

**2012 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship
First and Second Rounds
Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center • Notre Dame, Ind.**

Saturday, March 17, 2012

California Press Conference Quotes

Head Coach Lindsay Gottlieb

On being in the NCAA Tournament...

"I think our players have a very unique ability to live in the moment, to have fun with it, to enjoy it and to not have it make us any less competitive. I think Iowa is one of the hottest teams entering the tournament—they pose a lot of problems for us."

On preparing for 9:00 a.m. start...

"I can tell this team that we are playing on the moon at 3:00 a.m. and when the ball is tipped, they would be ready to go."

On representing Cal...

"Every time we put on a jersey that says California, we are very proud and very honored to represent our institution. We are excited to come out and play and give some excitement to our university and our fans."

On rebounding...

"We have a really unique front line. It is a luxury to have four post players that are all athletic, that are all skilled, but more than anything, they have fearlessness. They really value the basketball and go after it. It is something that our opponents see and know that it is factor that they deal with. We do emphasize limiting opponents to one shot. We have a talented front line and the players have owned it and embraced it as part of the identity."

On point guard matchup...

"Brittany Boyd is a key to our transition game. She has grown so much over the course of the year."

On leadership...

"Coming in to the season, it was a conscientious effort on my part to make sure we put time and work on things like leadership and teamwork. Our players absolutely bought in to that. This is a group that spent two weeks without a head coach, and when you are in that situation, there is a lot of looking in the mirror and saying, 'What can we do to make sure we are ready?' When I got the job, they were fully prepared to embrace me, my coaching staff and the direction we wanted to go. This is group of competitors that really want to win. My job was to get talented individuals on the same page so that the collective whole was better."

On playing style...

"We play two post players. We want to get up and down and have a different tempo of game."

On California Basketball...

"I hope that the country sees who we are: that this is a group of young women who love playing together. They play really hard, but channel that into a passionate skilled group. We know who we are and what we are and obviously you game plan for the opponent, but we need to be the best version of ourselves. I think the country can fall in love with some of players because they are just magnetic."

Eliza Pierre • Junior • Guard

On the new experience of NCAA Tournament and leadership...

"Like Layshia said, we're all just leading each other. We do all have experience and get along with each other pretty well. We all want to win, so I think that helps us throughout practice and throughout this whole journey. We have a great coaching staff behind us, and I think we're ready."

On the team's perception of Iowa...

"They're a really good team. They can shoot the ball well. They like to play four out, one in. One thing we're worried about is our posts defending outside. But we've had this challenge before playing Washington State recently. I think we're pretty prepared. The Pac-12 has helped us a lot with defending teams like Iowa. We're looking forward to it."

Layshia Clarendon • Junior • Guard

On the new experience of NCAA Tournament and leadership...

"We're all kind of leading each other in a way. We said it's a new experience for all of us, but we all have postseason experience with the WNIT. Coach (Gottlieb) always tells us about other teams that are looking for something and knowing who they are. We know who we are, and we're just going for it. We're sticking together. The three people up here are great leaders, and we're looking forward to going through this experience together."

On previous WNIT tournament experience and success and its preparation for NCAA Tournament play...

"I think it's definitely prepared us. It's something that can't be taken for granted. Because we've never been here, people keep asking us questions. I'll say, 'I don't know. I've never been here before.' When you don't hear your name called and the difference when you do [on Selection Monday] is ecstatic. It's exciting. It gives us so much emotion. We're not ready to be done playing with each other yet. It's that thing of not having it then having it. You appreciate it – hearing your name called and being able to write your name in the NCAA bracket compared to the WNIT bracket. It's a great and humbling experience because we've worked so hard to get here."

On the team's identity...

"We're Bears. What Coach G always talks about is knowing who we are and our identity. Knowing that we're a team that's athletic and using our weapons, we are a great team. We play people off the bench, and they can score. We have three point guards, four post players. Knowing our identity that we're an athletic, fast team that likes to run and defends well. Knowing who you are and not looking for something or someone to come lead us or come score points – we just know who we are."

Talia Caldwell • Junior • Center

On team rebounding edge and importance...

"It will be very important, especially defensive rebounds. It means we're getting stops. It's a big part of our identity. I think it's something we'll continue to do very well."

On being a dominant rebounding team...

"I think the post group especially is competitive with each other. Everyone is pushing each other to be better. It's just our hunger to go get the ball. Gennifer (Brandon) is going to jump for everything. Reshanda (Gray) is really athletic. You just want to raise your level of play and try to do the same thing. It's a good competition from the post. It really helps us rebound well in games."

On the time zone adjustment...

"We're excited. We've been here for a few days. We could play at 6:00 (a.m. PST) and be ready to play. We haven't played in a week and some change, so it could be any time."