



West Virginia Press Conference Quotes

December 3, 2016

WEST VIRGINIA HEAD COACH NIKKI IZZO-BROWN

Opening Statement

"I'm looking forward to playing such a fast, technical and quick team. I had the pleasure of watching them play Georgetown, and we're going to have our hands full tomorrow but we have two teams that really want to bring home the cup."

Is there an update on Bianca St. Georges? Will she be able to play or is her season over?

"That's going to be a gameday decision. Obviously Bianca wants to play and we're just keeping a close eye on her, so I will see when the whistle blows."

Before 2013, Becky Burleigh was the only female coach to win a national championship. Can you speak on what it would mean as a woman to win in a field dominated by men?

"It was incredible when Becky did it. You don't want to not pay attention to a woman winning it and being at the forefront for us women to win at the biggest stage in collegiate soccer. I've always just approached it that I want to be the best coach that I can be. I hope that everyone looks to me as one of the best, especially this year if we do hoist that trophy, but I do think there are role model opportunities for me being a woman and being in this situation. I hope that I can show lots of women that they can do it and they can do it with a family (as) I have three young daughters. Also to just set your standards high and set your goals so that anything can happen. If there are young women out there questioning if they can or can't do it, well they most certainly can do it. If I do take on that role as a role model, I'll embrace it."

Are there hurdles that you faced being a female coach?

"I do believe that there are hurdles. In any profession there will be hurdles when you're in a profession that's so dominant by male coaches. I have had great coaches of the male gender and the female gender. Especially when I was younger and less established there were moments when maybe I had to prove myself differently than I have to now, but I've never looked at it that way of being in an unfair profession. I've just worked hard and to the best of my ability and tried to be the best coach I could be and never get complacent."

What has it meant to your program to have two world class players like Kadeisha Buchanan and Ashley Lawrence in your program?

"It's been an honor and privilege for me to have both of these young ladies represent West Virginia soccer. West Virginia soccer is very personal to me because I've been the only (coach) so I take those opportunities to coach these young ladies and to have them wear the flying 'WV' very personal. I couldn't be prouder to have two young, fine ladies represent West Virginia University. One thing that isn't spoken enough is what quality women both of these young ladies are. They're great students and great people, and they'll be great leaders of tomorrow. I can speak for hours about these two, but there's nothing but pure pride that I have that both of them represent West Virginia."

WEST VIRGINIA SENIOR MIDFIELDER ASHLEY LAWRENCE

You have been on the world stage at the Olympics and the World Cup. How has that prepared you for tomorrow?

“It has helped immensely just with the experience that I’ve gained being at that level. I’ve grown a lot as a player, but from certain players like Christine Sinclair with her mentorship and leadership, I was able to learn a lot on the field with my movement as a midfielder and learned how to adapt around other players as well as how to become a leader myself. Coming back to West Virginia now and being a captain, that’s the biggest thing in just providing my experience and leadership to the team.”

When the final whistled blew and you heard “Country Roads,” can you talk about what that song means to you guys, especially in light of the amount of travel you put in between international duty and at West Virginia the past four years.

“Whenever we’re at home and we win a game, they play the song. It just feels like that sense of home like we’re back in Morgantown at Dick Dlesk Soccer Stadium. Even though we’re in San Jose, Calif., or wherever we are; I remember the Big 12 Tournament when we won they played the song. It’s just that sense of feeling of home. It doesn’t matter where we’re at. It’s just a nice feeling. Singing it with my teammates and the staff and to see the traveling West Virginia fans in the stands is a pretty cool moment to share amongst each other.”

Has Christine Sinclair said anything to you about this College Cup experience?

“We’ve been in contact with Sinc and the rest of the players almost on a daily basis because we have a group chat going on. It’s been more good luck and along those lines. From her it was more about have fun and more congratulatory from the veteran players on Canada.”

What would it mean to bring the first College Cup title to West Virginia?

“I can’t even describe the feeling of potentially hoisting that trophy. This season we’ve done so much for the program and we’ve broken a lot of barriers. At the beginning of the season we set team goals and that was one of them – to make it to the College Cup. Now that we’re here, all that hard work, commitment and dedication and sacrifice that we’ve invested into each other on the field and off the field, to finally be here is an accumulation of all of that work that we’ve put in. To be able to call ourselves national champions would be an absolute honor. To bring that to Morgantown would be amazing and speak volumes of all the hard work that we’ve done and that (Coach Nikki) Izzo-Brown and the staff have prepared us for.”

WEST VIRGINIA SENIOR DEFENDER KADEISHA BUCHANAN

You have been on the world stage at the Olympics and the World Cup. How has that prepared you for tomorrow?

“One of the main things is leadership and learning how they mentored us and bringing it back to this team. Always leading by example and communication.”

When the final whistled blew and you heard “Country Roads,” can you talk about what that song means to you guys, especially in light of the amount of travel you put in between international duty and at West Virginia the past four years.

“It brings us back to playing at home. Even outside of our soccer facility, everyone looks at us because we’re Mountaineers and we all sing the song together. It’s a cool feeling to always share that song.”

What was your experience growing up with the diversity of the sport as women of color growing up?

“For both of us, we’ve been on the same teams since we were nine years old. In Canada it is very diverse. There wasn’t much in the way of racial slurs or discrimination because of our skin color. That’s what makes Canada such a wonderful place. We’re friendly.”

You have played together since you’ve been nine years old. What does it mean for the two of you to come together and maybe go out with a championship?

“It would definitely be a great feeling. Both of us have wanted a trophy for ourselves. That’s our main goal. We both went to West Virginia for different reasons, but it brought us to Coach (Izzo-Brown). We’ve always done things which always bring us together. We’ve been best friends since we were young. I’m always proud to step on the field with her whether it’s with West Virginia or the national team. I’m looking forward to stepping out in my last game with my best friend.”