

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Colorado vs Illinois

Friday, March 20, 2026

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Memorial Gymnasium

**Illinois Fighting Illini**

**Coach Shauna Green**

**Berry Wallace**

**Jasmine Brown-Hagger**

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon everybody. We have student-athletes Berry Wallace and Jasmine Brown-Hagger.

**Q. This is for both of you. I know Coach Green has said you're both leaders in this tournament for your team. What does that mean to you guys and then how are you sort of doing that on and off the court?**

JASMINE BROWN-HAGGER: I know for me, both Berry and I have been in this position before and we just know what it takes to win the first game and even what it takes to win the second game just having been in this that position, so for us, I think right now it's just leading by example and using our voices.

Everyone is excited, so just making sure we're both there to make sure everyone is grounded as well and knowing we still have a job that needs to be done.

BERRY WALLACE: Yeah, I think just doing what we've been doing all year. Me and Jas have worked together all year trying to lead the team, being good examples, and helping them through a new experience.

But just telling them that they're prepared for this game and this tournament and we have been in a lot of the high stakes game and played a lot of high level teams. Just reminding them they can just be themselves and know they're ready for this moment.

**Q. Have you done any pre-scouting on the court itself? Memorial with the raised floor, some teams and coaches have struggled with it over the years.**



Obviously between the lines it's a basketball court but have you looked at the history of this place or done any scouting on the venue itself?

BERRY WALLACE: I mean, we've been working manage practice just -- we're always -- when we are playing a great environment we are playing music in the background and making it loud to help prepare us and talking louder for the communication level.

Just been working with -- it's different having your bench on the baseline, so just doing that in practice and working with having to talk to each other and calling out the plays, our defensive coverages and things like that.

So I think that will help us, and just kind of getting used to how it'll be here.

**Q. For each of the players, you've been playing familiar foes. Jasmine, Big10 teams for a long time now. Is it nice to face somebody different and prepare for a team you don't know much about?**

JASMINE BROWN-HAGGER: Actually, yes, I kind of like it. Neither one of us know anything about each other that much. It's also two different dynamics of ball coming from Big10 to the Big12. I think in this position that we're in being in the Big10, I think we should wear that on our chest and go out there and play basketball the right way and hope for a good, competitive game.

**Q. Berry, your you thoughts on Colorado, as I'm sure you watched a lot of film on them this week?**

BERRY WALLACE: They're a great team. They made it to this place in the tournament for a reason. We been working on ourselves and preparing for all the different players. They can do a lot of different things.

So just focusing on our defense and how we're going to be able to stop them and focusing on what we can do on the defensive side I think is the biggest thing for our team.

And just knowing that they want to attack and they have a lot of players that can hit good shots, so just trying to take



away the things that they thrive on.

**Q. One more. Jasmine, you guys are very good shooting the three. They've been pretty good at trying to take away the three pointer. What have you seen a with their three point defense that could cause you guys some problem or how do you navigate that aspect of it?**

JASMINE BROWN-HAGGER: I'm sorry, can you reword that?

**Q. You guys are a very good three point shooting team and they're good at three point defense. How do you counter what they do defensively with trying to find success behind the Arkansas?**

JASMINE BROWN-HAGGER: For us we can score on all three levels of the court, threes around the falling we have an inside presence. We move the ball pretty well so I don't really think their defense is too concerning for us, in the can we get threes off, can we not get threes off.

We don't take contested threes. We take what the defense is giving to us. I think in that we just have to play solid and take what the defense is giving.

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by head coach Shauna Green. Open up for questions.

**Q. I think when you get to this level the difference between a No. 7 and a No. 10 seed is a lot smaller. How are you preparing your team heading into the Colorado game?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Yeah, any time you're in the NCAA tournament everyone obviously is a good team, right? 7, 10, it is, 8, 9, everyone is good. So you can't really worry about that.

You just got to prepare like you always do. So we're preparing for Colorado just like we prepare for everyone in the Big10, non-conference. We had a week to prepare, which is -- I mean, that's longer than normal. Feel like we've gotten a ton accomplished this week. Feel ready to go.

Obviously Colorado is a really good team and had some really big wins this year. So they're going to be a good test for us.

**Q. Shauna, to have your team back in the tournament a third time in your four seasons after losing four starters, how has the season come along? And the experience you do have back, how much does that**

**help you as you step into this stage of the season?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Yeah, I mean, losing pretty much our starting lineup last year and over 80% of our scoring and had a very veteran team; now we're the youngest team in the NCAA tournament right now. We're the youngest team in the Big10.

So a lot of these guys haven't been in this position, so it was nice. Even in our team meeting the other day, Jas and Berry stepped up and talked to the team about some of the things to be ready for in the tournament.

You know, the good thing about youth is sometimes you don't know what you don't know. They just come and they play. I'm really proud of us. A lot people might not have thought we would get here with such a young roster.

They continue to be resilient and step up and they'll be ready to go.

**Q. I cover Colorado. Looking at the stats, watching you guys a little bit, you're very good offensively, they're very good defensively. How do you kind of view that matchup?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Yeah, they're really good defensively and really like their length across the board. The things they do defensively to really try it to stifle neutralize teams.

So we understand obviously that's going to be a big key is taking care of the basketball against them, too. They are an elite team of trying to force turnovers and score off them. We got to really take care of the possessions.

The great thing about the Big10 is we've seen a lot of different styles and have seen teams that pressure and get up and the length.

So we've seen a lot of that. But I have a ton of respect for what they do defensively there. Just the length across the board, that's the biggest thing they present a lot of issues with. And their aggressiveness, getting after you with the ball.

**Q. Can you name a couple of their players that you're really watching this week as keys for you tomorrow night?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Yeah, their big three with obviously Masogayo and Wooten and Walker. They do the bulk of their scoring.

Greer, too. We recruited her for a while in high school and know what she brings off the bench. You just don't want

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

those guards to get going. You get Wooten going and that basket gets big and she plays with such a great deal of confidence and swag to her, which I love.

So we got to really do a good job of trying to, again, just make their life a little difficult. They come off a lot of ball screens so ton of respect. Really good guards and I think they're big inside are a little bit different than some of the Big10 bigs. A little bit longer. More mobile. Athletic.

They got a lot of really good pieces. Obviously that's why they're in the tournament.

**Q. You mentioned that a couple people might have thought you guys wouldn't make to this far. What are the pros to having a young roster?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Again, they don't -- with the senior roster last year it was sometimes you can -- this is my last assist or my -- so much pressure. Sometimes you can make the moment almost too big.

And then when they're young, I said they don't know what they don't know. Just like how hungry they are, it's been really fun to coach this group. They're so coachable. They want to be elite.

They're little sponges and listen to everything. You see them get better in real time. You could see some of your guys really improve even in games possession by possession.

So I just think it's been fun. They're a great group. Again, it's really different to coach a team that's 18, 19 as opposed to last year, they're 23. Might have had a couple 23 year olds. It's been a really fun year.

**Q. Have you ever been on the court at Memorial? The bench is on the end line. Do you pre scout how far the coach's box goes up the sideline to be ready for tomorrow night?**

SHAUNA GREEN: I didn't go that into detail. I played here as a college athlete and when they were really good, a long time ago, I think they were ranked third in the country when I played here and we got our butts kicked.

But I played a small D1 school so they should have kicked our butt.

And I coached here as an assistant coach when I was at Dayton. So I've been in this place a few times. Played here a few times. Never been a head coach here so be a little bit different.

We did some things in practice with having me stand at the end line and having our bench at the end line and trying to prepare for that and the communication piece is something we talk about all the time. Has to be a whole 'nother level here.

I think they changed it now when I was here I was an assistant. I don't think the coaches could go on the sideline. As a player I loved it. I couldn't hear you, Coach.

So when I'm yelling at them and they start saying they can't hear me I've already done that one as a player. You can hear me. (Laughter.)

**Q. You both lost a key player. They lost Kennedy Sanders and you lose Gretchen in this February. How have you adjusted the last ten games without Gretchen?**

SHAUNA GREEN: Unfortunately we went through this last year, too. Lost our point guard, an All-American and Gretchen last year, so two people last year. So with us this year it's the unfortunate part of sports. It sucks. Let's call it what it is for the player, our team, for everyone.

But you can't sit and feel sorry for yourself. They got next welcome up and we keep moving on. I thought this team, again for a young team really adjusted really well and other people got more opportunity and have really kind of taken that and ran with it.

So I'm proud of them how they dealt with that. With Gretchen it was a little bit different. Wasn't season ending. She tried to get back and wanted to play so badly. It just weekend never get her there.

So then we had to make that and then she decided to do the surgery. Yeah, both teams, it's just unfortunate. It's part of this game.

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