

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Columbia vs West Virginia

Friday, March 21, 2025

Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA

Carmichael Arena

West Virginia Mountaineers

Sydney Shaw

Jordan Harris

JJ Quinerly

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: We've got West Virginia. We have Sydney Shaw, JJ Quinerly, and Jordan Harrison. Questions, please.

Q. I guess for all of you, assuming you watched the game last night, what was the first thing that jumps out about Columbia?

SYDNEY SHAW: One thing that definitely stood out to us, or at least me, their ability to execute in the second half of the game. Once they settled in, they were really solid, so just making sure we stay on our As and Bs and just execute the same way they did.

JJ QUINERLY: I think they were a team that stayed together despite being down in the first half. They came back and won that game being together, so that was a good sight for us.

JORDAN HARRISON: For me it's definitely their toughness. Like JJ said, them coming back from being down at halftime, they played a tough game, and they stayed together.

Q. You mentioned toughness. That's been a staple for you guys too defensively. Kind of how do you go about matching that, and what do you expect from that?

JORDAN HARRISON: Yeah, just going out there and doing what we've been doing all year. Playing tough basketball. Like I said, they're playing tough too, so it's just a perfect matchup for us. So, yeah, we'll just stick to doing what we do and keep playing there.



Q. JJ, obviously before last night there was still a possibility you face one team or the other. How do you go about preparing for that? Did you focus on both? Just what was that like?

JJ QUINERLY: We kind of focused on both. I think it wasn't a time where we were going to focus on the team more than one until the game happened last night, so focused on both throughout the week and figured out who won yesterday. So now we focus more on Columbia.

Q. What is your first March Madness memory as a fan? Not as a player, but as a fan watching. Was it Arike's shot years ago, or what was your first memory of women's March Madness?

SYDNEY SHAW: Didn't Kamilla Cardoso hit a three? That was March Madness, right? Yeah, yeah. No? Oh, okay, okay. Let's move on. Go ahead.

JJ QUINERLY: I don't really have like a specific memory, but I just remember watching March Madness for the first time in elementary school with my elementary teacher.

JORDAN HARRISON: Mine is I can't remember the guard's name, but she played for Mississippi State. Is it Morgan? Yeah, she hit the shot against UConn, I believe. Yeah, so that was my introduction.

Q. JJ, did you get a final number ballpark how many people are going to come down from Virginia?

JJ QUINERLY: It was around, like, 30. Something like that. Maybe 50 (laughing).

Q. How different is that? Obviously in Iowa City last year there wasn't a ton of WV fans that made that trip. How different is that going to be that there is going to be a section of supporters this year?

JJ QUINERLY: I think we feed off that fan base energy. Especially like at home, our energy with our fans is great. Just having them here to support us will be amazing.

Q. This can go for any of you, but watching Columbia last night, they played pressure, but they played pressure differently than the way you guys do. They want to get something completely different out of it. So when you have that mindset for yourself defensively, how do you have to, I guess, change the way you approach the game then to try to attack what they do?

JORDAN HARRISON: I would say honestly, yeah, they play like a different pressure defense than we do. Their press kind of starts at the free-throw line, where ours is wherever you go, we go. But I think, honestly, like attacking their pressure, we just have to try to pass it through, get it to the middle. Then I feel like for them, honestly, I would say we just got to make sure that we just deny the ball, especially from out of No. 10. We're trying to get somebody else to handle the ball a little bit more to make it harder for them.

JJ QUINERLY: I will definitely stay true to what we do. Our pressure has been good for us all year, so just stay with that. Then against their pressure I think our quickness. We have a lot of guards that can handle the ball. We have Kyah that can bring the ball up the court. We have a lot of people that can handle it, bring the ball up, passing through it, same as Jordan said.

SYDNEY SHAW: I think it's to be expected. They pressure differently because two different conferences, but just staying true to who we are and what we do will get us through the game.

Q. JJ, I know you've kind of downplayed your individual accomplishments, but you look at your scoring average. You look at the numbers for your career. You're averaging around 21 for the season. You're 19 away from that 2,000 point mark. Just to look across the board and look over the last four years, what's the feeling like coming into this weekend just knowing how far the program has come since you've been a part of it?

JJ QUINERLY: Honestly I'm just ready to enjoy the moment. It's my last dance, so ready to show people what I can do.

Q. I guess for Jordan and JJ, what do you take out of last year's tournament and obviously that environment was crazy, but what do you take out of that that you have learned that will either make you better this year or maybe more prepared for this?

JORDAN HARRISON: I would definitely say the crowd for sure. Getting that experience playing in front of that many

people I think will help us this year in the tournament.

JJ QUINERLY: I would think just us staying together, trying to control what we can control, and not worried about outside things, like the refs.

Q. Speaking of last year, you guys drew Princeton in the first round last year. Now you've got Columbia. Did that cross your mind when you saw the results of last night that you were getting an Ivy League team again? Do you see any similarities as far back as you remember from last year?

JJ QUINERLY: I mean, some similarities, but at the end of the day it's just basketball games, another team, another game. Just got to go out there and play and do what we need to do.

JORDAN HARRISON: Basically what JJ said. I mean, they come across our mind that we're playing another Ivy League team first, but I think they kind of are similar with, like, toughness. I feel like all Ivy League teams are unexpectedly tough, tougher than people think they are, so yeah.

Q. It's going to be two weeks since you guys have played, so what do you do in that time to make sure there's no rust and then how important is the first few minutes tomorrow just because obviously they just played, so you think they're going to be kind of ready to go.

SYDNEY SHAW: I think we've done a pretty good job making sure we get up and down and get game reps just to make sure we stay in rhythm and we don't come out here and look like it's been two weeks since we played.

So the first couple of minutes is to be expected that we're going to have to settle down a little bit, but the quick earn we settle in, I think -- yeah (laughing).

Q. As far as the atmosphere goes, you guys are used to playing in the Coliseum. It's been a great home court advantage this year. You just got done playing in Kansas City. Carmichael Arena is not as big as the Coliseum or where you would have played in the Big 12 Tournament, and the fans are right on top of you. So mindset-wise, how do you guys prepare? I know Iowa City was crazy last year. There's not a lot that's going to match that, but how do you prepare to know you're going to have your fans right top of you, but the Columbia fans are going to be down there as well?

JJ QUINERLY: We just have to stay locked in with each other. Whoever is on the court, that's who we're playing

for. All the outside noise really don't matter.

JORDAN HARRISON: Yeah, exactly what she said.

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