

**March 4, 2010**



**COACH KEVIN McKENNA  
HARRY MARSHALL  
RASHAD REED**

THE MODERATOR: Indiana Sycamores are up next. We have Rashad Reed and Harry Marshall with us, along with Head Coach Kevin McKenna. We'll go to questions and 15-minute sessions for all three participants.

COACH MCKENNA: We're looking forward to Friday night's game with Illinois State. They're an awfully good team with two first team all conference players. We're excited to be part of the tournament and looking forward to the challenge.

We've got two senior guards here that are competitive kids and put us in a position to make a run at this thing.

**Q. You guys are here in St. Louis now. Talk about your general focus to get through three games instead of four, and what your mental preparation is at this point?**

HARRY MARSHALL: Like coach has been telling us, we're trying to take it one game at a time. We're looking at tomorrow night Illinois State and trying to get a victory there. And hopefully moving on to Saturday.

We're just trying to prepare and put up all of our dedication and preparation into one game.

RASHAD REED: You know, just like both of them said, it's one game at a time. Not looking past tomorrow at all. Everything is about Illinois State. And hopefully we get the win and we get to Saturday.

**Q. Kevin said "part of the tournament." Does it feel different more exciting not playing tomorrow? Does it feel like you're more a part of things because of that?**

HARRY MARSHALL: It's just another tournament. You come in here -- I've been here four years. Rashad's been here two. So it's our last go around and we're happy to be out of the playing game. You know, it's just like we've been saying. It's one game. We tried to build up to a championship on Sunday.

RASHAD REED: You know, everybody in the back was fighting for these positions. We felt like four games is always harder than three. We're just looking forward to tomorrow night.

**Q. Harry, it's been recently that you've played Illinois State about a week ago. Talk about playing a team that close together and in your case you were limited in to how much you could play there. What difference do you think it's going to make for you not being as limited minutes-wise tomorrow night?**

HARRY MARSHALL: Like you said, it was just recently that we played them. And my limitations are going to be different this time around. Right now I'm just trying to play Illinois State the same way we've been playing all year. Good team, good coach, well-coached.

And like Coach said they have two first conference players on their team. We're going to have to come ready to play, try to be the aggressors from the tip, and hopefully dictate what they're going to do instead of us being back on our heels.

**Q. Kevin, what can you talk about working with Dana in this tournament. What did you learn about how to work with him and prepare for this tournament?**

COACH MCKENNA: I think if you are going to make a run at it, it's tough playing three games in three days. We haven't been going long lately because of our injury situation. I remember

those types of things and just trying to get as much rest as possible. And try to give them the confidence on a daily basis that we've been doing all year.

Keeping it simple and not getting too far out of what we've been doing when we go on the road. Making sure the guys are as comfortable and relaxed and ready to go as possible. That's something that Coach Altman has had a lot of success over that in the years in this tournament.

**Q. Harry, you and Osiris have been battling hard for four years. What makes it as special a play against him? Does that gear it up for you even more even?**

HARRY MARSHALL: Definitely. We've been playing since we were freshmen against each other. And the last years have been more physical and more aggressive. It's just two guys that are competitive. Two guys that are going to go hard each and every night that you're playing against each other.

So we have great respect for each other. It's just it comes to a certain point about who is going to push their team and who is going to will their team to get the win.

**Q. I wonder who you would have voted for for Defensive Player of the Year? A guy from one of the other teams that really gives you some problems with the defense?**

RASHAD REED: Outside of the best defender? I would say from a guard standpoint, I would say that I think Clevin Hannah, he played pretty good defense on me. And Phillips the last game played pretty good defense. So I would probably nod towards those two from a guard's perspective.

HARRY MARSHALL: Besides of course the obvious, Odiakosa, who won it, because he's a great defender coming off of a big man coming off of the floor. Guardwise, I would have to say Osiris. He's a physical guard. He presses you a little bit. He's quick and can get out in the passing lane, so if you're not careful, he can make a big play.

**Q. Can you talk about what getting out and playing around does as far as advancing your program and just a little in general about the steps that you think you made this year?**

COACH MCKENNA: I think like Harry said, not having to play four games and advancing, it is one game at a time. And it's awfully hard to look across the country and how many teams have

won four games to advance to the final day. I'm sure there's not very many. I know Iowa did it a few years ago. But I think it's a baby step in the right direction for our program.

You know, we haven't conquered anything yet. We still finished in the middle of the pack which is an accomplishment in itself based upon where we've been. I think our players can agree with me on this, we're not satisfied. We're still plugging, we're still working, we still have a lot to achieve as a program this year and a future. It is a step in the right direction. There is no question about that. I give our guys credit.

We've battled a lot of different types of things this year with injuries to players and Harry in particular, and Jake Kelly, and Dwayne Lathan. And we've gotten through it. And that's a credit to our players, and a credit to the depth of our team. I think the only other thing that's a bonus is I got a free lunch today at the luncheon.

**Q. When you've had a recent match-up as you have with Illinois State last week, and then you face them again so quickly, how much does that help or hinder your preparation with the players having that match-up fresh in your minds and how much for your opponent having it fresh in their minds.**

COACH MCKENNA: I think having it the way it went, you know, they might be playing with a little more confidence. I don't know. I know our guys are going to be ready to play tomorrow night. We know where we had some lapses in that game, the last game that we played. It was a three-point game with five and a half minutes to go.

And one of the things that hurt us during the course of the game was that offensive rebound. That kind of snowballed from there. But we know we're going to have to play good basketball top to bottom 1 through 10 to beat this team. They're good. They've got they've got good guys that have stepped up and played well toward the end of the year.

**Q. Given the injuries that you had and the things that you did to keep things in line and keep chugging as you did, and now having Harry back, are you a stronger team now because of that? Not better, but stronger and if so, how?**

COACH MCKENNA: I think we are, when Harry and Dwayne went down the first time against

Illinois State was when we lost those two guys we talk about keeping together and getting the Fort down when we got those guys back. That's exactly what we talked about.

That's the direction we took. We are better because of it. Some guys shot and played the point. Now he's a better ball handler, and more ready to run the team when Harry's not in the game. And Koang stepped in, and played well. And we moved guys around, and Carl got to play some wing minutes. And we figured out he could do some things from a wing spot from some smaller guys and things like that.

I think we became a versatile, well-rounded stronger team as a result of losing those guys now.

Having said that, having those guys for those games might have made it easier on us. But our guys withstood it. And for that I give them a lot of credit.

**Q. You were second in the "Coach of the Year" voting, when do you give yourself a chance to, I know you're focused on the task at hand, but when do you give yourself time to reflect on things like that?**

COACH MCKENNA: I don't give it much thought at all. I look at that the only reason my name was considered is because of what our team did. We had some injuries and battled through and got through them okay. Where we ended up, it might have had something to do with it. But our players expected to be where we are if not higher, and probably higher.

So from my standpoint I don't think about those types of things at all. I'm more, you know, and I think our players would agree with this, we're all thinking more about where our team is going. Harry made second team all conference, and that is a great accomplishment. But I think he would much rather be playing on Sunday than being a first team all conference player. And I'm the same way. Ben was very deserving of that award. You know, you get what you get.

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