

**2011 NCAA Women's Basketball Championship
First Round --- March 19, 2011**

An interview with:



THE MODERATOR: We welcome University of Notre Dame head coach Muffet McGraw.

Q. Opening Statement

COACH MCGRAW: I think whoever was in charge of marketing for the tournament did an outstanding job and I think the atmosphere was great and the crowd support was just amazing. I hope everyone will come out for Monday's game.

Q. Yesterday you thought the team may be tentative after not playing for a couple weeks, was that the case at all? It seems like you started ok.

COACH MCGRAW: Rusty, is the word I think I used yesterday. I thought it would be a half like that but not longer than that, but we didn't really seem to get into a flow. Defensively I thought we were bad, we left their three-point shooter quite a bit in the first half and she knocked them down, just like we thought she would. She's a really good shooter. So I thought in the second half our defense got much better and then we got a couple of turnovers. That's our game when we get turnovers and defensively I mean we really just did not do our job in the first half.

Q. Can you talk about Skylar [Diggins] at the start of the second half?

COACH MCGRAW: We wanted to go to Sky to see if we could get something going to the rim, hoping that maybe we'd get the pick and roll and get somebody rolling, but then she hit a three, she got to the foul line. She did a lot of really good

things in that stretch and I thought the three was really critical, that gave us a little bit of a boost and we really needed it at that point. We needed to have a little run like that to get a little confidence.

Q. Did you change defensively in regards to their perimeter play and also did you change anything in terms of their rebounding?

COACH MCGRAW: Well I am going to say no to the rebounding, because they out-rebounded us for the game so, if I had a plan, it was a failure. I think that the thing that we did do in the second half, at some point, was we put Brittany [Mallory] on 3 [Rodrigues] and she really shut her down, I don't even think she got a shot after that. We had made the decision that we were going to take away the three-point shot, and we had gotten a little better defensively, but Brittany was the key.

Q. Utah's Badon and Plouffe, can you talk about the defensive focus on their two big ones?

COACH MCGRAW: I don't think we did a good job on [Janita] Badon, she got to the rim anytime she wanted to, she just missed a lot of shots. We did a little better job rotating at times, but we didn't have anyone who that could contain the ball, but we changed our plan on how we were guarding her in the second half and it didn't make any difference, she went by us every time. I thought we did do a good job on [Michelle] Plouffe, I thought whoever was guarding her only left her free a couple of times. We left her on the three point line and she knocked one down but overall I think we did a pretty good job on her.

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THE MODERATOR: We welcome University of Notre Dame student-athletes. Let's direct questions to University of Notre Dame student-athletes.

Q. You had the first 13 points in the second half. How determined were you to get the team going?

SKYLAR DIGGINS: We wanted to make a run and we talked about that at halftime. We needed to get a pass and then score. We knew we were going to come out and be aggressive in transition and just knock shots down.

Q. What changed defensively in the second half?

NATALIE SOVOSEL: We stepped up our defensive intensity and we knew that would decide the game for us and that is what changed.

Q. What did Utah do to frustrate the team?

BECCA BRUSZEWSKI: They did a good job of packing their defense inside. They had a very packed defense so when we went to drive, they would have two or three defenders. I think we were rushing things and were overlooking people on the outside. They forced us into a lot of things they were uncomfortable with.

Q. What was Utah doing to get the rebounding advantage?

NATALIE NOVOSEL: They were extremely athletic and were really great at crashing the boards. A lot of times we would try to get the rebound and number 5 [Michelle Harrison] was in

the paint, which made it hard for us. I think it was a little bit of mental error on our part. We need to focus on our rebounding and get it to our shooters first.

Q. What did Devereaux [Peters]'s shot blocking do for you?

SKYLAR DIGGINS: Devereaux saves a lot of us. Her rotation is getting better and better and she is getting her timing down. She is great at helping out her teammates. Now she is catching the ball instead of just blocking it out of bounds and it helps us in our transition game.

Q. When you were up by 10, Utah came back. What was the message in the Notre Dame huddle in that situation?

BECCA BRUSZEWSKI: Defensively, we were a little lazy. We needed to get focused on what we needed to do. It was the little things that got us into that situation where they got their shots and open 3's. We just needed something to calm us down and get us focused.

Q. How prepared were you to play?

NATALIE NOVOSEL: We have been waiting for a couple of weeks to play so we had a lot practicing. I think we just came out a little anxious, a little excited, and our adrenaline was pumping us up too much, but we were ready to play.

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