

West Virginia Mountaineers

West Virginia Head Coach Randy Mazey

Opening Statement...

"We're happy to be here but you guys have no idea how happy we are to be here. This is the first at-large bid in 125 years of West Virginia Baseball and it is super exciting for our kids right now to be in the NCAA postseason. With me I've got our entire senior class here, Jackson (Cramer) and Jackson (Sigman). From day one we talked about getting to this point in the season for these two guys so they can experience this before they move on with their lives and I'm very happy for them that they'll get a chance to see what NCAA Tournament Baseball is all about."

On earning a bid...

"It's been an interesting process in the time that Jackson Cramer's been here. He's been here for four years and I've been here for only five and Jackson Sigman has been here for only three years. It's been tough and hard. When we joined the Big 12 five years ago, that was pretty imposing for what we were getting into. We went into this league with some nervousness and how it's going to go and oh my goodness and what's going to happen to the Mountaineers in the Big 12. That first year in the league, we established a culture that we are not just going to stand back and let the Big 12 steamroll us. We played really well in our league and I can't remember all of the finishes that we had, but in the first year we finished third and finished fourth a couple of times and they said we played really well and deserved to get in the NCAA Tournament. It's really nice to get in after several years of frustration and feel that you're getting in or not getting in and get rewarded and seeing your school coming off the selection show. The hard job as coaches is exciting these kids and it's something those guys will never forget as they enter the tournament."

West Virginia senior infielder Jackson Cramer

On the past couple of days...

Monday after the Big 12 Tournament was kind of a feel-good day to see where we are playing baseball once the tournament was over. On that day, I guess that's when it hit us to see where we are playing in the postseason. Come Tuesday, we had to get back to practicing to get ready for these games."

On facing Maryland again...

"I haven't watched much film yet but we've already played them before. It was a good game as far as the teams are concerned and we are excited to play them again. I definitely think that playing them earlier in the year helped us out a bit and we will be ready for them on Friday."

On finally getting to this point...

"I thought we would make it the past two years. I guess it was that feeling of finally being able to get here after not being able to make it in the past couple of years. I knew we would get here once the season started. In the past, we would just get too close and you can't describe it so that motivates us every day to get here and I believed we could get here from the get go."

West Virginia senior pitcher Jackson Sigman

On refocusing after receiving a bid...

"We've been working all year. Once you've reached this moment, it means a lot. You have to win three, maybe four games to move on. We've been working hard all this week to be in a position to win three or four games."

On the journey to finally receiving a bid to the tournament...

"Look at this view, this is where you are going to play for the next four years. Good things are going to happen to you. My first year here we were one of the first four teams out and we came so close and we had a really competitive team but Coach Mazey told us that we would get to the tournament soon and we just needed to get the right pieces of the puzzle in place and have things go our way. I just worked out harder than ever before and in the end, we made it."

On the dimensions of the ball park...

"Whenever you see small dimensions, you think that this is going to be a home run from any team. You just got to keep the pitches down low, force some ground balls and do your job."

Maryland Head Coach John Szefc

Opening statement...

"We are just very excited to be here. It has been a long season, like it has for all of us. I feel like our guys are very prepared to be here, physically and mentally. We came off a very long weekend in Bloomington at the Big Ten Tournament where we won three games up there. We feel really good about the guy we have on the mound tomorrow in Brian Schaffer, the Big Ten Pitcher of the Year. I think we feature a few other guys that are really hot and are playing well. We feel like we have a lot of guys who can help us get in a good position in a game, offensively, defensively and we feel like we're going to go out there and pitch well and play good defense. Last time we were here was in 2014 when we were still in the ACC. A majority of the guys on this club were not on that team, so we have quite a different roster than we did three years ago, but talented none the less. Lastly, we're here with a bunch of pretty good teams. Obviously, Wake Forest is deserving as the No. 1 seed and host. We were fortunate to play against West Virginia and UMBC this year, both at home. Two very good coaches, very good programs, so I think regardless of who we play in what situation it's a good group of four teams. We're all pretty happy to be here."

On the importance of stolen bases...

"Well, Rob Vaughn and Anthony Papio do a very good job of working in practice with those guys, on the up tempo running type game, our numbers reflect that. That won't change, it really hasn't changed throughout the season, that's kind of what we do. Really, those guys have just done a very good job of developing our running game and it's something we've put a lot of stock into. It not only helps us get extra bases but the biggest thing I've seen it does is in a lot of cases it will take the pitcher's focus off the hitter so that the hitter is going to get better pitches to hit while they're worried about controlling the running game. That really helps our offense a lot."

Maryland senior infielder Brandon Gum

On transferring to Maryland and making his second appearance in the NCAA Tournament...

"It's awesome, that's why I chose here. This is why I wanted to come, to be in the NCAA Tournament again. Obviously, the first time being very different down in Houston with three Texas teams. This atmosphere might not be as hostile, but it's going to be fun."

On his growth throughout the season...

"I think the growth has definitely been defensively at first base. It was definitely a big difference compared to what I'm used to playing, which was short and third. Moving across the infield wasn't the easiest transition, but got a lot more comfortable with it 60 games in, so nothing to be afraid of at this point."

On if he expected Maryland's name to be called during the selection show...

"I guess you're never really comfortable hearing it unless you know it's going to be called. We felt like three wins (at the Big Ten Tournament), we kind of deserved it after that. It was definitely nerve-racking on Sunday and the plane rides home weren't the best. So when we heard our name called, it was definitely a sigh of relief."