

**Penn State Women's Basketball  
Student-Athlete Postgame Press Conference  
vs. Nebraska - February 17, 2022**

Makenna Marisa | G | Jr.

***Q: Coach Kieger said that she told you to focus on the next play, how much do you think that mentality really helped the team?***

A: That's the only mindset you can have in that situation. You know, everyone misses layups, everyone misses shots. So, you just move on to the next. That is what we said going into the next one, get the next play, get the next stop, get the next bucket. You're going to get another one.

***Q: What do you think has been the biggest factor that's contributed to your success this season?***

A: First off, I love this team. The chemistry is awesome. We all love each other. We're super close. I tried to get in the gym as much as possible to try to be consistent. I talked about that a lot, but consistency for me is important. I'm always trying to work on my weaknesses. Shooting, ball handling, and if I have a rough shooting night, then you're trying to get more shots up in the gym. Whatever it is, but consistency is super, super key. For everyone on this team.

***Q: Can you talk about Kelly Jekot's performance and what she has meant to the team?***

A: I want to talk about Kelly Jekot! She hit 4-of-5 tonight and you know her coming back, the whole team is playing for her right now. It's so inspiring to see her and see her knock down those shots tonight was just amazing. I think the whole team felt it. But those are key shots and she just inspired me, every single day she inspires me, so we like each other.

Kelly Jekot | G | Sr.

***Q: Coming off a losing streak, what positive can you take from tonight's game?***

A: Losing is super frustrating especially after all the hard work we put in every single day at practice, and we do learn in those losses. We do get the takeaways and we bring them into the next game.

I had a conversation yesterday and we only have one more home game together now. So, if all else fails, we want to play for each other, and I have seen the growth that Makenna has brought in. We worked really hard, and I saw it the past two, three years. The reason why I came back is because we have that chemistry, we have that bond, and I want to do it right. I want to do it for us as a team. Tonight's win was big for us and propelled us forward. We're going to get ready for the next game.

***Q: What is it about Makenna Marisa's work ethic and other things that just makes her such a special player?***

A: I never had a gym rat on my team, that's always in the gym. I know Coach said this, but she brings her teammates along with her even in the summer. Coach put on a ball screen workshop, and we really focused on that. That's something that I have seen [Marisa] improve on a lot this year especially and it makes her hard to guard because if she comes off the ball screen and drives, she can score that way and she can also step back and shoot. She's just elevated her game in so many ways, even on the defensive end. Tonight, she had a great stat line. I know she had assists and rebounds

and she's making everyone else better out there. So that's important, especially when she has the ball and has so much influence over the game.

***Q: Could you feel the momentum shifting during the 15-0 Penn State run?***

A: Yeah, I felt the momentum shift. I think it was after the and-1 layups when I was like, okay, here we go. I can definitely feel that coming. Then we had a few big shots. I know Maddie Burke stepped up tonight. That was great to see, she's been working on her shot in a gym almost every single day. Really proud of her for knocking her shots down as well. But something that coach preaches here is to play fast. Our goal is to score at least 80 points a game because we can outscore these teams. In order to do it you can score a lot in a little amount of time. We're capable of it. We just need to do it more.

***Q: Kelly, this is one of your last games in the Bryce Jordan Center, what does it mean to finish your career here after starting in a different program?***

A: I was at Villanova University, outside of Philadelphia and it's in the Big East Conference. Coach Kieger was the head coach at Marquette, which is also in the Big East. For the three years that I was at Villanova I went 0-6 against her. When I decided to go on the transfer portal, she called me that night and I was like, 'okay, I'm going to visit Penn State.' I've always wanted to go to Penn State as a Pennsylvania kid, and honestly, I committed on the visit. It was the perfect fit for me. I have one more game now in the BJC. It's very sentimental, it's sad, but I'm super excited for the rest of the season with these girls.