



2014 NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

First Round · #5 North Carolina State vs. #12 BYU

Pauley Pavilion · Los Angeles, Calif.

Friday, March 21

FIRST PRACTICE DAY QUOTES – BYU

Jeff Judkins, BYU Head Coach

Opening Statement

"Well, first of all we're excited to be here. We've had a great season so far and all the teams that make the tournament have sacrificed and worked hard together to be able to be here. We're also excited to be in LA. We feel like it's a great place to play. What tradition to be able to play on the same court as Lew Alcindor and Bill Walton and some of these guys that, in my young days when I watched them and played against them in the pros, it was kind of nice. Second, to be able to play NC State, who—a lot of you don't know this, but one of my players, Morgan Bailey, her uncle is Thurl Bailey, who played for NC State. So it's just a great opportunity for us to be able to play a great program and Coach (Wes Moore) is awesome. They're very good and we have to play our best to beat them. And last but not least, it's nice to have this much media. We don't get that much, so it's really nice to be able to get a little coverage, you know, to tell people about our program. We're excited about it. We're excited about what we have accomplished so far and as you probably know I'm so lucky to coach these two young ladies. They're great players, but they're smart, they're hard workers and they really care about their team and performing not just for themselves, but for me and everything. So we're excited. Hopefully it'll be a great game tomorrow."

On what team has done to improve ball pressure since WCC Tournament

"Well, we've taken a lot of practice days and really worked on some of the things that we felt we didn't play as well in the tournament. It's nice to have boy practice players that can do that kind of pressure. We feel really good about it. We feel we've worked on it and kind of better—hopefully we can do it. It's kind of like you prepare, but until that moment comes, you have to be able to perform and you don't know it until you get out there. I think one thing Kim (Beeston) said is true. I think NC State is very similar to us, the way they play. They have great inside presence, they will pressure, but that's not their whole game. Their game is their four-man motion and moving the ball around and getting it inside and rebounding. If you ask me what I'm more concerned about, I'm more concerned about their rebounding than their pressure because they just dominate the glass so we just have to do a great job on that."

On how team differs from that of two years ago

"Well first of all, Jen—I've been at BYU for 13 years and she's probably the best post I've coached in a long time. She creates so many different problems for teams. She's a great passer, she can shoot it, she can score with people playing behind her. She can score in a lot of different ways. And then defensively, she led the country in blocked shots, so she does a great

job with anticipating and helping out. This team is real balanced. Probably the biggest difference, we have people that can score when we need to and take advantage of it. I always believe you got to have three good offensive players to be good. You have to have inside presence, which we have with Jen, and then Lexi (Eaton) is one that can create her own shot. You don't see that a lot in women's basketball as much as men's, but it's getting better, to create their own shot and make people double-team. And then you have to have someone who can shoot and I think Kim (Beeston) fills that role. If you sag off her, she's a good enough shooter, she's going to make it. And so this team is more balanced than the team I had two years ago. Haley (Steed) handled the ball a lot more. Now my little point guard, she gets us in our offense and really kind of lets everyone else do their thing. And this team believes in themselves. I'm not saying the other team didn't, but this team believes that if they play their game and execute what they're doing, then they're a tough team to beat. And we got some experience. I think that's helped. You mentioned that NC State does not have anybody in the tournament. These two played. They know what it is and what it means and how hard it is to really get here. So hopefully that'll make a difference."

On lack of depth for both teams and role tempo will play in game

"I think it's one of the keys of the game, is what team can survive having to have their best players sitting on the bench. That was probably our biggest weakness is our inside depth. We lost a kid to an injury. We also lost a kid we had that would have really helped us but didn't have the grades to be able to get in school. That's kind of been our problem if Jen or Bay (Morgan Bailey) get in foul trouble. It's hard and I know North Carolina State is the same, you're right. (Markeisha) Gatling, she didn't play there, it affected their team, because of her inside presence. It fouls up the whole rotation. People don't realize that. It's not just you can't replace a kid, it's now who replaces that kid and so forth. So it'll be interesting. It'll be really interesting to see what happens. I think both of us kind of have something up our sleeve if that happens, but we hope we don't have to. We hope the referees will let us play. I don't want it to be a fight, but I want it not to be where it's ticky-tacky. I hope it's a good mixture and I hope if we do that, it'll be a fun game for really both teams. It's funny, you got a tall center who's long and lanky and then Gatling, who is powerful and strong. It's going to be interesting to see who wins the battle. And I don't think that's going to decide the game, but I think it's going to make a big difference, really what happens in the game tomorrow."

On Markeisha Gatling and team's strategy to stop her

"Well we're going to try to do our best. She is strong and she's smart and their team looks to her and she knows how to get position. The key is hopefully you get her out of rhythm, you get her off the comfortable place where she wants to be and then you hope—this is what's scary—I've done this before in the NCAA, you worry about one player and North Carolina State didn't get here just because of her. They have a lot of good players who can step it up anytime in any situation and make baskets, so as we look at this, we look at it and say we've got to play a real balanced game and not let—their outside players are good—they don't get enough credit for what they do shooting, driving, rebounding, defending and so we have to do a real good job on their whole team and everything. So it'll be interesting. You don't know until tip-off what's really going to happen sometimes, but hopefully both teams play their best. I think their

advantage, they play, I think in one of the toughest conferences in America and they've had that competition over and over and I'm sure that's going to help them where we play three or four teams who are up to that category and we have to do a better job of that, so it'll be exciting. I'm ready for it to go. It's been a long week. It's been practicing, so it's exciting to get playing again."

On previously coaching against North Carolina State under Kay Yow

"Well, I'll tell you, I didn't realize what big a legend she was until I got there because I was in men's basketball for 10 years and I'm not saying I didn't watch it, but I didn't know everything. So to be able to come play there—and we lucked out and won and had one of our best games. And then the next year, we're undefeated, she kind of showed me who the boss was and they came in and beat us with a really good team. You know, basketball, there's a lot of great coaches that have been before me and I think she's one that's really made women's basketball what it is today and that is more athletic. Meaning more to this game, these young ladies really have gotten a lot better. They've gotten better fundamentally, athletically and I think those coaches are ones that really started it and she's been a great example to me and I know I wouldn't be sitting in this seat if it wasn't for her hard work and what she's done for women's basketball."

Kim Beeston, BYU Guard

On changing point in season

"I don't really remember a specific point in the season. Our conference was really good, we had some great teams. I just remember coming together after our first loss and realizing a lot of things had to change. That came along with really utilizing our post inside and when we do that, teams have to cover down and we have shooters on the outside to execute. I would say that happened right at the beginning of conference play."

On preparation for North Carolina State

"I honestly think their team is a lot like our team. I think it is going to be a great matchup. They really look to get the ball inside to their big players and then when the ball is kicked out, they have shooters. It will be a matter of helping on the inside, but when the ball is kicked out finding matchups, knowing personnel and executing that way."

On North Carolina State resembling teams faced in season

"I think that they are a lot like Gonzaga in the fact that they have bigs that they go really go to. As far as a whole team, I honestly think they play a lot like us. When we practice against that type of play every day, I think it is something that we are ready for and is something we can handle because we are familiar with it. I wouldn't say a lot of teams in our conference are like that, but if I had to pick a team that is similar to them I would say Gonzaga."

On being difficult to guard

I would say it really helps having [Jennifer Hamson]. So many people have to collapse in on Jen. We also have great drivers that people have to respect. Because we have those girls, because

they are such a huge threat and they demand respect, I think that is a way I am able to get open on a lot of threes.

On advice for younger players in first NCAA tournament

"We have talked about this a little bit as a team and just realizing that it is just another basketball game. Just going out there and playing our game. When we play together, I think we are a really hard team to stop. I think the games we have lost, we have kind of beat ourselves. Coming out there with confidence and realizing this is such a great opportunity. We have nothing to lose, just play with heart, play with passion and, most of all, play with no regrets. When we went to the NCAA tournament a couple years ago, we came out a little bit scared. When you have a deficit or parts of the game when you are not playing your best, it is really hard to come back from. So as long as we can come out fiery and passionate and realizing we are a great team, I think we will be happy at the end of it."

On possible impact of bench players

"Anyone who gets in the game is just going to have a big challenge, especially from the guard line. We are looking to be pests on defense, making it hard for passes to go inside, then once the passes do go inside, looking to help and recover quickly. Whether that is Kylie Maeda starting off or Rovetti coming in, they are great defenders. We have a whole group of girls on the bench that can really come in and make a difference."

On Lexi Eaton's impact on team's success since returning from injury

"Lexi demands respect when she is one-on-one. When she has the isolation on the wing, people have to really look off of her and because of that people like myself get open shots. She just kind of spreads everything out. She has made a really big impact and she has been the completing factor to really making our team turn."

Jennifer Hamson, BYU center

On changing point in season

"I don't know exactly in the season it happened, about midway or a little past but we finally figured out how to play together. We started getting the ball inside, kicking it out and using our emotions a lot better."

On her mother's impact on her game

"Growing up I didn't really like basketball at all, I kind of hated it. My mom let me be and let me do my own thing. In ninth grade, she introduced me to some sports that were better for my height. We bonded over basketball and she has helped me so much improve my game. It is so fun to have her around and her opinion."

On matchup with NC State's Markeisha Gatling

"I think it will be really interesting. She is a different kind of player but we have some big post in our conference too so it is something we have played against before at least. I am excited to see what the matchup will be like."

Thoughts on being a #12 seed

"I would say it kind of motivates us. As a twelfth seed playing a higher seed, we have nothing to lose. So we have nothing to do but play confidently, play our game and how we know how to. That is what the tournament is all about. Sometimes there are upsets and that is what we are trying to do."

On Lexi Eaton's impact on team's success since returning from injury

"It has been incredible. She has done such a good job turning around from an ACL tear. She sat out all last season and I thought she did really well. She was watching and learning while she was out so I thought that really helped her game this year. She has come back smarter, she has really helped us. She is someone who can beat someone off the dribble and we kind of missed that last year. Now we have that with our team again, she completes us."