



## 2016 NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

First Round · Miami vs. South Dakota State

Maples Pavilion · Stanford, Calif.

Friday, March 18

### PRESS CONFERENCE QUOTES – SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

#### **Macy Miller, South Dakota State Guard:**

"We're veterans. We know what a first round game is like: the pressures and nerves. We're just going to play our game as best as we can."

"Those last few games, we weren't playing our best basketball. Going into the Summit League [Tournament], we talked about bringing a toughness that other teams couldn't match. I think that was a major key in the Summit League was playing tough and putting in hard work."

#### **Kerri Young, South Dakota State Guard/Forward:**

"We're pretty good at spreading teams out. Penetrating and them finding other people that are open, and hitting down shots."

"[Coach Aaron Johnston] does a good job of instilling confidence in us. Just telling us that we're capable of playing with any single team and beating any team. I don't think we shy away from that. We just go out no matter who we play and what game is ahead of us, let it all out and leave everything on the floor."

"That's one of the main things we focus on everyday in practice is our defense. That's something we're striving to get better at every single day. Every team can score, but defense wins championships and games."

"It's sometimes the case that we're so hungry in the Summit League. That's our main focus right away is to win the Summit League Championship and moving onto the NCAA. And once we get here, we kind of settle. That's the biggest thing this year is that we have to stay hungry. We have to want to win this game, and keep moving, and keep playing for this team. Staying hungry and wanting to keep moving forward is a big key."

#### **Gabby Boever, South Dakota State Guard:**

"We're closer than most teams are. We're more like a family and more like sisters than teammates. That's unique especially in college basketball because you always get these little cliques that go off and hang out by themselves. But for the most part, we're a very big family."

"I don't know if it's necessarily because we're from the Midwest that we work harder. But because we are a mid-major, it does take a little bit more hard work to play with these bigger teams and stay with them and eventually beat them."

**Aaron Johnston, South Dakota State Head Coach:**

"It's been good to be here. We're very excited to be back in another NCAA Tournament. It's always a new experience and different experience than what we've had in the past."

"Traditionally, we probably take as many threes as a lot of teams. Perimeter player-wise, what separates or changes things for us is that a lot times our post players can play on the perimeter. So I think that creates match-up problems for other teams. Miami's posts are going to be more traditional defensive players around the basket, and we've got players that will play in all five spots within our offense. Our guards will post up as much as our posts do."

"Miami is often good individually. They can guard players one on one, they force a lot of turnovers, they disrupt you, they don't let you get into a comfortable offense."

"[Gabby Boever and Chloe Cornemann] have been great of us all year. They really bringing a calming presence to our team off the bench. And an experienced presence. Sometimes youth comes off the bench for a lot of teams, but in our case, with Chloe and Gabby and [Alexis Alexander], each of them knows exactly what we need from them."

"[During our lull,] I think I just tried to over-coach some areas and got us too fixated on things we were trying to do and get better at. [...] We still defended really well, but offensively, maybe tried to tinker a little bit too much. As we got closer to the end, we just tried to simplify things a lot more. Tried to get people in really good spots that they felt good about, and maybe didn't try to force some things offensively. But then the players deserve a lot of credit. They really rose to the occasion in the Summit League Tournament."

"Neutral court is helpful – you're not out battling someone else's main fan base – but it doesn't ensure that you're going to play well. If we go out tomorrow and lay an egg, then we really have no one to blame anymore at that point. You can't say it was somebody else's home crowd. It's helpful to have one less variable that can go against you."

**LOCKER ROOM QUOTES – SOUTH DAKOTA STATE**

**Ellie Thompson, South Dakota State Forward:**

"The build up of getting to the tournament, getting to the championship game, and winning the rivalry game against USD [University of South Dakota] was definitely a peak of our season. I think keeping the momentum going will be a big motivator for this game."

"It's good to be seeded as a #12 seed. It was definitely what we were hoping for. I think that will give us a good look going into the postseason. We were watching that game [#12 seed Albany defeat #5 seed Florida] and that was definitely a good game. They were down by 17 at one point and made a comeback. I think that the possibility of a #12 seed upsetting a #5 seed definitely has us motivated."

"We have a lot more people that know what it's like to play in an NCAA Tournament and play in a big game like this. It will definitely help us."