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Mules To Play For Trip To State

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Mules To Play For Trip To State

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports

Saturday (March 12) is a big day for the Bernie Mules basketball team. The Mules will be facing New Haven to see who advances to the State Finals in Columbia, Mo. If the Mules are able to advance, it will be the team's second consecutive trip to the Final Four.

Bernie head basketball coach Brad Botsch was pleased with his team's progression this season.

"Throughout the year with as many teams that have keyed on Jordan [McGowan], its improved everyone else's skills," Botsch said. "They've gained confidence as the season has gone on, and any one of them can step up in a big game situation and feel good about their skills in a big game situation."

McGowan, the three-point ace of the squad, as well as Sammy Walker, will both have to have great games for the Mules.

"They've [New Haven] got a big 6'9" kid, and we'll have to try to keep him pushed off the block," Botsch continued. "We have to keep them off the glass. [Jordan] McGowan and [Sammy] Walker will both have to have great games." Botsch credited New Haven's discipline and patience as key attributes in their success.

“They [New Haven] only play five kids - they rarely sub. That’s why they’re so fluid and patient,” Botsch said. “A very patient team on offense that rarely makes mistakes - a real formidable foe. They play real fundamental man-to-man defense, with great helpers. They’re a solid team all-around. They run a set offensive play almost every trip down the floor, and are very focused on what they want to do.”

Despite the pressure that such a big game can bring on players and coaches alike, Botsch remained adamant that his kids were focused and ready to play.

“We try to treat each game as a single event and take things one game at a time,” [images/Blog Images/Local News/Walker.jpg](#)

Botsch commented. “The team we’re playing on Saturday is independent and different from anybody we’ve faced. The kids had a great practice today, and I think they’re really focused on giving their absolute best effort. We feel pretty good about it.”

Botsch noted controlling tempo as a key point in his gameplan.

“It will be important for us to try to dictate tempo of the game, but its so difficult to do it against a team this disciplined,” Botsch said. “We can’t allow them to get into their offense and get what they want all the. We time don’t have the depth to play with a real quick tempo, but we still tend to play at a faster pace than they [New Haven] do.”

Tipoff for Saturday’s (March 12) game is set for 1:00 p.m., at the Bearcat Event Center in Dexter, Mo.

Make sure to check back with the *ShowMe Times* for the full story on the game Saturday!

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