

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Regional Semifinal: Arizona vs Texas A&M

Saturday, March 27, 2021

San Antonio, Texas, USA

Alamodome - Mercado

Texas A&M Aggies

Aaliyah Wilson

Sweet 16 Postgame Media Conference



kind of what messed us up, I believe is one of the things we could have done better.

They had a really good defensive team. Aari McDonald led them really well, applied the pressure on the ball, help side. We just didn't answer as much as we should have. We didn't adjust as well as we could have. Hats off to them. They pulled off the win.

Q. If you could put into words, looking back as this season, what it meant to you, how would you do that?

AALIYAH WILSON: I don't have a specific amount of words. I think I'd go on for a while. Like Coach Blair said, this team, it was probably my favorite team for sure the four years I've been here. It was a really special year, really special group of girls.

Like you said, we accomplished a lot of things that I don't think a lot of people expected us to. We remained the underdog the whole year. We just kept proving people wrong. Wish we could have kept doing that here during the tournament.

We kept fighting. We fought every night, every game, one game at a time. We were able to pull through. We won a regular season SEC championship. We hadn't done that. We made history this year on and off the court. I don't think I could sum up just one little sentence. I think I'd be going on for a minute trying to sum up what this year meant to us, to me as a team, as a family.

These girls, they're special. They're not done yet. We have a really good group of girls coming, younger girls that been waiting their turn, help make us better all year. The vets, you know, we did what we could. We played together. We played our hearts out.

The result is what it was, but I think we put this whole year in perspective, it was a heck of a season.

Q. Have you thought about your personal future, what your plans are for next year?

AALIYAH WILSON: Yeah, I will sit down and talk with my

Arizona 74, Texas A&M 59

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Aaliyah Wilson. We'll start with questions.

Q. Although tonight didn't go the way you expected it, what did it mean to you to see the 12th man backing you guys and show their support in the Alamodome tonight?

AALIYAH WILSON: Oh, man, especially coming off those last two games where we just only had the tickets that were provided for the team. When we first came out there, we first heard, we seen the maroon and white, we heard them yelling, knowing how many fans we already had in the first, probably an hour before the game even started, we were so happy. Jordan talks about the 12th man and the spirit of Aggieland, all that. That's one thing. When the fans are actually there, you're able to feel their support, hear them cheering, it's a whole different experience.

We were definitely excited. Definitely took us back to the season. Wish we could have had a different outcome. Just having them there and hearing their voices, hearing their cheering, their yells, was definitely a good feeling.

Q. Why so much problem against that defense? What did they do different than maybe other teams you faced this year?

AALIYAH WILSON: They scouted well. They had Fa really good press defense. Their guard play was really good on the defensive end, also the offensive end. Just applied pressure. At times we got ahead of ourselves, giving the tempo they wanted us to. After the break and the press, just slowing down, getting back into our game is



family, talk with the coaches. I'll let this loss grasp onto the fact that the season is over, put the whole year into perspective. We'll sit down and talk. We'll make decisions hopefully soon, so...

Q. Can you put your finger on any reason that so many of your guys' shots in the tournament didn't seem to fall, shots you seemingly made all season?

AALIYAH WILSON: Man, honestly, no, I can't put it on one thing. Tournament play is different, stage is different, big stage. Best of the best. Sometimes you can get it to go in. Best thing you can do is keep trying to shoot them. I think we tried to stay within ourselves, keep shooting, remain confident in those shots. If you didn't try and pick up somewhere else where we can help the team.

Like you said, I don't think we got a chance to play our best ball. That's what it is when you come to the tournament. You don't have too many opportunities to not play well. We were able to make it to the Sweet 16. Wish we could have kept rolling, but we didn't, so here we are.

Q. You have said that you saw so much potential in this team. Did the Aggies live up to or exceed your expectations for this year? What have you learned throughout this season about yourself and about anything?

AALIYAH WILSON: I remember the conversation. I think we definitely lived up -- we exceeded my expectations. Did we live up to our full potential? No, I don't think so. I think we definitely have had a national championship-contending team. I think we would have played up to our full potential, we still be playing come Monday night.

But we had a really, really great season. Like I said previously, we proved a lot of people wrong. I think we even surprised ourselves with how well we played, how much we accomplished, how much we bonded, how much we grew together throughout everything. Like pandemic, things that went on this summer, the social injustices, just a bunch of different things that we faced throughout this whole year.

I wouldn't put a full perspective of our accomplishment just based on this loss. I think we definitely exceeded the expectations of who and what this team could have been.

Q. What did you learn throughout this season?

AALIYAH WILSON: Definitely learned a lot. So many obstacles we faced this year off the court, on the court. We just kept overcoming, kept pushing, kept finding a way. I know everybody talked about how when we played, it

wasn't always pretty, everything wasn't always little cleanest, but we always found a way. I think that was a testament to how much of a team, how much of a family we are. Just knowing this is a team, an experience that you don't get to have, playing in college, playing with the type of girls I play with, having these girls my sisters, this is an experience that I won't experience anywhere else after college.

Just being where your feet is, your feet are, being in the moment, I think that was my biggest takeaway. Don't try and rush the process of anything or dictate what's going on, just enjoy who you're with, what's going on, make the most of it.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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