



2014 NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Semifinals · Practice Day · Notre Dame vs. Oklahoma State
Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center · Notre Dame, Ind.
Friday, March 28

SEMIFINAL PRACTICE DAY QUOTES – Oklahoma State

Jim Littell – Head Coach

On preparing for ND...

“I really don’t know if there’s a team that prepares you for Notre Dame. I think Connecticut and Notre Dame are two teams in this country that have clearly separated themselves from the rest of the pack. I don’t know of anybody in the Big 12 who’s like them. After watching film, they are probably one of the most efficient teams I have ever scouted. They have great talent and can score in numerous ways, they are very strong defensively, they have shooters, they have people who can slash to the basket, they can score on their own, and they can score within their offense. We’ve got a lot of great teams but I really can’t compare them to anyone in the Big 12.”

On Tiffany Bias’ injury status...

“I wish I knew right now. She hasn’t practiced yet. She’s going to try and practice today and I think it’s a read that we’ll have to make after she tries to go today. We’ll give her some therapy tonight and see how it goes, but I can’t give a definitive answer now. I’m not one who tries to hold anything out from somebody— if she was going to play I’d tell you, if she wasn’t going to play I’d tell you. But she hasn’t practiced since the injury so we’ll just wait and see how she practices today.”

On the challenge of possibly playing without Tiffany Bias...

“It’s a pretty huge challenge right now but without her it’s a pretty big challenge. She’s been our leader for four years here. She’s been an All-American for us. She’s a very athletic young lady who has run the show for four years, so it would be a blow to us and it would be a huge challenge.”

On playing back-to-back NCAA games on an opponent’s home court...

“I’m not real thrilled about it to be quite honest. We don’t talk to our team about it. The only thing that we say is that they’re playing on their home court so we’ve got to be very good. We’ve got to take care of the basketball, we’ve got to be very efficient in how we play the game and we’ve got to be very smart. That’s the difference right now in the men’s and women’s game. To think about the Mercer-Duke situation on the men’s side, you’re probably going to see less upsets when you go to home sites. But we’re thrilled to be playing right now. There are 16 teams left in this thing and this is a very, very big

deal for our school. I know Notre Dame is accustomed to going deep into the tournament every year but this is a very big thing for us and we are excited to be here. I expect our kids to compete and play hard as they did at Purdue, and we have high expectations.”

On the game against Purdue...

“I think we’ve played pretty well the last three or four games to go in and win at Purdue was big for us. We struggled a little against Florida Gulf Coast but they had a good team and tough guard for us. But we played Baylor very tough in the semifinals of the Big 12 tournament, and played well against Iowa State as well. Right now, we’re playing our best basketball of the year, so that’s the time of year to be doing it and we feel good about the way we played.”

On defending ND...

“I think we’re going to have to change up defenses and see what’s going on. I think we are going to have to change defenses according to personnel that they have on the floor. We had to do that against Purdue as well. They bring some extra shooters in and we might have to go man, they bring some of ‘this’ and we may have to go zone. So I think the game personnel will dictate what we play.”

On the inconsistency of the team...

“I think our schedule was set up a little better for us at the front half of the Big 12. Then we weren’t playing quite as well for a while but that’s kind of the nature of the Big 12. Baylor and West Virginia won the conference and they were a number two seed. Five of our eight losses came to Baylor and West Virginia so we played good teams. We lost to Iowa State, who made the tournament, Texas, who is a five seed, and we lost to Oklahoma on their home court. A lot of people have said inconsistency but I kind of think it’s the nature of the league that we play in. We were one of the three teams that did not lose back-to-back games if you want to put a different spin on it. There were a lot of teams that lost consecutive games and maybe three or four games in a row, so our kids have proved to be pretty resilient and have bounced back. The record and maybe the inconsistency is more of the nature of the Big 12.”

On main concerns about playing ND...

“They get a lot of shots up and score a lot of points in transition, and they go right from transition into early offense. They’re really effective doing that, so that is a big concern. They’re very physical and get a lot of put back points as well. They have the ability to post guards on smaller guards as well. So there are a lot of concerns right now I can promise you that. Their defense is one for sure.”

On whether the team is satisfied with making it to the Sweet 16...

“We’ve talked a lot about being proud of what you’ve accomplished but not being satisfied. I don’t think our team is satisfied. I’ve heard 50 times and gotten probably 200 texts in the last 3-4 days saying you have nothing to lose— well absolutely we have something to lose. We have a chance to move on to the Elite Eight or Final Four, so I guess I’m not big on that statement. There are upsets that happen and we’re here to play the game and play the game the right way. To answer your question, no I don’t think our team is satisfied. They want to continue playing as well as they’ve been playing.”

Tiffany Bias – Senior – Guard

On her recent ankle injury and prospects of playing against Notre Dame...

“My ankle’s feeling better and I’ve been practicing on it. So I’m planning on playing tomorrow.”

On competing against Notre Dame's freshman point guard Lindsay Allen...

"She's a great point guard. Having been there myself, I know that you just have to pressure them, rattle them a little bit, and make them speed things up a little faster. I think we have a good scout so we'll do what we can."

On becoming used to playing in hostile road environments...

"I think we've had a lot of games where it's been 11,000 people and you couldn't hear and it was crazy in there, and we had a hard time relaying back to each other. I think we're ready for that, we've experienced that this year, so I don't think it'll be that much of a big problem with us."

On her career at Oklahoma State coming to a close...

"I'm just excited for this team. I think that it's a great opportunity, and that we've had a great year. We have great people on this team. It's crazy that I'm a senior and it's going to be my last time around. These girls believe in themselves, and I believe in this team. So I'm just excited to be here and finish it out the way we want to."

On preparing for Notre Dame's transition game...

"Really we just have to get back on defense. We can't spend too much time swiping at the ball if we don't get the rebound. They do have a good transition game, but we do, too. I think just stopping the ball and knowing that everyone can score and no one is going to stop for you just because you're in front of her is important for us. It's one of those things we're really going to harp on, and I think we've focused on that throughout the year. A lot of Big 12 teams run, too, so I think we'll be ready."

Brittney Martin – Sophomore – Guard

On her approach to playing on Notre Dame's home court...

"I like it. I think it's fun to play with the other team's fan base. It's loud and it's just exciting to have that opportunity. It's been my dream to play here, to play a team this good, number one or two in the nation. It's cool to be here I think."

On why she's specifically excited to play at Notre Dame...

"I just like it. They've always had a good team. It's just one of those atmospheres as a basketball player I've always wanted to be in."

On why the team is playing their best basketball...

"I think it's because we have nothing to lose. We're in the mindset of it's one and done. We have to do what we have to do. We don't have time to mess up. We don't have time to lose. Really, we're in the mindset where we have to win and do everything we can to win. Everybody's going to give 100 percent, so I think that's why we're playing our best basketball right now."

On the challenge of Notre Dame's ability to score in many different ways...

"I think it is challenging because you have to know where everybody is on the court. With some other teams, you can kind of back off some players or some might not score as much as the others. But in this case, everybody's unique. They can score. They can put the ball on the ground. They can shoot three-pointers. So I think we all just have to know where everybody is and that's a unique situation. We can't lose anybody, because anybody on the court can score. So it's a little different."

On her rebounding prowess as of late...

“Rebounding is always there. If shots aren’t falling, you can get rebounds. You can hustle for those. Like I said, I want to win. And I think the team wants to win. If I can get 20 boards a game for my team, then that’s what I’m going to do. I’m going to just put hustle into the game. That’s what my mindset has been.”

On the team’s attitude towards the other game in this region, Kentucky versus fellow Big 12 member Baylor...

“I can’t say we’re rooting for Baylor, but it’s cool to have another Big 12 school in. We want to show people that the Big 12 is a tough conference to be in. So I can’t say rooting for, but I can say we’re sort of leaning towards Baylor.”