

**2007 State Farm Missouri Valley Conference Women's Tournament**  
**Semifinal Round: Creighton 59, Illinois State 56**  
**Saturday, March 11, 2007**  
**Knapp Center, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa**

**Creighton head coach Jim Flanery:** "Obviously, we are ecstatic to have an opportunity to play tomorrow. It will be a great environment. The adversity Drake has overcome is remarkable and a testimony to their staff and players. People from the outside will see a No. 6 and No. 8 seed playing and might say they don't deserve to play. But those fans that have been here the last two days will say otherwise. I think both teams will be ready. It will be a war, and it won't be pretty. You will find two teams that will really play their hearts out."

"We are fortunate to have a leader like Ally Thrall who has probably done as much as any player I have ever coached in terms of holding a team together. Then Megan (freshman Neuvirth) has made a great contribution to our team. She won four state titles in two sports, so you get an idea of how big a competitor she is.

"Our whole team is to be commended. Our level of energy on the bench and the commitment to each other is really what has given us the opportunity to be here tomorrow. It is a testimony to how much these players have stayed together and believed what we told them.

"I thought every shot they (Illinois State) took was contested. I thought there was reasonable pressure on every shot they took down the stretch.

"When you experience what we did last night in coming from behind to win (erase 19-point deficit) because it is so recent you tend to not get so negative when the situation occurs again. Today's game was very similar, and there is no question we drew on last night to win today... Last night was huge in keeping us positive for that stretch in the second half when we couldn't score."

**Freshman forward Megan Neuvirth** talking about last Illinois State's last possession: "We wanted to win bad enough that our defense hung in. I was hoping that last shot wouldn't go in."

**Junior guard All Thrall:** "They made some jump shots coming out in the second half and our energy level wasn't where it was suppose to be. But we didn't give up, get rattled, we hung in there and battled to the crucial part at the end of game. Then we stuck together and believed we could win in the last two minutes.

"Yesterday (quarterfinal round victory past Indiana State) we dug ourselves a bigger hole. Today we were able to battle the whole time against an incredible team.

On missed free throw (with 16 seconds left)" It wasn't ideal to miss because we could have gone up by five points. But I knew I couldn't give up and that is why you have teammates to pick you up."

“When things don’t go good for your team offensively when you are in rut, if you get stops defensively it evens out. We hung in there and knew the shots would fall.”

**Illinois State head coach Robin Pingeton:** It was a tough way to end the season but that is March Madness. I think Creighton is the most improved team in the MVC. They played good defense and did a good job on the offensive boards. I was disappointed in the way we rebounded because it creates so much offense for us. I also was disappointed with how loose we got with ball down the stretch with several unforced turnovers. We must play with better poise.

“I felt that when we went to the zone in the second half, we definitely got some stops, but we had a hard time finishing and scoring. They really took Nicole Lewis (starting center) out of the game early when they double-teamed her. They had a great game plan in defending our post players, which is a big part of our offense.

“I didn’t feel like we had the killer instinct today, and I don’t know why... We had a tremendous year and accomplished a lot of things especially winning 20 games with such a young team. Although it is tough to swallow, it was a great season and the future is bright for us.”

**Sophomore guard Kristi Cirone:** “Give Creighton credit. We didn’t dig in on d (defense) and get rebounds tonight. You always have the mentality that when you score you hold them off. They did a great job moving around and attacking, trying to find open shots. They were getting good looks. When you have a lead you need to dig in and get those rebounds.

**Freshman forward Kenyatta Shelton talking about five minute scoring drought by Creighton late in game:** “At that point I felt we should have taken advantage but we didn’t.”