Big Ten Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gainbridge Fieldhouse

Ohio State Buckeyes

Coach Kevin McGuff

Jaloni Cambridge

Chance Gray

Postgame Press Conference

Ohio State 83, Illinois 59

THE MODERATOR: We want to welcome Ohio State to the dais. Head coach Kevin McGuff and student-athletes Jaloni Cambridge and Chance Gray. Coach, if you will make an opening statement.

KEVIN McGUFF: We could probably just go right to the students. I'm ready for that.

Q. I've had the pleasure of watching you guys, this is the third time now this season, and Chance, the thing that stuck out the most to me is just your shooting form. It's very smooth, very simple, very easy. Can you just talk about the work that you've put in over the course of your career to get your shot to be the way it is?

CHANCE GRAY: That's pretty much the first thing I learned how to do, first thing my dad taught me. I'm in the gym every day, and I feel it's all about feel and touch. I just make sure I'm shooting the same reps, shooting the same way every day, and just make sure it carries over to the game.

Q. Jaloni, Indiana only made five 3-pointers, shot 24 percent. How do you feel the perimeter intensity was on defense today?

JALONI CAMBRIDGE: It was way better than the last time we played them, just making sure we were getting out to their shooters and not letting them get those open shots.

So being more aggressive than the last time we played them.

Q. I would love to know how you felt about the performance of your supporting cast. Kylee had 9 points, Bryn had 8, Elsa had 6. Just what these players add to your team.

CHANCE GRAY: I think we have confidence in everybody. So we just make sure they believe in themselves every game and have confidence in what they do. I think everybody shot up, and we need them to keep doing that because we're going to need everybody.

Q. For either of you, seemed like a little bit of a Helter Skelter start? How did it feel good just to get a couple shots to go down and everything kind of settled in? How did it feel there in the first quarter?

JALONI CAMBRIDGE: Yeah, we've been in this position many times before. We needed to let the game come to us. That's what we did, just settling in. They all were good shots. Just making sure we're taking our time and making sure we're making those shots.

Q. Chance, for you, 18 points today. How do you feel the offense performed just in general? It seemed like they're firing on all cylinders, especially in that second half.

CHANCE GRAY: I think we were getting good shots. Like we said, in the first half we were getting good shots; just weren't falling.

We had to work against some of the calls a little bit. I think we did a good job of staying poised and moving the ball. I think we're better when we're scoring across all cylinders. So it was a good team win.

Q. Kevin, I already asked this of the players, but it seemed like the perimeter defense was playing really well tonight, especially better than the last time you guys played Indiana. How would you describe how they played out there?

KEVIN McGUFF: I thought we had much better focus and intensity on the defensive end, especially in the half-court. We didn't play very well against them in the first half, first

time around, and they really made us pay.

We watched a lot of film, and we worked on that the last couple days. It was good to see our players execute that end of the floor.

Q. The Big Ten is littered with a lot of really good guards, but you guys have a well-rounded team, and your frontcourt with Kylee and Elsa do a great job game in and game out, doing a great job of being successful so you guys can be where you are right now. Can you talk about the two of them together, what makes them special, and kind of adds to the well-rounded nature of your team at this point?

KEVIN McGUFF: Yeah, I feel really confident in our backcourt. Chance and Jaloni both have had great seasons to this point. I think today was a perfect example where they both scored the ball, but they also had 11 assists between the two of them. I think that's really what makes our team good.

We had 21 assists today, and 11 of them right here next to us. When we move the ball and make the extra pass, it usually leads to good shots. We were fortunate enough to knock down enough of those shots when we got them today.

Q. Talk a little bit about your team. Where do you think they are right now at this point after this game? This is one of your better starts from start to finish from outside game, inside game. Talk about where you think you are at at this point.

KEVIN McGUFF: Yeah, we were coming off a good win last Sunday where we shot the ball and executed at a pretty high level. It was good to see us carry that over into today. Give Indiana credit. They played extremely well yesterday and played really, really hard in the second half to put themselves in position to be here today.

They also have a short bench right now, and they sort of ran out of gas. I like the way we're playing. I think offensively our execution is as good as it's been, and we're really making the extra pass and sharing the ball. Defensively I was happy to see more so our half-court execution today.

Because the press has been good to us, but I think ultimately to continue to win here in March, not only in the Big Ten, but the NCAA, our half-court defense is going to have to be good as well.

Q. Is there any sense that you just like to make sure that you get one, get started in this kind of a setting?

KEVIN McGUFF: Yeah, you've got to -- it's sort of cliche to say, but you've got to win the first one before you can win the second. The thing about this year in particular, the Big Ten is so strong. Regardless of who you're playing, you're going to have a tough opponent.

Like I said, give Indiana credit, they've had a really great back end of the Big Ten season and have played extremely well and did a great job yesterday. We knew we'd have to play well to win today, so it was nice to get that under our belt and hopefully get comfortable with the arena, and hopefully that helps us tomorrow.

Q. You guys got Minnesota next. I know they gave you guys some trouble a couple of weeks ago. What needs to be different this time around?

KEVIN McGUFF: They're a very good team. They're well coached. The thing about Minnesota is they've got balance in what they do and they've got a great post player in Sophie Hart. They've got excellent perimeter players.

I think once again our defense will have to be really, really good. Like a little bit of a different way than it was today in that we got -- we weren't real effective defensively around the basket at Minnesota, and we'll have to be much better with our interior defense to win.

Our perimeter defense was good today, and that will have to be good tomorrow because they've got great perimeter players, but we have to match that with interior defense as well if we want to be successful.

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Indiana University Hoosiers

Coach Teri Moren

Shay Ciezki

Maya Makalusky

Postgame Press Conference

Ohio State 83, Indiana 59

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by Coach Teri Moren and student-athletes Shay Ciezki and Maya Makalusky. At this time, Coach, if you'll go ahead and make an opening statement.

TERI MOREN: Congratulations to a very, very talented Ohio State team. We will certainly be cheering for them. Have a ton of respect for Kevin and his staff and players. They're obviously excellent and very talented.

We are certainly disappointed. I just think that one of the things that Ohio State can do is they can get you to -- they speed you up. I thought in the first half -- and the second half. I will say this, we got some really good shots. I thought we looked hurried a little bit in the first half. I thought we looked less hurried in the second half. Just still couldn't connect the way we needed to.

You have to put points on the board in order to beat a team like Ohio State, and then we just didn't have enough to keep them off the offensive glass, which again, we knew going into it there were certain areas that we just couldn't allow a lot of extra points, and it was off the rebound, the free-throw line, and off our turnovers.

We are disappointed we weren't able to play as clean and as well as we wanted to today, but again, as I said to our players, still really proud of the fight that they showed all the way to the very end, and particularly here in the last month. This is a team that's gone 7-3. So they've stuck together, and we're leaving here -- I am at least -- very proud of our group and how they've managed to stick together and stay connected here.

Q. For the players, what can you take -- Teri mentioned the last 10 games. What can you take and build off of it to the future?

MAYA MAKALUSKY: I think obviously having a team that's very young and out of the portal, I think it shows the grittiness that Coach Moren has installed in Indiana women's basketball. I'm proud of the team. I'm proud of the way that obviously we continue to fight till the end.

I think just the overall grit. Nevaeh and I getting those reps, Coach putting that trust in us. So having that confidence over this year will definitely help.

Q. Shay, obviously there's still some uncertainty about maybe postseason play and a WNIT game, but if this is your last game in an Indiana uniform, what's the message to your teammates and the future Hoosiers coming in next year to carry this program further?

SHAY CIEZKI: Man, I'd probably say a lot, but I guess the first thing to come to my mind is keep working. That's what I pride myself on. That's the foundation of my game is just to work hard, to outwork your opponent, and I think that I tried my best to show this group that you can kind of do anything you set your mind to.

The adversity hit us, and all we did was just put our head down and work even harder than the start of the season. Obviously you've seen that through our wins. Just to tell the girls to work hard. Not everything's going to be handed to you, not everything's going to be easy. In four years, you're going to face a lot of adversity, more than you'd think, and it's how you respond to that is what really matters.

Q. I was going to ask something similar. A modification of that would be for Shay, where do you see yourself being next season?

SHAY CIEZKI: I see myself playing pro. I'm a firm believer in the work that I put in to get here. I think I had a phenomenal senior season. There's not much more I could have done to try to set myself up for the next level.

I have high confidence in myself and the future. I think wherever God takes me, that's my plan, that's my purpose. Yeah, I'm just going to kind of wait to see what the future holds and obviously see the draft and see where I fall. I think my work ethic is going to take me wherever I need to be.

Q. Shay, I noticed your shirt when you walked in. How important is your faith to you, one? Two, how are you able to stay grounded in that over the course of the ups and downs of a strenuous season?

SHAY CIEZKI: My faith is very important to me. That's the reason why I'm here. I highly doubt without the faith of Jesus Christ that at 5'7" from a suburban town in Buffalo, New York, that I'm sitting here right now talking to you guys. That is Jesus working.

I think that it's a strong foundation to have your faith in God when you're going through adversity. Every person, whether a basketball player or just a normal person living, you're going to face trials, and I think having foundation in something so strong that you believe in is important, and that's how you're going to get through it and be better from it. My foundation is the Lord.

Q. Maya, over the last few weeks, how have you kind of felt yourself adjusting to the game at this level?

MAYA MAKALUSKY: Obviously with Shay being the great player she is and Lenée, we need people that can kind of help relieve the pressure off of them, but it doesn't happen without my teammates finding me and installing that confidence in me.

My teammates throughout the year have been helping me continue to get more and more confident to shoot those shots, which has definitely helped me get more confident along the way leading to that.

Q. Teri, yesterday you came from way back, played six players. How much do you think the lack of depth really affected how you did things today?

TERI MOREN: Yeah, it did, there's no doubt about it, and we're going to have to -- moving forward we're super excited about the freshman class that we have coming in here to Bloomington next year. I think they will provide some depth.

We're going to have to do some work here in the spring, I think in the portal as well. There's no doubt that you can't play in a league like the Big and you can't play in a tournament like this or the NCAA Tournament without it.

I did, I felt like it showed up. It reared its ugly head, especially with kids like Nevaeh tonight. We rely so much on her.

Even Beau, and Shay's put a lot of mileage on her legs as well. It did affect us tonight, there's no question.

Q. How were Ohio State, how were they able to stop you from coming back to compete in the second half compared to against Nebraska?

TERI MOREN: Their press in itself really, really is disruptive. It slows you down. It takes you out of any kind of offensive flow, offensive rhythm. Unless you can get a hit ahead to a layup, they do such a great job of recovering and getting back. Then they force you to have to play in the half-court as well.

They switch everything. Like I said, they're disruptive. They got to balls way faster than we did, even those loose balls. They're terrific. When you think about Ohio State, you think about, first and foremost, their pressure. It's outstanding.

Q. What went into the decision to keep Beau in with the third foul there with, I think, 4:20 left?

TERI MOREN: Again, we trust Beau to stay in there, and it didn't quite work out for us. We just felt like we had to have our best players on the floor in order for it not to get too out of touch for us. Having Beau in there, she's another scoring threat for us, although, again, she struggled tonight on both sides of the ball.

She is somebody that we really count on. So we just felt like we could trust her, and we needed her in the game.

Q. Would you welcome a call, an invitation from the WNIT?

TERI MOREN: We haven't even thought about that. We really, honest to goodness, have just put our head down, and we've just focused on especially finishing out the season the way we wanted to finish it out because we wanted to get into the tournament, this tournament, the Big Ten Tournament. Then our focus has just been on the Big Ten Tournament.

Those are discussions that we'll have when we get back to Bloomington here in the next week or so, but it will certainly -- I will weigh in with Shay for sure and Jerni to see what their interest level is going to be in that.

We're a little bit beat up. So I don't know what they'll decide. For some of those kids, we got some

end-of-the-season things that we've got to get them healthy.

Q. It's been a whirlwind of a season, the highs and the lows, especially the highs, going 6-2 ending the season. What have you personally learned from your players? What would you say about this iteration of this Indiana Hoosier team?

TERI MOREN: Again, we -- as I said to them in the locker room, just the resilience that they've shown has been, especially in the last month, has really been remarkable.

This is a group that when you start the season, the Big Ten season, off the way we did, it would have been easy to just kind of throw the towel in, and we didn't do that.

I've said it multiple times in the media that this group has continued to show up every day, to Cook Hall, to Assembly Hall, and they're willing to work. They're willing to fix things that need to be fixed. They're willing to be great students when we're in film.

I do feel like -- again, it might not have been the season that all of us have been accustomed to around here, but there have been some wins in terms of our improvement. I do think we've had great improvement. I think for Maya and Nevaeh, they've gotten great reps for the future here.

So I'm not satisfied at all this season, and I think our players would echo that as well, but I am proud. I'm proud of what we fought, we continued to fight, and that's what I'm most proud of.

We're looking forward too. I think we've got a really, really bright future. I'm excited about our incoming kids. I'm excited about the kids I've got that gained great experience here at Indiana.

Again, we're going to get this thing back on track, and I'm really looking forward to that.

Q. Beginning of the year, you had pretty much nobody who had played for you outside of Shay Ciezki for the most part. Going into next year, you now have two big freshmen who started good portions of the year, Lenée Beaumont, who in the locker room was --

TERI MOREN: We can call her a freshman.

Q. Essentially her freshman year. Going in you have three leaders who have played a full season under you. How does that affect your confidence for next year?

TERI MOREN: As I mentioned, I think the future is very, very bright. With the addition of our incoming class that we have, and certainly we'll look at the portal to get the right pieces that are going to fit what we do and how we do things here at Indiana, but I'm really excited and looking forward to what's next for Indiana women's basketball.

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