with this tournament, the teams that aren't supposed to get beat that get beat,

that get upset.

We're seeing it on the men's side. We are going to see it on the women's side. I don't want take away from any the other of the great conferences we all have a chance play in, but they obviously have done well so far.

You know, we realize that they won their conference championship. We also realize this about this group: They can get down, as they were in the Texas game, and fight their way back. They're never out of it. So that's also what makes them a dangerous team.

And so we have a tremendous amount of respect for Oklahoma. We know we have to show up here and play a complete 40 minutes in order to have the result that we want.

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