

Who is Sam Wyche?

Being barred from a press conference isn't my idea of a thrill. It was embarrassing, inconvenient and unfair.

Worst of all, Sam Wyche's quotes which I used in my Indiana University-Northwestern game story were taken from a tape recorder. Sure, I could press the pause and rewind buttons whenever I wanted, but I felt like I missed something — like coach Sam Wyche.

Did he hang his head in defeat? Did he sneer with bitterness? Was he about to cry? Did he fidget?

And being an IU grad, I was curious to see what Wyche looked like in person.

But I still don't know. You see, I was sitting on a stool in the hallway.

I was told Coach Wyche has a policy that females aren't allowed in the locker room until the players are presentable. Fair enough. I'm not too anxious to enter a locker room of downcast football players who are getting dressed.

What I don't think is fair is carrying on a press conference for some and not others. And what's worse, sometimes it's a good 60-minute wait before every player is presentable.

I had a deadline just like ev-

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eryone else, and my editors expect me to write a responsible, objective story just like other reporters' do.

This is the third season I have covered IU games, and the first time this problem has arisen. Last year, the interview with the coach was conducted in a separate room, although the sportswriters did have to pass through the locker room to get there.

The last two years, I had gotten in by promising the door guard I would look at the floor. They offered me a towel to put over my head just in case I couldn't resist a peek, meaning they really didn't approve, but no one had told them to keep me outside.

Once inside, Coach Lee Corso would insure that players were brought to me to be interviewed. Thus, I didn't have to

battle the dilemma of sitting alone and waiting for the right time to leave or milling around the locker room and trying to conduct an interview.

Things changed this year. The post-game interviews are conducted on the other side of Memorial Stadium, and whoever organized the new setup forgot about the handful of female sportswriters who cover college football.

The experience didn't leave me completely disillusioned. I wasn't treated as if I were some gawker trying to wheedle my way into the old locker room.

IU sports information director Kit Klingelhoffer apologized and said, "Something will be done." His assistant John Johnson was helpful, and saved my story by providing me with a tape of Wyche's comments. Other sportswriters offered me their notes, or were willing to tell me what Wyche said.

I'm not trying to break down barriers to locker rooms. I just wish there were post-game interview rooms, apart from the locker rooms — like Purdue has. This gives everyone an equal shot at writing a good story.

Besides, this 1983, not 1973.

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