



Wisconsin

PRESS CONFERENCE QUOTES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Wisconsin Head Coach MARK JOHNSON

Opening remarks...

It's been a very good season and we are certainly honored and thrilled to be here. I'm very excited for several players on my team especially the ones from the East Coast who are getting the opportunity to play in front of their home crowds and families. Erika Lawler, Meghan Duggan and Hilary Knight, they made a big commitment several years ago to come out to the Midwest and be part of our program and they certainly have been a big part of it. We've had a lot of success throughout the season and it all starts early in September with the group coming together and making a commitment and being as consistent as they can throughout the season. and that is one thing that I harp on with each team, if they can be consistent and they can improve each weekend and one thing that has impressed me about this group is they have played most of the season with a bulls-eye either on their front or on their back because no matter who were playing everyone gave us their best effort and A game and they really haven't flinched they really have come together and are playing their best hockey right now.

On if there is a favorite in the tournament...

I don't see a favorite. I think as we got down to eight teams when we started this process any of those eight felt could beat anybody and it was who could handle the pressure playing in these games and if you do win you move on and if you don't your season is over. I look at the four teams that are here and we know two real well and everyone has put together a fine season.

On Erika's playmaking abilities...

She does a lot of things well her ability to get around the ice and you can see how competitive she is and she is going to go after the puck and usually wins the battles and comes away with the puck. Her playmaking ability comes from her ability to get into areas, get pucks and set up her linemen.

Wisconsin Senior Forward Erika Lawler

Opening Remarks...

It's been an exciting season and a successful one, we've come a long way and its been our motivation all season is to make it to the Frozen Four. We're just looking forward to the game and we're focusing on Friday and hoping to come out on top on Friday and get another shot at it.

On playing Minnesota-Duluth in the semis after last year's championship loss...

Last year doesn't really matter and neither does the season we've had this year. What matters now is right now and nothing that has happened in our past can really dictate the game tomorrow and I think we are focused on tomorrow and what we need to do to come out on top.

Is there a home ice advantage being from the region...

I don't really thing anyone has an advantage here but we're (Lawler and Meghan Duggan) are going to have big families here tomorrow, but I know that the entire team is really happy to be here and anytime you have an opportunity to play in the Frozen Four it is an honor and we're just focusing on the game tomorrow.



MERCYHURST

PRESS CONFERENCE QUOTES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Head Coach MICHAEL SISTI

Opening statement...

It's been an adventurous season. We're a very young team with 15 freshman and sophomores in a lineup of 20 players. We started out of the gates pretty slow with three wins and four losses. We had some injuries, and it was a matter of getting our young players into our system and use to the way we do things. In our program, we like to bring our players in and throw them right into the fire. If we lose great players, we have to somehow and somehow replace them with great players, and those players will get power-play time and penalty kill time. Early in the season, it takes a while to adjust to college hockey. At one point, we were 3-4, and without the auto bid, some people think it's a negative for our league. We'd love to have it, but we think the auto bid only favors a team that has a poor season and gets hot playoff time. Although we have high expectations, we plan not to have an off-season. We plan to fight our way into the NCAA's, win a lot of games and earn the right without the auto bid each year. To do that, we can allow four to six or seven losses a season, which is a lot of pressure and a lot of stress on the team. Having four in the first month before Halloween put this team under a lot of stress, and we could have gone in two directions. To the credit and the character of our players, they fought their way out of it and battled through. As we matured, they put some wins under their belt. A key moment was the series with St. Lawrence before Christmas. We felt we really had to win that series, and we did it convincingly. The players went into the Christmas break with a lot of confidence. Also, with so many new faces and young leadership, we had to find a way to co-exist. We get players from all over the world who have always been the best player on their team, and getting them to buy into our system and work together was a challenge early in the year. We worked some of those problems out before Christmas, and the team really came together, learned how to understand each other, and play together as a team. At that point, we came back from Christmas together on the ice and off the ice, and it showed in our second half. We went on quite a roll and went into the playoffs with a lot of confidence. We have great rivalries in our league with teams that really challenge us and give their best when we play them. It forced us not to take a deep breath down the stretch and play well every night. I think that helped us win another CHA Championship, which we're extremely proud of. We've won seven in a row. It's tough getting on top, but it's even tougher staying there when everyone's season revolves around trying to beat you. I thought that was a challenge that our young team handled well. Last weekend, we had an exciting home berth against a very good and prideful St. Lawrence team that has plenty of NCAA playoff experience. Once again on center stage, I thought our players played well and, fortunately for us and our program, came out on top. I think everyone knows our history of playing well in quarterfinal games and (then) just some heartache losses. It's just a credit to this teams' resilience, their ability to handle pressure, and play at their best when they absolutely have to. That starts with our captain, Meghan (Agosta) helping lead this team.

On Frozen Four favorite...

If there is, it's not us. Clearly, everyone knows the track record of the WCHA teams and their success. I think the nice thing about hockey is that once the game is played, anything can happen. Right now, Wisconsin is the No. 1 team in the country, Minnesota is No. 2, we're No. 3 and (Minnesota) Duluth is No. 4. If there is (a favorite), I guess it would be something like that. I think it's anyone's tournament, and whatever happens, happens.

On preference of playing a familiar or unfamiliar opponent...

For us, it really doesn't matter. It's just good to be in the moment, be challenged, and play great teams. We've had it both ways over the years, and it should be exciting. With our scheduling, we try and play anyone and everyone. One year, we went out to Minnesota with three flights to help out our schedule together. In the past, we've gone to Dartmouth for just one game. In our league with so many outside games, we're trying to get as many games as we can each year, and at times it's a struggle. We've had a

track record of playing anyone anywhere. We call every team in the country and each year whoever is on our schedule are the teams that find way to fit us in. Some teams have been extremely accommodating to us over the years, and some we wish we could play a lot more. It's great when you play teams many times, like in our league – playing teams five times to win the league to win the championship creates its own challenges. It's also fun when you play a team you haven't played. You get to see how you match up. There are some unknowns that you have to deal with within the game as well.

On 'intimidation' factor of playing teams with Frozen Four experience...

Clearly, there are teams that have been here. Other than how great the rink looks and maybe watching yourself on replay, the game's the game. I'm sure each team has players who are really comfortable in the moment, and some may have players that are nervous. There are probably some advantages of them going through this year, especially the teams that have a lot of veterans. Other than that, when the puck is dropped, you have to play. What's nice for our team is that they've played in nice arenas before and for national teams all over the world, so I think we're just excited and prepared. The biggest thing is that they take this opportunity to play the best they can so that they don't have any regrets regardless of the outcome.

Senior Forward MEGHAN AGOSTA

On the season...

At the beginning, it was pretty tough. I was injured in our first game and we didn't do so well. From my point of view, I thought that (it) was a huge role of mine to get the team together and make sure that we're prepared to continue getting better. Our chemistry has come a long way and the freshmen have done amazing for us. We're pretty excited.

On playing Minnesota...

They have a good team, but I can't really think about what they're going to bring to the table. I have to think about what am I going to do and how am I going to make sure my team is ready to play on Friday. We're just concentrating on what we need to do and how well-prepared we are for tomorrow's game. It's us in the jerseys that control our own destiny.

On preference of playing a familiar or unfamiliar opponent...

In my opinion, it really doesn't matter, To be the best, you have to play the best, and there is no doubt in my mind that whether we've played them before or not at all, coach Sisti and the rest of the coaching staff will do whatever they can to prepare us as well as they can. They have done a tremendous job this year and for tomorrow's game. I have no doubt in my mind that the team is ready.



MINNESOTA-DULUTH PRESS CONFERENCE QUOTES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Head Coach Shannon Miller

On the season in general and how they reached the Frozen Four...

We had a great season and started it as the defending national champions. We learned some lessons early on, which is pretty typical I think for college teams. We lost some games that we weren't supposed to lose. It took us a while to iron out some of the kinks and to get on track and to get focused, but once we got focused, we've been very strong. We've had a tremendously fun season. I think sometimes when you're the defending national champions, you feel a lot of pressure, but we have not this year. It's been more about having fun. We won last year. That was awesome. It was right in Duluth. The stars were aligned. It was just a very exciting experience for everyone. The way we've looked at this year for someone like Saara (Tuominen), who's a junior, it's her third appearance in a row for NCAA. Tawni Mattila is one of our captains. She's a senior and been here three out of four years. Our approach is this. It's our third season in a row here. We don't feel any pressure. This is all about having fun, and we've always played our best hockey when we're having fun. It's also about life experiences. It's the big picture for women's college hockey. We've had a great season. We're very pleased to be here. We're good to go.

On if she has chosen a goalie for Friday night yet...

Not that I'm announcing. We're in a great situation. I've never been in this situation before ever as a coach. We have three goalies that are all really good and two for sure that can play this weekend. I'll let you know when I know.

On how to minimize the impact of a player like Wisconsin's Erika Lawler...

You have to deny them time and space. Wisconsin is used to practicing and playing on big ice, and they are used to having a little more time and a little more space with the puck than what we will give them. That's the most important thing is respecting how talented their first line is, but out of respect done denying them that time and space that they're so used to having. When you give them time and space, wow, are they good. You play them tight, but whatever line ends up against them, whether it's Haley Irwin's line or Saara Tuominen's line, they recognize that they have to be very solid defensively. Then when we get possession, jump to offense, be creative and have some fun, but make a real commitment to be good defensively against this line.

Junior Captain Forward Saara Tuominen

On how being in the Frozen Four this year compares to the other two appearances...

Every year is a new year. We only lost one player from last year, but we have some great kids on our team. Like coach said, it's all about having fun. We had some struggles in the beginning of the year, but we have come together as a team. We've had fun and are really excited to be here.

On the matchup issues presented by Wisconsin...

Two great, talented teams playing each other. It's always playing hockey when you play Wisconsin. It's going to be a great game, as we always play against them. I'm excited, and the team is excited. It's going to be a big fight.

On the difference between the rivalry with Wisconsin and other schools...

I don't think it's a lot different. I don't see a big difference, for example, against the Gophers. We want to keep the focus on our team and play whoever is the next opponent.



MINNESOTA

PRESS CONFERENCE QUOTES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Head Coach BRAD FROST

Opening Comments on Minnesota's Season

First and foremost, we're very excited to be here in Boston. It's been a few years since we've had the opportunity to be in a Frozen Four and play for a championship, so we're very excited about that. It's really been a wonderful season from day one. We've continued to improve each and every day and we have a wonderful group of student-athletes and a great staff. We've been playing some great hockey. We have a lot of depth and a lot of balance on our team, which is probably our biggest strength. We play four lines and have six or seven defenders that can play and we have several goalies well. We've obviously had a great record and won the WCHA regular season and are very proud of that, especially with WCHA being such a great league. We lost in the tournament championship, but rebounded last week against Boston College to earn our trip here. It's been a great season and I'm looking forward to a great weekend here as well.

On Playing a Team Minnesota Hasn't Played Before This Season

We're really excited to play Mercyhurst. We know they're an excellent hockey club. Sometimes when you play a team in your league four, five or six times a year, you know each other so well, but that's not necessarily a bad thing either. I know it brings out a lot of excitement in our players to know they have the opportunity to play somebody not in our league, similar to last weekend when we were able to play Boston College. It's a challenge for both teams. They don't know much about us and we don't know much about them. That allows you to focus a little bit more on yourself than your opponent, so we're really excited about it.

On Facing Mercyhurst

We're certainly not going to overlook them. We know a lot of their players who have played in the Canadian National Program and Meghan Agosta who is a top 3 finalist for the Patty Kazmaier Award and the leading scorer in the country. They have a lot of players with international experience and have played on big stages, so I anticipate they will come out quickly and be excited to play. I'm sure they'll be ready.

On Playing in Boston and at Agganis Arena

This is a great facility and venue and we are ecstatic to play in a place like this. Boston is a great city and there is so much to do. It's been wonderful so far.

Senior forward GIGI MARVIN

On Minnesota's Season

We had a great season like Coach Frost mentioned. We were regular-season champions and made it to the championship game in the playoffs against Wisconsin. We accomplished a lot and came together as a team. We have a lot of depth on our team. We have good, solid defensemen and excellent goaltending. We have a great group of individuals and it's been a fun senior year. I've enjoyed every minute and it's fun to be back in the Frozen Four.

On Playing a Team Minnesota Hasn't Played Before This Season

Mercyhurst is obviously very fast and talented and have a skilled group of individuals. It will be a lot of fun to play them here in Boston tomorrow. We've seen Wisconsin and Minnesota Duluth all year, but it'll be very exciting to see a new team.

On Playing Physically

It can definitely be a double-edged sword. We definitely got into penalty trouble, especially in the second period last week and had to kill a bunch of 5-on-3s as well as 5-on-4s. I think we thrive on that as well. We've been saying discipline over emotion, but I definitely think it's a strong point. They're a lot of

passionate players in our locker room and I definitely think we've rallied around that. From top to bottom, I'd rather have teammates playing with a lot of emotion than going out there with not as much fire in their bellies. We've tried to clamp down on the penalties, so hopefully this weekend you don't see too many Gophers in the penalty box.

On Playing in Boston and at Agganis Arena

It's an outstanding place. It's been exciting since we've arrived. All of the players have been looking out the windows at all the shops and awesome scenery. Boston is a wonderful town. I've kind of fallen in love with it. The ice surface is outstanding and it's a lot of fun to see all of the amenities that Boston University has and we're very thankful to be here.