

Women's Basketball Invitation Tournament: Columbia vs Wisconsin

Sunday, March 29, 2026

Wichita, Kansas, USA

Charles Koch Arena

Columbia Lions

Megan Griffith

Perri Page

Riley Weiss

Semifinal Pregame Press Conference



played her back in Missouri in '17 or '18 -- it was a while ago -- '21. We had a great battle earlier on when I was here at Columbia.

Looking forward to the matchup. It's going to be a lot of fun.

Q. Kind of any memories in particular from that 2021 game? Have your paths kind of crossed at all, whether it's recruiting or anything else?

MEGAN GRIFFITH: Actually, we have a transfer on our team that came from Missouri, junior Hilke Feldrappe. She is from Germany, from Berlin, played for Robin for two years. We are fortunate to get her knowledge and brain of what Robin's system is.

Also, back when we played -- that was when they had -- what was the player's name that went to Baylor? They had two forwards in Hayley Frank. They had a great -- it was a really, really nice team. Mama Dembele was their point guard. We had a really good team that year. Perri, were you a freshman? No, gosh, that was a while ago.

I like what she runs. She runs a good system, good action, a lot of misdirection, a lot of screening off the ball. Robin and I don't know each other personally that well, but like I said, I've always thought she was running good stuff from afar.

Q. What do you think it says about the Ivy League that you guys are here and Harvard obviously making it to the quarterfinals as well?

PERRI PAGE: I think the Ivy League is very respectable, and we're making a name for ourselves, especially over the course of the four years that I've been here.

I think you're going to see some fun basketball tomorrow night too.

RILEY WEISS: Echoing what Perri said, obviously any basketball team that's playing this time of the year, it's really great. Yeah, just -- I think it shows that the Ivy League has some really great teams and really great

THE MODERATOR: I want to welcome everybody to the WBIT press conference. With us here from Columbia, we have Coach Megan Griffith, Perri Page, and Riley Weiss.

MEGAN GRIFFITH: Thank you everybody for having us here. This is a great experience so far. It's been a long few days on the road, but we're very excited to attack this tournament together and being here with these other three great teams.

I'm excited, one, for you to hear from Perri and Riley, because I think they have a lot of great things to say about Columbia and our program. We're looking forward to getting started tomorrow.

Q. Megan, kind of looking at Wisconsin on tape, what stands out to you the most about them? Is there anything in particular you've noticed that's different about them the last three games versus the previous ten?

MEGAN GRIFFITH: I think they're starting to find their stride, much like us. That's always fun that you want to be playing your best basketball this time of year. You're seeing, I think, a very confident team.

They've also been in a lot of close games. So watching the end of that Harvard game -- Harvard, conversely, has been obviously down and coming back in a lot of games. So it was unique to see how that played out for them.

A really trusted point guard. They play four guards, super interchangeable with a dynamic center. It's a fun team to watch and scout. I have a lot of respect for Robin. We



players. Yeah, excited for Monday.

Q. I have two questions. Perri, I would love to hear your thoughts about Riley really coming into her own, breaking records that Abbey Hsu, who was once a mentor, set. Coming into her own and finding her voice as a leader.

PERRI PAGE: Seriously, I think Riley has shown a lot of growth even from last year to this year as well. When Riley came in as a freshman, I think she was a little bit nervous, a little bit shy of herself in speaking and talking and using her voice to understand.

I think she's really separated herself. We talked a lot this past summer what our goals were and what we wanted to accomplish this year and what we needed from each other. I think she's really stepped into that, and we've been a lot more connected this year.

I've been very proud to see the growth, and I can't wait to see what it is next year and also following this WBIT event.

Q. My other question for Coach Griffith, Wichita is notoriously a basketball city. I would just love to know your thoughts about Wichita and how they've really welcomed women's basketball and the team into the city.

MEGAN GRIFFITH: We were greeted immediately by a younger team that actually came to our practice yesterday. That was great just to have a little bit of a home welcome, just to feel like, hey, this is a place that we can really be us and be embraced by the community.

Also, I would just say that everyone I've met, super friendly. We went out to Chicken and Pickle last night. The team had a great time. We were watching a lot of basketball. The people at our hotel are fantastic, the wait staff.

So everybody here has been topnotch so far, and I'm looking forward to see what the community brings out tomorrow.

Q. What does still being able to play in end of March, what does that extra kind of practice time and true game time kind of really give you guys?

MEGAN GRIFFITH: It's invaluable. One thing that is -- I don't know if it's known about the Ivy League is that we don't practice in the summertimes together. We actually start a little bit later. If you take your full eight weeks, we're almost two months behind a lot of other programs.

So what we're trying to do in the bulk of our season,

especially early, is prove ourselves, our resume for March in November, in December, which December is always hard to get really good games. November we're always trying to prove ourselves to be in the postseason.

What this does is allows us to play on a great stage in front of a lot of people and show the brand of basketball and what Columbia can do because I do think it's one of the best programs in the country. I just want us to continue to grow with this young backcourt group.

Perri and Susie, obviously being seniors, have led us quite a lot this year, but for Riley, Mia, Nasi, for all of them to get this spotlight right now is just pivotal for us to really propel into next year's goals.

Q. I've got a couple questions. I'll start with Riley and Perri. For both of you guys, with Mia sliding into the starting lineup for this tournament, I'm just curious what have you liked most about how she's playing, and how was what she's doing made your jobs easier and your roles?

PERRI PAGE: I love Mia. I think Mia's been a dog. I think she also has been pushing the pace on our offense a lot more and like really looking at us early in transition as well. I think she's been doing a great job of that.

Also, like knowing when she needs to score and when to look for us, I think she's doing a great job of that. And also being a great energy giver. That's always a great way for us to stay connected on the court, but I think she's doing a great job.

RILEY WEISS: I agree. Mia is super great to play with. She's super fun. Like Perri said, she pushes the pace, she moves the ball up the floor, and she has great energy.

She stretches the floor because she's a great shooter, a great scorer as well. So it's been really great to play with her a lot more.

Q. Sticking with both of you, Meg talked a lot with us over the season about kind of the importance of focusing on the process over the results. Just curious, is that something you feel like you've been able to do more in this WBIT? If so, what do you think has made the difference there?

PERRI PAGE: I would say, yeah, talking a little bit more about the process and not necessarily the results, I mean, obviously the regular season championship and the Ivy League tournament championship was a heart breaking loss for us, especially against the same opponent.



Now we need to focus on what's in front of us and being where our two feet are. So I think understanding what was needed from us as a team and what our roles that are shifting, especially with Maria and Fliss out. It was a big thing for us just to collectively come together, understand like what do we need to do in order to come into this WBIT run.

RILEY WEISS: Yeah, I feel like you covered that. Like Perri said, new roles in that sense without Fliss and Maria playing. Also, yes, taking it day by day, obviously it's a little bit of a different journey than we originally obviously wanted and expected, but just embracing that new journey and taking it day by day, practice by practice, and just being grateful that we're still playing basketball in late March.

Q. Meg, just one for you, you talked about how the pressure kind of came off this team in the WBIT after getting out of the Ivy League season. Your first two games in the WBIT were blowouts, but then the Cal game, you had some game pressure at the end of the game. I'm curious what it told you about your team watching them handle a different kind of pressure maybe, but again in the WBIT?

MEGAN GRIFFITH: I would just say that it's been, I think clear headed. We talk a lot about having Blue heads in this program. I think Perri, especially these two to my left, have really demonstrated what that looks like, what that means.

For us, it's about being calm and poised, trusting the system, trusting the decisions that were being made. Obviously having Perri in the end of any close game is helpful. She's now had four go ahead buckets in close games for us this season. Then Riley, who can just create a shot or use her to draw the defense in a different way. It's a lot of fun. It's a coach's dream to have players like that that can make plays.

Again, I think they just really -- they're just really trusting, like I said, of the system and of each other, and that's the most important thing right now. That's the deadliest weapon you can have in March and April.

Q. For the players, I was wondering if you could just reflect at all on what the travel schedule of a postseason has been like? Obviously it's not easy to be an Ivy League student and to be sort of on the road for two, almost three weeks straight now. I was wondering if you could reflect on that at all.

RILEY WEISS: Obviously school is still going on, but my professors, at least personally, and I think the team, the

majority can speak on this too, professors have been super supportive and super understanding with schoolwork as well. Yeah, I think it's been pretty good.

PERRI PAGE: I think the Columbia community overall has been very supportive in our journey here. We literally packed our bags for ten days. So just being able to move onto the next thing but also having professors who are super welcoming in what we're doing and being able to be compromising with their syllabus and things like that.

Q. Coach, I was wondering if you could reflect at all on obviously the news that Carla Berube is moving on to Northwestern. Feels like a massive shock -- not shock, but change for the Ivy League. I was wondering if you could reflect on that at all.

MEGAN GRIFFITH: Yeah, good for Carla. Congrats, Carla. I shot her a text right away and said congrats. She said she's always rooting for us.

Obviously I have tremendous respect for how she's run the Princeton program for the last several years. She's got a tall task ahead of her at Northwestern, which I'm sure she's excited to attack.

I think, just like anything, there's always change. We're going to be ready for whoever is going to take over the helm at Princeton next. I'm happy for her. That's all I can say.

Q. Two questions here. I'll start off with Coach. You went to the WNIT finals a couple of years ago. Now you're in the Final Four for the WBIT. What can you take from that run that has helped you into this run?

MEGAN GRIFFITH: So many things. Perri was a first year then for us, and I think she got to see what it takes to play deep into March and to April 1st, which is kind of poetic that we're back in Kansas to finish the job this time.

I would just say that it's a journey, and you just really have to embrace what's in front of you and be ready to attack the next thing. These tournaments with the quick turnarounds and just playing opponents that you don't see all the time -- obviously for Kansas and BYU, that's a little different, having to face each other, which it would have been if Harvard were to have beaten Wisconsin.

You get to learn a lot about the game. I love watching great coaches and what they get to run with their program. It's a lot of learning right now, but you just have to again take it day by day. The longer you do this, now that I'm in my tenth year at Columbia, everything just slows down. So I feel like you're able to take in stride what you're going to

do and what practice looks like day to day and just the needs of your players and injury staff.

I feel more ready than ever to go win this thing.

Q. One for Perri that I have, Coach mentioned it right there about how you were a part of that team that went all the way to the WNIT Finals. Been part of a couple of NCAA Tournaments. What is this program like for you to be able to participate in the postseason and make a couple of deep postseason runs every single year, it seems like?

PERRI PAGE: That's the reason I came here, right? Also understanding Coach G's vision and what she has for this program is the reason I came to Columbia and we set out to do this. Also, just being able to play our best basketball and understand that's how you win in March is being able to move on to the next thing.

I think each team that I've been on has done a really good job of that, but I'm really excited to see what this team does.

Q. This one is both for Riley and Coach. We had Perri talk about Riley's growth a little bit. Now I wanted to ask each of you about just the growth and development that you've seen from Riley, one, throughout your career, but then also this season specifically?

MEGAN GRIFFITH: You said about Riley or Perri?

Q. Riley.

MEGAN GRIFFITH: Riley, I would just say is a really unique player. Recruiting Riley, I recruited her out of high school pretty early, and I remember talking to her father quite a lot about just her toughness and how that would translate to the next level.

From a skill standpoint, she's one of the most skilled players I've ever recruited. I personally think she's one of the best players in the country, one of the best scorers in the country. I remember she came to a camp one summer and played with our players a little bit, and I was like, oh, she's going to be just fine. She's going to be a star here. She's going to break all kinds of records.

Even Abbey Hsu, who was our first player to be drafted by the W, said she's better than me, Coach. That's a big compliment right there. I would just say I think the world of Riley, but Riley knows no one is going to be harder on her than I am, and I just know there's way more to come.

I think we're seeing a way more dynamic version of her this year. She's defending. She's scoring at four levels, which not many people in the NCAA can do. She does that all and plays 30, 35 minutes a game. I would just say the best of her is to come, but we're seeing a good glimpse of that in this postseason.

RILEY WEISS: Thank you, Coach G.

Yeah, I think my teammates and coaching staff have really empowered me to use my voice. So it's really help me grow in that sense. Also, as well having Fliss and Maria not playing with us on the court has been a challenge for me to step up more vocally and also just having the ball in my hands more.

Yeah, it's been honestly a really great challenge for me to allow me to grow in this postseason run.

Q. For you guys to have as much defensive success as you guys have had, what's been -- particularly with steals kind of, what's been the key in terms of being that disruptive with opposing offenses?

MEGAN GRIFFITH: Perri Page.

(Laughter).

But seriously, yeah, Perri Page. I would just say that every team's identity is solidified by its leader. Once Perri took over this team, we became a defensive team. Last year we were an offensive team. Largely a lot of my teams have been offensive minded and begrudgingly played some defense too.

For Perri to be our catalyst and the point of attack on both ends for us is really special. For her to lead us defensively -- we've just done so many different things this year that we've never done in the past. That's been introspective of my staff as well. I've given them a lot of credit. I have a great staff who's constantly trying to learn and figure out how we can make the most out of this team.

We graduated the two leading assist players in the Ivy League last year, so for us playmaking was going to be different. So we learned how to play through our forwards a little bit more this year. I would just say that Perri's defense has really translated and led us into our offensive attack. So I would start and end with Perri there.

Q. Meg, following up on the question early on about Wisconsin's personnel, they had four players in double figures against Harvard. Is there a particular matchup that you feel is going to be most important to win defensively? What do you think are the biggest keys

there?

MEGAN GRIFFITH: I do think the toughness, like rebounding, 50-50 battles is going to be big in this game. I think just in postseason in general, for us to go out and outrebound Cal by 13 or 14, I think was a big deal. Same here, I think that's going to be a big one, limiting shots, contesting them.

In terms of direct matchups, I think they have a lot of talented players. I know a lot of them. We've recruited some of them. But I think No. 20 and No. 1, obviously, whoa are leading them in scoring, your stars shine the brightest in the biggest games. So I would just say I think they're going to be really pivotal in getting them and making the big shots that they need because I've seen them do it repeatedly.

Then their center, No. 15 and No. 6, having those two sort of being at the lynchpin of their offense is also, I think, really pivotal. We saw that really similar with Cal with Sakima Walker.

I think we're ready for that, but I'm excited. I'm excited to see these players step up on both sides and really get after it tomorrow.

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