



USC Press Conference Quotes

December 3, 2016

USC HEAD COACH KEIDANE MCALPINE

Opening Statement

"We've got our hands full with West Virginia. They're super-athletic, super-confident and haven't given up many goals. We're just going to focus on ourselves and make sure that we're prepared mentally to just go out and have a great time. We're just looking forward to the game."

With such a diverse team, how important is it for younger players to have student-athletes and coaches that look like them and maybe have shared the same life experiences?

"For me, Clive Charles was here a long time ago and I had the chance to see him not knowing that I wanted to be a coach then. Right at the beginning of my career, so to speak, to see him on that stage was important. Hopefully it will be equally important going forward. For the players, I know as a player myself I was often the only one on my team. So to have this kind of diversity in a game of this magnitude will do nothing but continue to grow the game because we need it in this country as well as others. I think that it's a wonderful, wonderful thing for this sport."

How do you feel like you match with West Virginia?

"We're here, so I think we matchup pretty well, but I think they pose some very interesting matchup issues in terms of pace, not unlike some of the things we've seen in the past. When you look at the front line of Cal, they have players that you need to be aware of, so we've seen similar type of pace. Obviously West Virginia has been more consistent with their results, but we feel like we've played a schedule in a way that has provided us an opportunity to be prepared. We think we can do some things that will cause West Virginia to have to deal with us. That's what makes this game fun, right?"

Generally when talking about an opponent you talk about how to stop an opposing line. With West Virginia, you talk about how to get around Kadeisha Buchanan. Can you talk about what makes her so special as a player?

"Many, many things. Composure, toughness, mentality, athleticism, experience. She's got all of those things. I think the greatest thing about our game is that it's a team game and she can't be everywhere all the time. We're going to have to make her bring it to space and make her be the first defender in areas and see if we can take advantage of the second defenders. But their game has been solid all year. They don't give up many goals and led their league in goals against. It's something that will be a challenge, but I think our team has created a lot of chances against a lot of great defenses. We've put teams under pressure in a lot of ways they haven't been under pressure because of the diverse ways we attack. Our plan is to make sure that we continue to do that and force all of their backline to be the solution to stopping us."

Can you talk about your perspective as a coach trying to keep this team together during their national anthem decision. The team chemistry looks well.

"That was a great discussion. I told them and I'll say it here, I think that was one of my proudest days as a coach. To see women sit there and open up honestly, freely and emotionally, there were tears, there was anger, there was all of those things. But at the end of it, we were reminded as Americans and as citizens – well most of us – that we share the ability to have differences in this country and that's OK. But we are

united in our goal of being where we are right now. That was the focus, that it's OK to be different and to have differences of opinions, but family is family, and Lord knows all of our families don't always get along, but somehow we're still family, we still love each other and we'll still support each other regardless of our slights or disappointments or whatever else there may be."

What would be the key way to break down West Virginia and put the ball in the net?

"You have to stay aggressive. They're a team that feeds off their rhythm. They get excited and get into a happy place when they play sometimes. You have to keep the ball for longer periods of time and you have to make them defend for longer periods of time to not let them impose themselves offensively. That's a big, big key for us."

USC SOPHOMORE DEFENDER ALLY PRISOCK

Is there something that you are willing to share with us that the team opened up with each other?

"We all know the issues going on across the world. You've seen a lot of teams kneel during the national anthem. One game a couple of us wanted to do that. Before we did it, we had a whole team group discussion about it to make sure that everyone was on board. Everyone just laid out there how they felt about it, if they wanted to do it or didn't want to do it, if they agreed or didn't agree. Obviously we agree to disagree and we some of us kneeled [or] stood, but at the end of the day we are all there together and supported each other."

USC SENIOR DEFENDER KAYLA MILLS

With such a diverse team, how important is it for younger players to have student-athletes and coaches that look like them and maybe have shared the same life experiences?

"It's awesome. I think it opens up doors. People aren't used to seeing people that look like them on a stage like this. They see it and we're definitely excited – I know I'm excited – about being able to inspire people and open up doors."

USC SENIOR MIDFIELDER/DEFENDER SAVANNAH LEVIN

Your coach earlier this week characterized the team as misfits, paraphrasing. Not that you've gotten this far, I wonder if you still feel like you're misfits?

"I think what is so awesome is that our team has people from so many different places, backgrounds and religions. It's become a safe place to open up discussions and just be who you are. I think that the transfers that have come in are also very diverse and add to the group that we were before they came. I guess you could call us misfits, but we've just grown so close as this experience has gone on. We're just misfits together now."

How are you using this time to prepare for tomorrow's game?

"At this point a lot of it is just resting. The more down time that you have, the better it is on our legs and our bodies. We're all in the hotel together, so spending time with one another. Most important is rest. Us and West Virginia have played a ton of games at this point. The best thing that we can do is rest our bodies and take it as easy as we can until we're ready to go tomorrow."