

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Texas A&M vs Houston

Saturday, March 21, 2026  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA  
Paycom Center

## Texas A&M Aggies Coach Bucky McMillan Rashaun Agee Pop Isaacs

Media Conference

Houston 88, Texas A&M 57

THE MODERATOR: We are joined now by Texas A&M student-athletes Rashaun Agee and Pop Isaacs and head Coach Bucky McMillan. We'll start with an opening statement from Coach.

BUCKY McMILLAN: It was a great season for our team, and particularly these two came here with. Had no returners on the team besides C-Mac and put together a heck of a season. Had 22 games. Tied for fourth in the SEC. Advanced to the round of 32 to play the team that played in the national championship last year and brought back about half their roster with elite guard play and elite defense.

For the game tonight, we knew we had to play a really good game. Houston is really a good team, and when their guards are playing like that, they're going to be a really tough out. I think they can go win this whole thing.

They got good shots when they wanted to, and then I thought sometimes we guarded them well, and they made some tough twos as well. When you are doing that in tournament basketball, man, with their athleticism, their skill, they are a very tough out.

They did a great job tonight, like they always do, of rebounding the basketball. I got to go back, watch the tape. We may have had position on some of those, and they just got up there and tipped it out. I thought our whole goal at halftime was to try to get out there, have a good first 12 minutes to the game, get the thing to single digits and put some game pressure on them. We just weren't



able to do that.

So, therefore, they were able to really slow it down and kind of control the pace that they wanted to play at there late in that game. My hats off to Houston, but my hats also off to our guys for just a remarkable season even though we didn't make it happen today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for our student-athletes.

**Q. For Rashaun, just share kind of the emotions of the season ending and what this year has meant to you and how you hope your time, even though it's one year, is remembered?**

RASHAUN AGEE: Just the emotions is a lot of ups and downs of the season, but we had a great season. I'm thankful that Coach allowed me to come here and play for him. You know, I mean, we made the tournament his first year. We beat a lot of good teams this year. I'm just really just super thankful to be in this situation.

We lost to a good team, but man, we did a lot of good things this year.

**Q. Pop, obviously you guys knew the challenge they presented coming into the game. Can you talk about some things you saw and maybe how they were able to limit you guys offensively?**

POP ISAACS: Yeah, I mean, obviously they're a really long team, really good defensive team. All of Coach Sampson's teams are really good defensive teams, really tough-minded.

I feel like we went on that scoring drought the end of the first half, and that didn't help, obviously. But I feel like we missed a lot of shots today. I honestly felt like we were getting good looks, especially at certain points of the game, and we weren't making them, and they were making their shots. So they made a bunch of tough shots tonight.

Our guys didn't stop fighting at all. We kept fighting. Attitude was great with all the guys, so I'm proud of everybody.

**Q. I know things are still fresh, but what has it meant**



... when all is said, we're done.®

**playing with this group of guys, and what are you going to remember most about this team coming together and getting to play with them throughout this year?**

RASHAUN AGEE: Just the belief in each other. I will say the trust we had in each other throughout this entire year was great. Even this last game, I still feel like a couple of things could have went our way with a different outcome, but man, just the belief and the trust and the brotherhood that we built this year, just thankful to be here with these guys.

POP ISAACS: Yeah, like Shaun said, just super thankful. We all came together in the summertime. Basically nobody knew each other. Nobody knew what to expect, but you know, within the first week you know you could tell we had a really good group of guys that were all about the right things.

I think that really helped us throughout our season with the ups and downs we had. Much adversity where we could have folded. Especially in conference play we went on a four-game losing streak, and we figured it out. Got to the point nobody expected us to be in this position, you know, playing a game with a chance to go to the Sweet 16 today.

Obviously it sucks, and we wish we would have gave them a better game or at least -- not at least won the game, but gave ourselves a better chance to win the game, but I don't think you could take away from what we accomplished this season as a group just as far as being picked second or third to last in the SEC and tied for fourth and then we won the tournament game in Coach's first year. I think it's huge for the direction of the program.

**Q. Rashaun, thinking back to that 18-0 run that Houston had near the end of the first half, what kind of went wrong in that stretch? What would you have liked to have done differently during that stretch?**

RASHAUN AGEE: I would say during that stretch a lot of second-chance points. I mean, they made some tough buckets. We had chances. I mean, it's not like we didn't have a chance. We had a lot of good open shots we normally make. We just couldn't capitalize.

But they just made some tough shots down in that stretch and got a lot of second-chance points that I feel like we could have tried to fix.

**Q. For Pop, as a guy that's able to return for the next season, what do you think this season did for what the new regime of this program is trying to get accomplished and where you guys can build from**

**this?**

POP ISAACS: Yeah, I think this team did a great job of setting the foundation and setting Coach's culture. I mean, that's a huge thing when you are coming in. Nobody knows what to expect. Coach did a great job of setting the culture this year on what A&M basketball is going to be moving forward. You always want to do that year one. He did a great job of it.

All the guys bought into it, which was huge. So, you know, the next group will have no choice, which is kind of how you want it when you are building a program.

I think this first year, this group will always mean something to Coach and A&M basketball. It was his first year coaching at the Power 5 level. Like he was just a high school coach not that long ago. Not many people have had his journey. It was fun to be a part of that with him, and I'm excited, so...

**Q. Rashaun, everything you went through this summer just to be eligible to get to this point, come here sight unseen, what do you want your legacy and your season as Texas A&M's leader to be remembered as?**

RASHAUN AGEE: I mean, the fight we put up. I feel like we put a lot of fight and energy into this year throughout ups and downs of our season. I mean, it was a lot of new guys this year that came in and fall together and allowed me to lead them. I would say my legacy is our first year we came in, we won our first game, and almost got to the Sweet 16. That's the legacy right there, the team, how we did everything this year.

**Q. Rashaun, yesterday Bucky said that you and him will be close for a long time, that you bring life to the party. How would you describe your relationship with him and how you feel like the direction of the program will be going under him after this season?**

RASHAUN AGEE: That's always going to be my guy. I always talk to Bucky 24/7. I tell my teammates, I tell my family, like, man, I appreciate him. No matter what goes on, I know -- I'm thankful that he allowed me to come here and be here at A&M and allowed me to lead. A lot of coaches, you know, wouldn't pick somebody the first year just to come in and lead. He helped me become a man this year.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

**Q. Bucky, it's fresh, but what do you think this season meant for what you are trying to build here at A&M?**

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

BUCKY McMILLAN: Well, I mean, I think it's great when you can be a tournament team, you can compete in our league, which has been analytically the toughest league in the country the past two years.

You know, I thought we have an identity to who we are and how we're going to play. We've showed we can play with a lot of teams. We obviously came up short here today, but I do think that this was a major step getting to the tournament this year where we finished in the SEC, and I think that it should only just continue to grow from here.

We're very thankful to this group, you know, because I'm telling you, if you were in that locker room and you saw the tears in that locker room, that usually happens when you have a team more like Houston's that brings back a lot of guys, right, or maybe a group like last year's A&M team that had a lot of guys that played together for years.

We had no returners virtually. These guys came together for eight or nine months from all over the world, and they're crying their eyes out because it meant so much to them.

That means something is right. They didn't want it to be over with. I've done this before when I've started programs at high school or college. Everywhere I've gone, our first year was the lowest that we achieved. We really rallied from there.

If you told us before the season that we would do this, I'd still say no because I'd still want to say let's go to the Final Four, but if you take yourself away from it and you see where everything started and where we got to, you probably would say that's a pretty big deal for this group, and we're only going to keep getting better.

**Q. Bucky, you were complimentary of Houston yesterday. Did they attack you the way you thought they would, and what are some of the things they saw when they were successful on both ends of the floor?**

BUCKY McMILLAN: I actually thought we were probably a little better on offense. It sounds funny. If you took a picture of our creating advantage, I thought we created more advantages than I thought we would. Like, we played in some games where it's just, like, you can't get away from them. I thought we got away from them, I guess, in some scenarios.

That's an incredible defense. I'm just saying I thought our guys moved it well, played it well in a lot of scenarios. We just didn't capitalize.

It has to do with their tenacity to recover, their length. You

look at that. They had seven blocked shots. We had zero. Then their ability to clean the glass was elite.

They've made some tough shots. They executed and got some good shots. The run before the half when you can't score, it allows them to get in transition a little bit more. It was a 20-point game with, what was it, four minutes left right there. You know, we have the option to sit back and keep it at 20 or try to make something happen. You're always going to try to make something happen. They got some easy ones there.

It's a dang good team. It was tough, well-coached, with high-level play and particularly high-level guards.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

