

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - McNeese vs Vanderbilt

Thursday, March 19, 2026

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

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## Vanderbilt Commodores Coach Mark Byington Tyler Tanner Devin McGlockton

Media Conference

Vanderbilt 78, McNeese 68

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by Vanderbilt head Coach Mark Byington, student-athletes Tyler Tanner and Devin McGlockton. We'll start with an opening statement from coach.

MARK BYINGTON: What an extremely hard-fought game, and that's what you expect in the NCAA Tournament. That team is used to winning, and they came out right away and jumped us from the start. I just don't think we were ourselves for the majority of the game, especially the start.

I don't know if it was something going on from the hangover. I know our guys prepped well. They were excited to play. We just didn't have the normal bursts we did. What I really like is I don't think we had our best game, but the guys just figured out a way.

They toughed it out. Give McNeese credit. I think their style is really good, and I said this yesterday. They have a really good roster, good coach. They tested everything about us, which is what you expect to be here. So we're happy to go on to the round of 32.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Tyler, it felt like you really hit your stride there in the second half. What was going through your head in that second half, and what made you excel in that second half?**

TYLER TANNER: Yeah, I think I calmed down a little bit. We went in to play collected and calm, and I felt like I could



have rushed some of my shots early. My teammates were finding me in the second half. Coach put me in good positions to be myself and do what I do.

**Q. You guys had four players in double digits points this afternoon. What does that show about your depth on this team?**

DEVIN MCGLOCKTON: It just shows that we're a very deep team. We have a lot of people that can come in, make plays for us. We have a very unselfish team as well. We find an open man and make the first pass. Yeah, we're very unselfish as a team.

**Q. For either of you guys, did you get to see anything from the Nebraska game earlier? What have you seen from that from them throughout the season that could make it hard for you guys on Saturday?**

TYLER TANNER: We weren't watching that game. We were just so focused on this game. We needed to put our best effort into it. I'm sure tonight we'll do our studying on them. Tomorrow we'll be prepared for Saturday.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, guys, very much. Questions for Coach.

**Q. Mark, did last year's experience, do you think, help at all with some of these guys who were part of that, with the lead against St. Mary's and all that? Did you feel any maybe resolve that came from that?**

MARK BYINGTON: No. I mean, I really didn't think that. I thought that yesterday coming in the game. I thought the experience would help us.

We didn't look like ourselves today, and I'm glad we won with this version, because I don't think it was our best version. We know we're going to need that going forward. This was a hard turnaround.

We had Friday, Saturday, Sunday, SEC, and then playing the earlier game here on Thursday. I think it's good to get this out of our system.

We'll be more rested on Saturday than I think once we recover, but I miss part of the guys because there was



times where it wasn't going our way. We were down 10, 11 points, and they really didn't waiver. They just kind of figured it out. I thought they were the more aggressive team earlier. Then we were willing it on make plays there.

Closing the first half was big for us. To be able to go in the first half when we didn't think we played our best ball, going with the lead, and I thought we could reset. Then we jumped out the second half with a big lead. Then, again, I can't credit McNeese enough. They fought back, and they made it tough on us.

Then down the stretch our defense was really good. We got a lot of stops there towards the end.

**Q. Like you said, you guys had a slower start than usual. What for you was the turning point so you guys could probably get the lead and kind of dominate more of the game?**

MARK BYINGTON: I mean, we were playing passive and not aggressive. That is a really aggressive team, so they capitalize on that. So that was -- when I had to call an earlier timeout, I was pointing out to the guys they're the more aggressive team. Rebounding, defense, attacking the drives. Then we just kind of had to see the game and reset.

It was one of those things, it wasn't the best start. We've had a couple of those before. Usually we get off to good starts, but just the fact that we reset and we were able to win the game, I'm proud of the guys.

That's not easy. That team can make you look bad, and they did for a good portion of this game to us. We were able to figure it out.

**Q. Just wanted your early thoughts on Nebraska and just the atmosphere today and the way their fans made this like a home court for them, what you anticipate seeing on Saturday?**

MARK BYINGTON: Yeah, how lucky are we that we're going to play basically a road game in the NCAA Tournament. So much for neutral site.

First thing is when I walked in, I really didn't see the crowd. I went straight to the locker room, Andy Katz told me that's the best opening crowd he's ever seen in all his history of NCAA Tournaments.

In the SEC we're used to the chant of "Go Big Blue," and now we're going to hear "Go Big Red." We're going to be outnumbered 98%. It's going to be a true road game for us.

I like the fact that we've had experience on the road. We played well on the road this year, but we're going to have to go in with that mentality. It's going to be every coach uses this. It's not a catchphrase. We're all we got. It's going to be us against the world.

We're going to have to overcome a really good Nebraska team, a crowd, an environment, and everything else. We got two days to get ready for it. Our guys will be excited on Saturday.

**Q. Similarly to what was asked to the players, you guys had four players with more than ten points. Obviously Tyler had a dominating 26. And then Duke, Tyler, and Devin also had over ten points. What's so important about this team that makes it that everyone can get a little bit of the stardom?**

MARK BYINGTON: Usually when you see us scoring like we did, 15 assists is good. The thing I didn't like was 13 turnovers, and that might be a season high for us. We're one of the best in the country at taking care of the ball. That was out of character with some things there.

We shot a really high percentage. Shot over 50%. When we touched the paint, that was really successful for us. In the first half we were 1.9 points per possession when we touched the paint, we had to quit turning the ball over.

This team really is an unselfish team. It's happy for each other's success, and they will be willing passers. So we've done that all year, and I know we'll continue to do that starting again on Saturday.

**Q. You guys lost a tough, hard-fought game in the first round last year. What do you feel like was different about you guys today that you were able to overcome kind of a slow start and get things going again?**

MARK BYINGTON: Yeah, I mean, just the resiliency. Not to say last year's team didn't have that. It's almost -- there are some things that you can talk about here in the NCAA Tournament, but the opponents are so different. The environments, the team, the situation you come in, so different.

Really whichever team you got, and we got this one, and I love this group, you just got to figure out a way to try to win the game, to try to go on to the next one.

Last year we came up barely short. This year we're lucky to get the first win, and now we want to try to get the next one. But it was something in our first team meeting that we talked about in our team meeting. It was June. That we



want to make I run in the NCAA Tournament. We know that's one game at a time, but you got to win one, and this team was not just happy to be here.

We kind of knew we were going to be in the NCAA Tournament for a while. This team wants to do the best they can to make a run. When you get to Round of 32, everybody is good. Everybody has earned their right there. It's going to be a tremendous challenge, so it gets tougher and tougher.

I do hope we play better on Saturday. We're capable of better, and we're going to need to be better.

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