

March 6, 2014



Ohio State-86
Northwestern-77

An Interview With:

**COACH JOE MCKEOWN
MEGHAN MCKEOWN
KARLY ROSER
TERRY TAYLOR
MAGGIE LYON**

COACH MCKEOWN: I thought it was -- you know, just a hard-fought back-and-forth game. You know, in the last two minutes, they just made a couple of extra plays and that was the difference in the game. I'm proud of our team. You know, we really fought hard today. We just you know -- I'm really proud of our seniors, the leadership, what they've done for Northwestern and women's basketball at our school. So you know, just you know, one of those things that this is their last Big Ten tournament. And again, they've helped turn around -- turn around Northwestern into a prominent women's basketball program now. When they got here, you know, when they were in high school, that wasn't the case. So I'm really proud of them and the effort that everybody put in tonight.

Congratulations to Ohio State. Wish them the best in the tourney.

Q Meghan, a lot of runs in that game. Can you talk specifically about the run in the end of the first half? I think it was 16-0 that you guys closed on at halftime.

MEGHAN MCKEOWN: We always -- especially when we're coming from behind -- we try to push in transition. You know, we were hitting a lot of shots. We had a lot of energy going. I felt like, defensively, we were doing well. We were executing our game plan very well at the end of the first half.

Q Karly, can you talk just about the last couple of weeks and then again today? It seemed like you're finally kind of rounding in the form. I know it's been a rough season for you. But looking to score a lot today and contribute more on the offensive end than maybe we've seen from you before.

KARLY ROSER: I've just been trying to contribute in any way possible, whether that be on the opposite end or defensive, whatever my team needs me to do. And today I thought that by attacking I can lead the front and other people would follow. And we had a hard time scoring in the second half, but I thought the energy was there.

Q Meghan and Terry both, can you guys talk more than just today, but overall in terms of closing out your career and just what the feeling has been for you for the last four or five years in Northwestern. Terry?

TERRY TAYLOR: Yes. My coach mentioned earlier, we've changed the atmosphere at Northwestern as far as winning. I think we've become a very competitive team, a very competitive program. It's been great to grow in this program. Especially this year, being injured and learning how to develop as a leader. I'm grateful for my experience and I've seen a lot of girls since I've been here. It's just great to see.

Q Meghan?

MEGHAN MCKEOWN: Yeah. It's been a really special four years for both Terry and I. Just seeing when we came in here, the program was on the rise, we were on the brink of post-season. In the next few years, there's definitely going to be a lot of success here in the program. I just want to thank Northwestern, coaches and administrators and the whole university for everything they've given to us as student athletes.

Q Was there anything that you had tried to do differently the way the first game went?

COACH MCKEOWN: Yeah. I thought, you know, the first half our game plan was pretty good and defensively, you know, they came out pretty hot. And then I thought we did a real good job of closing them out and ending on a really strong run. You know, I thought the key for us was the first half the last of the game in

Columbus, you know, the first half really dug a hole. Today we went up at half-time three of four and a shot at the buzzer. I felt like we did what we wanted to do in the first half. The second half we had some breakdowns on the glass.

Q Joe, what went into the decision to use Karly as much as you did today?

COACH MCKEOWN: Well, two things. Number one, Deary was sick. Sick before the game and started out the game played well. And Karly played extremely well today. Probably, obviously, the best game she played since coming back, really, in the beginning of February. So you know, a combination of things. I thought they both did a great job. But Karly, you know, showed what she's capable of. You know, Deary has had a great year for us, incredible year. We wouldn't be eligible for post-season if it wasn't for Deary.

Q You had them taking a lot of outside shots. Was that kind of what you wanted to force Ohio State to do?

COACH MCKEOWN: We did. I didn't know they were going to make 11 threes or I would have changed my mind. But, you know, they make four or five a game and tonight, they just shot the ball really well. And Ellerbe hit a big three late in the game. I think we were up one, gave them the lead back. I don't have the exact time. But that was the big play. You know, we just -- I felt like first half we rebounded after misses in the last eight, nine minutes. Second half, they rebounded their misses late in the game. That was the difference. And Moore made big plays down the stretch. Just sealed us. And

once I think she had three or four plays in the last probably three or four minutes that I thought changed the game.

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An Interview With:

**COACH KEVIN McGUFF
AMERYST ALSTON
MARTINA ELLERBE**

COACH McGUFF: I'm extremely proud of our players today in that I think we put forth great effort to get this win. Northwestern played well, and both teams made a lot of big plays down the stretch, but we just made a few more to get the win. It's a great opportunity for us now to move on, and we'll be very diligent with our preparation tonight and show up and play a very good Penn State team tomorrow.

Q. Both of you, what was it like being in the middle of the flurry of those last five minutes of that game?

MARTINA ELLERBE: I think we just knew that we needed to play hard, and we were just trying to stay focused, stay with the game plan, and just grind it out to the end.

AMERYST ALSTON: Just remembering back from last game, we came out really strong, but we had some downfalls down the stretch of the game, so I think concentration was really key that last five minutes of the game.

Q. Martina, there was a stretch where you guys were just back and forth and back and forth and they were answering your baskets pretty quickly, but you got back on a play I think that turned into a steal for Craft. Can you just set me up what happened on that play and how you got back there?

MARTINA ELLERBE: I knew they were running really hard in transition, and I think I was just trying to get back, and I kind of got lucky I got

in the way of that one, just trying to stop the long pass because if she would have got it, it probably would have been a lay-up.

Q. Ameryst, when she did that I think she followed that with a three-point on her own, but how big was that for the outcome?

AMERYST ALSTON: That was really big. They had been getting some transition buckets and that caused to kind of go back and forth with the scoring, which is something that we don't want to do, so she did a great job of getting back on defense, and that gave us some momentum, and we pushed it in transition.

Q. Either of you, how big a lift was it to get two or three big plays from Lisa Blair?

MARTINA ELLERBE: It was definitely big. I mean, we all have confidence in her, and I know it's her freshman year, and to see her go out and do great, we're happy for her.

Q. Martina, the inside play, I think you wound up with 13 rebounds, but basically Darryce had 10, but just what was it like inside, I guess, playing against these guys inside and how hard was it to get the rebounds?

MARTINA ELLERBE: I mean, their team is really good, and their post players are really athletic. But we as a whole team were like boxing out pretty well, so I don't think it was really just me, I think it was everybody just boxing out.

Q. What was it like in the first half when things weren't going well for you guys?

AMERYST ALSTON: We can't get down on ourselves. That's something you really don't want to do. The game is over, we go to the locker room, we talk about it, and it's 0-0 from there and you just play the rest of the second half really hard, and that's what we did.

Q. Could you ever relax in that game?

Did you finally relax in the last minute?

AMERYST ALSTON: No, we never relaxed. It doesn't matter if we're up 30 points. It doesn't matter. You play the hard game all the way to the end until the clock says zero.

Q. Kevin, the end of the first half wasn't going very well. What did you talk about at halftime and how do you think your kids answered what was going on?

COACH MCGUFF: The biggest problem we had, our transition defense was really poor at the end. Northwestern was playing hard. They were running harder on offense than we were getting back in transition defense, and so that was the biggest issue. To compound it, we were taking a lot of quick, contested threes which were resulting in long rebounds for them and igniting their transition.

Q. You had some foul issues in this game, too, but Darryce was in foul trouble and you went to Lisa in the second half. What kind of minutes do you think she gave you?

COACH MCGUFF: I think Lisa was terrific. She had a tremendous presence around the basket, especially on the defensive end. Even there late in the game when I put her in, she altered a shot Douglas got at the rim. She plays really hard, and she also had two big free throws during that stretch where we needed them. Her minutes were really good in the second half.

Q. Overall can you speak to the offensive execution in this game, especially down the stretch? Is it about as good as it's been this year?

COACH MCGUFF: Yeah, for the most part we played very aggressively, and we had a great balance of driving the ball at the rim and either getting to the rim with shots that we could make or sucking the defense in and pitching it for open threes. But it was just our aggressive nature, I think, that made the difference in today's game on the offensive end.

Q. I was going to ask about going to the basket, but I guess was this the best that you guys have rebounded?

COACH MCGUFF: Yeah, we had great effort on the boards, and part of like as a result of us really being aggressive driving the ball, we'd force their post players to help quite a bit on the drive, so even when we missed some of those

shots, Darryce or Lisa were able to clean them up on the backside.

Q. You don't have much time to celebrate; you come back tomorrow against the No. 1 seed. You've seen them twice this year. What makes them the No. 1 seed?

COACH MCGUFF: Well, they're deep. They're big. They're very physical. They have an elite scorer and player in Maggie Lucas. I thought last time we played them at home, we played them pretty well, but in the second half Maggie Lucas made a lot of big plays, especially down near the end of shot clocks because she can do that and she's a special player. But they're also really big. They're the hardest team in the league to score around the basket. We won't necessarily get the same looks tomorrow that we got today.

Q. Did you see a reaction to them? They were pushed a few times where maybe in the past the other team goes ahead and surges by, and this team really had two or three answers to things like that.

COACH MCGUFF: Yeah, and one of the things I was really happy to see was Martina and Darryce had their best games in quite some time. If you're going to win this time of year any time, you just have to be with your seniors. They played like people who didn't want to go home, and so I think that was the difference. We had a lot of effort, great effort, and that was -- Am was certainly special today, but our seniors, in particular especially Darryce and Martina were exceptional.

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