



2019 NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

First Round · #6 UCLA vs. #11 Tennessee
XFINITY Center · College Park, Md.
Friday, March 22, 2019

PREGAME QUOTES – Tennessee

Holly Warlick, Tennessee Head Coach

Opening statement:

“Happy to be here, excited to be here. The team has put in a lot of hard work this past two weeks and we’re just anxious to get out on the court.”

On talking to the team about a run in a NCAA tournament:

“We’ve had an up and down season. In the beginning, especially the SEC tournament we were young, but you have to grow up. I thought we did, but this is a third chance for us. We looked at it with the regular season, we looked at it with what we need to do in the SEC tournament, and to have this opportunity has given us another life. Again, our kids are older, we’ve matured a little bit, but the last two weeks have been really solid. We’re excited about this obviously but we’re anxious to get out on the court.”

On arriving to the arena for the younger players on the team:

“We have four sophomores and four freshmen, so this is new to us. I like being here, I like being on the road. Our kids tend to focus a lot better being on the road. We had a good practice this morning, but we haven’t been out on the court yet. I know it will sink in a lot better when we get out there. It’s a little bit of a reality. We talked about it a little bit back in the fall, and we have the opportunity to do what we’ve been planning for and talking about. Now it’s up to us to go out and do what we need to do.”

On attitude in practice after being announced they made it to the tournament:

“When we heard, obviously it was excitement. These kids, most of our kids haven’t been to the tournament and our focus has been a lot better. Go figure that. It was a relief for us to get into the tournament and for now we’ve zeroed in. Especially when you know your first opponent, you can actually practice and prepare for someone. I would tell you it was hard for our kids to practice after the SEC tournament when we didn’t know who were playing. So, we tried to give them some days off, days on, but when found out we were playing UCLA, we zeroed in on a lot of their stuff. They appear to be a lot more focused.”

On playing UCLA:

"I think it is two very similar teams. To me, they are like an SEC team; they are athletic, they are physical, they're strong, they pressure the ball, and they want to get you to turn it over. They have a super, super point guard, their players inside are physical. They're third in the country for offensive rebounding, we're sixth, so it's whoever is going to control the boards. Two very, very similar teams."

On attitude during the week after the SEC tournament:

"Well, I've been doing this for a long time and whether we win the SEC tournament or not it feels weird. You don't know who you're playing, you don't know where you're going, you don't know who you're going to be matched against. So, it was still that feeling, but we added on getting in or not and I didn't really doubt that we would get in. I thought we had a schedule that would get us in, with our RPI and how we were playing towards the end. I was worried and concerned."

On her last time playing UCLA in postseason as a player in 1979:

"Y'all weren't even born, I could tell you all I was awesome and you wouldn't know. I scored 40 points, had one turnover and 10 rebounds offensively. We played in the semifinals of the national tournament and that was Greensboro. A very competitive team. I think Billie Moore was coaching, who was good friends with Pat Summitt. We won the game, I can remember that and that's a good thing. I don't know how I played really. Here's the big thing, our team won. It made coach Billie happy because her and Coach Summitt were close friends. It was a strong, healthy rivalry and I have a tremendous amount of respect for UCLA because I've known Billie for a long time and been around their program. You jarred my memory a little bit, I could've gotten away with it but Eric (Trainer) is all about stats and the truth, I'm not."

On paying attention to today's men's basketball game:

"I do have an eye on the men's game. Rick Barnes has done an unbelievable job for Tennessee. I am so fortunate to have a men's coach, and it's always been this way at Tennessee, that cares and loves the women's program. For a women's coach and a women's team to have that support from their men's side, it's so valuable. So valuable in recruiting, in just talking basketball and understanding. If a women's team does not have that relationship with their men's program, I feel bad. It's been such a positive thing. Rick's done such an unbelievable job in the short amount of time he's been here. I'm not surprised. He gets his guys to play hard, they believe in him, they believe in each other, have a lot of trust in each other. We're obviously looking to see a lot of great things from them."

On matching up against Japreece Dean:

"It is always difficult when you have a player that can shoot the three, penetrate, and a great passer. That's what she brings. She runs their team. She probably has the ball in her hand 90 percent of the time. We have to be creative in how we're guarding her. She uses screens well; she attacks the basket well. She's outstanding, and as she goes, the team goes."

Cheridene Green, Tennessee Forward:

On the matchup with UCLA:

"During this game I think we will have to make an effort to box out, because you know they are third in the country in rebounding. We are a great rebounding team too, so I think that will be a main goal for us is to box out and don't allow them to get second chance efforts on the boards."

On having two weeks off and hopping back into the game:

“We’ve been practicing, going up and down, and taking care of our bodies too. That’s important for us but during this game we just have to focus and make sure that we do what we need to do.”

Meme Jackson, Tennessee Forward:

On limiting turnovers against UCLA:

“I think a lot of our turnovers come from playing too fast and trying to hit the homerun pass. In practice we say that we need to take care of the ball more and if we don’t, we run for it, so I think that’s been holding us accountable for taking care of the ball.”