

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Miami (OH) vs West Virginia

Saturday, March 21, 2026

Morgantown, West Virginia, USA

Hope Coliseum

West Virginia Mountaineers

Coach Mark Kellogg

Jordan Harrison

Meme Wheeler

Media Conference

West Virginia 82, Miami Ohio 54

THE MODERATOR: Coach Kellogg will begin with an opening statement. We'll then take questions for our student-athletes Jordan Harrison and Meme Wheeler.

MARK KELLOGG: Thank you. Appreciate everybody. What a great environment. We felt that was coming. It was electric. It was everything I think that you would want. I told them the other day to walk out there the first time, look up there, enjoy it. See it. You've earned the right to play in front of a crowd like that and then didn't look up there anymore and focus on the task at hand.

Very appreciative of everybody coming. Let's run it back on Monday, maybe, I guess would be the challenge now to see if we can do that again because that was special for all of us and an opportunity to reflect and even through my whole year and end up at this point at home hosting an NCAA Tournament game was really, really special.

And then from there, I thought, yeah, I thought we settled in pretty quickly. I thought the start to the game was good. A little bit through the first quarter, I thought we got a little stagnant, lost our way just a hair.

Loved the second quarter response. I thought Jordan settled in really quickly, got us going. The third quarter was, at times, at our best and when we're really, really good to get the four in double figures is also us when we're clicking the best offensively as that ball gets moved and shared.

I thought all four of those guys that got to double figures



had really good nights. I thought CC and Woodley off the bench were really good for us and gave us some great minutes. Did a good enough job defensively and we'll move forward and know we have to play a little bit better probable. But certainly got the first win out of the way and feel good about that.

Q. Jordan, address the atmosphere, what that was like and the feeding frenzy that you guys do all the time but are with this atmosphere, how much did that impact it?

JORDAN HARRISON: Yeah, a lot. I think we definitely feed off the crowd's energy. I know the first time walking out there in warmups, to hear them cheer for us was kind of crazy. I looked back at Shaw and was like can you believe this? It was great. I appreciate everybody for coming out and as a player, it's so competing to play in front of that many fans.

MEME WALKER: Yeah, for sure. When I came out, I was like -- I was kind of struck. We got people up in the 200 sections. I just looked all the way up and I looked at CC and I was like you ready to do it? And she was like yeah. It brought excitement to us to see everybody come and support us. The fans show love, it was amazing.

Q. Jordan, what kind of sparked that run at the end of the first quarter and into the second there where you guys kind of took control?

JORDAN HARRISON: I think it's just us settling in. We haven't played if like two weeks so getting back comfortable, playing how we play. That was just how we would normally play, it was just us settling in and finally taking in everything and starting to play our game.

Q. Obviously you guys came in as the heavy favorite at home. What was the tone, the conversation even in the huddle when they were trading some punches or even able to take a brief lead early in the game?

MEME WALKER: Just to keep going and telling each other we have to stick to what we know and playing hard. They're going to go on a run. They're good shooters so they went on a run but we wanted to make sure we kept



our pace and just kept playing as a team.

Q. Jordan, how easy is it for you to play your game when Sydney Shaw is driving to the basket and getting back to back and ones and three-point plays? How easy is it for you?

JORDAN HARRISON: I mean a lot easier. I always tell Shaw just get to the basket. You're either going to make it or they're going to foul you. But I love seeing her get to the basket. She's known for her shooting and her midrange. But seeing her do that and I'm not like me and Gia are not the only guards going in there, having her go in there just makes her a threat, a huge threat. That just helps us out and makes it hard on the defense.

Q. Just talk about, I guess, the comfortability of being able to host the tournament games here. Of course maybe that's what it looked like in the third quarter for you guys, maybe settling in and getting comfortable. Was that kind of what it was like being able to host that now, just being comfortable with it?

MEME WALKER: For sure. Past times I was the underdog in March Madness so coming in today and just seeing us being able to be on our home floor, we're grateful for that and I also just let my team know just because we're home doesn't mean we're comfortable. I have been on the other side and my coach was the one telling us you can come in and take it. We didn't want anybody to come in and take it.

It was definitely the best of both worlds and being able to get into the atmosphere was great.

Q. Jordan, your drive at the end of the third quarter, you kind of gave a signal after. Was that just a moment of just, hey, this is going the way it should be?

JORDAN HARRISON: Yeah, it's March. All the emotions, all the feels, they're there. I was just happy to see the ball go in, to be quite honest.

Q. Meme, at the end of the half, you got a steal and went coast-to-coast on the fast break. Can you take us through that? Had you done that before?

MEME WALKER: Yeah, I've done that before for sure, but I got the steal and then I was dribbling and Gia and Wood wasn't looking at me so I was like uh, I might as well keep going. And I got a little closer to the rim and I'm like wait a minute, you're already here, might as well go up and I turned around, I was like yep. I knew the fans were going to be excited. I knew my teammates were going to be

excited because who doesn't love to see the big dribble up the court?

Q. What about your coach? Were you worried? Would want oh, no. Coach Kellogg got my back for sure (Laughter).

Q. Meme, talking about CC, how big of a spark does she provide off the bench for you guys in this first round game?

MEME WALKER: CC's amazing off the bunch. She's always coming in ready. She's a great passer. She opens up the floor a lot. Me and her being in a tandem and being able to read each other has been amazing just with this one year we had together. CC put in great minutes. I think she puts in great minutes every time she steps on the floor.

Q. Jordan, going back to the crowd, how awesome was it to have two buzzer-beaters in front of this crowd the way that it was. What did that moment feel like?

JORDAN HARRISON: It was exciting. Definitely hearing that roar after you make a shot, oh, wait, hold on. There's a lot of people in here. But, yeah, definitely exciting. I'm feeling all the emotions like I keep saying. I love playing in front of that many people. I'll take that any day.

Q. You got this win under your belt, ended up being a comfortable victory but as you mentioned, it's March. You don't just want one victory. You have to play Monday. How do you now reset yourself, come down from this emotional high and what's the mentality going into the game against Kentucky because that's going to be a different animal even though you're still going to be at home.

MEME WALKER: Definitely talk about surviving and advancing. Of course that felt good but that's behind us. We got goals to finish and I think we did a good job this year of putting everything we accomplished behind us because we knew that we're hungry for more. Today, we're going to take today, maybe even tonight but we need to move on tomorrow and be ready for the next opponent.

JORDAN HARRISON: Like Meme said, I feel like also the Big 12 Tournament helped us with that too. You play today and then you play the next day. We know we have a good opponent coming up. The goal was never to win one game, it was to win two and keep advancing from there. Like Meme said, just bringing ourselves back down. We'll be happy about this for probably an hour or two, at least I know I will, and then I'll be ready for the next one.

Q. Jordan, yesterday Coach Box was saying Tamar

Singer is kind of an extension for himself on the court. Do you feel that way for Coach Kellogg and that team from a leadership standpoint?

JORDAN HARRISON: Yeah, that's what I think point guards are, an extension of the coach on the floor. I think me and Coach Kellogg being together for four years, our chemistry, I know what he wants and you just got to give me the signal or whatnot to make sure the team is doing what they're supposed to do. But, yeah, I think that's just natural and normal. Me and Coach Kellogg has the relationship that makes that pretty easy.

THE MODERATOR: All right student-athletes, thank you very much. We'll let you go.

All right, questions for Coach Kellogg?

Q. Coach, start a little bit, you expressed your thoughts of the excitement and the crowd. I'm sure at times you envisioned what it would be like hosting a game, 13,000-plus in here. Did that meet that? Exceed? Come below it? What were your thoughts on how this really played out?

MARK KELLOGG: I guess it met what the expectation would be. We hadn't seen it yet so you're always kind of in dream mode and I think when we took over three years ago, you have ideas, you have goals, you have visions where you want to get your program. That was certainly one of them. I've talked a lot about that Iowa game and being that experienced and playing in front of 15,000 and getting to the second game and how loud it was and what a great environment.

And if that's the rules, if that's how the NCAA has it set up, let's try to get that thing in Morgantown. I said that numerous times. Said it again last year about this time after we had to go on the road and play North Carolina. As I've said, it doesn't guarantee us anything, but for our program, for women's basketball, for our state to get basketball going again here, yeah, it's special. Literally in a lot of ways, I woke up at peace excited about it. So happy for our kids.

I was a DII grinder for a long time. We hosted some DII regionals and had some packed gyms, but nothing like this one. Just, yeah, so many emotions honestly when I woke up today. I was in our practice shoot, some free throws and messing around, reminding me what this ball has done. It's taken me all over the world. I have coached unbelievable people. I have had great staff. My family's been through all with me, every step of the way. To kind of see it start to unfold.

I was looking out my window three and a half hours before the game and people are lined up to watch our team play. There's a little emotion tied to that probably.

Q. You mentioned CC and Woodley coming in. It seemed like they kind of sparked that run there in the first, especially Woodley's defense in the press.

MARK KELLOGG: Yep. That's what Woodley can do. She's kind of an instance defense. We talk about instant offense a lot but Woodley can come in and change the game in a hurry. She was really, really good. CC was great. When you look at their plus minus they were in when we made the big run, we got out and got in transition a little bit. Made some shots, got some easier looks finally. I thought our offense stalled a little in the half court at times, so that allowed us to at least get it moving a little bit.

Q. Coach, I saw you down there on the floor watching a little bit of the game prior, the Kentucky JMU game at least in the first half. How much were you able to watch the game, scout the game, or catch yourself kind of just taking this the atmosphere? You didn't get all your fans in there yet but I imagine that was a little bit of a unique experience trying to scout. But you're at home and you're previewing the next game.

What were you able to glean from that? What were you able to take away from that? How was that trying to scout a team while you're at home in the midst of a historic event and not let your mind wonder from just this is really cool?

MARK KELLOGG: It probably did a few times. I would be lying if I said it didn't. It was all of those things, yes. I was watching a little bit. We have assistants assigned to scouting reports so they were probably going to be a little more in depth than I was, but it's different when you watch people play live so you're just trying to peck up on some tendencies so what advertise it look like in realtime as opposed to films.

There were times in time-outs I would look up and see it start to fill in a little bit more and that kind of goes away a little bit so it's not like the first time I come out with three minutes to go, this is the first time I have seen the building like that. All of those emotions but probably thinking a little bit more about Miami Ohio if I'm being honest than Kentucky. Although I was watching and trying to take a few notes but Coach Carter has that scout so I'll let him do the brunt of it.

Q. Talk about that end of the first quarter run that bled over to the second quarter. How much of a momentum swing was that for you guys leading into the middle of the second quarter leading into halftime?

MARK KELLOGG: Big, obviously. Settled us. I think we got it to double digits through that stretch and kind of extended it. Had it all the way to 17 right before they hit that three and that place was ready to explode. We were loud and then we had the missed coverage and they hit the three. We would have really run into that locker room with all sorts of juice at that point and we still felt good even at halftime.

But, yeah, that stretch was probably the separator. We can do that, we can go on a 9-0, 10-0, 11-0 run sometimes pretty quick and it doesn't end the game by any stretch but it certainly can be difficult to come back.

Q. How much did Sydney's game -- I don't want to say change but maybe it did kind of change today, the fact that it wasn't just dependant on three-pointers and needn't rebounds and maybe it might have been one of her better all around kind of games.

MARK KELLOGG: Yeah, I thought she was really, really good. I don't know if it changed. We've seen it. Not as much as we probably want at times, but, yeah, just to be aggressive and find different ways to score. As Jordan alluded to earlier, she's probably known a little bit more for her three-point shooting and some of her mid-range game but there is an ability to get to the rim and then she did that, had, what? Two and ones probably at least and a really good free throw shooter. She got fouled on the three.

Just found different ways to score for us and get involved with the rebounding was huge.

Q. I know you were just talking about the assistants have a majority of the scout for the Kentucky game on Monday but what are your first impressions of that game and what are you expecting heading into it?

MARK KELLOGG: Obviously their length can be a separator. Strack's an All-American caliber player but Key's phenomenal. Tonie running the point guard is really good and just kind of controls the whole dynamic. The shooting around the length can create some problems.

Really well-coached. Obviously Kenny has been at this for a while and had all sorts of success. Big challenge but that's what happens. We're in the round of 32. You're getting 32 of the best teams in the country. It will be competitive. We'll be competed to play it. They'll be excited. Should be a really, really high quality women's college basketball game.

Q. You shot 51% from the field, 50% from three. In

your view, what allowed you to be so efficient offensively?

MARK KELLOGG: Getting the right shots by the right people at the right time in the right shots at the floor. It's what we talk about quite a bit and just understanding what those are. It was good for us to see it go through. That's for sure. We wanted to make some early and see the ball go through and not just be in a grind it out defensive battle in this one if we could.

Q. How important is it on the future side of things when you're able to play a game like this with the crowd getting everybody in the game at least for a little bit? How important is that?

MARK KELLOGG: Yeah, important. It's great that all of them get NCAA Tournament experience. Whether it's for this year to help us Monday, following years. Yeah, we did what we needed to do. Got the comfortable lead. Got to rest some of them in that fourth quarter. I think everybody now feels it. I think you settle down after the first one, too, a little bit.

And now it feels a little more like a basketball, Big 12 Tournament. You're just advancing. We understand what happens if you don't take care of business, but just another opportunity to advance to a Sweet 16, which would be the second one and the first time we've ever won multiple games in the NCAA Tournament. So great opportunity in front of us.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you very much. We'll see you tomorrow.

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