

# 2026 Phillips 66 Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

**Cincinnati Bearcats**

**Coach Wes Miller**

**Moustapha Thiam**

Postgame Press Conference



UCF - 66, Cincinnati - 65 (OT)

THE MODERATOR: We've got Coach along with Moustapha Thiam.

WES MILLER: Just absolutely heartbroken for them. Obviously -- can I see a stat sheet, please? Thank you. I think if you would have told us before the game, you'd look down and you'd see some of the lines from some of our main guys -- Baba's line, Jizzle's line, Day Day's -- I think if you told us before the game we were going to have those kind of numbers in a game like this and we'd have 19 turnovers, we'd get outrebounded, I think you'd say, well, dang we're going to lose by 20.

I think this group's been so resilient, and I thought the fact that we were in the position that we were in says so much about their character.

I'm extremely proud of them. We did not play our best basketball today. Again the turnovers were certainly a factor. But we were in a position to win the game. That says a lot about this team's character.

It's been a very, very rewarding team to work with. And we've been, in my opinion, since Christmas, we've been Top 25 team in the country, no doubt about it.

So, again, very, very proud of our guys, even though we weren't able to pull out the win.

**Q. The timeout with .8 seconds left, were you trying to get that sooner? Can you walk us through that last sequence?**

WES MILLER: Yeah, we put Jizzle and Mou up -- I didn't want to call a timeout because I thought they would sub and maybe go smaller and switch. They had done that

when we played them in the first game down there at UCF.

So we saw Bol was still in the game. We had some success with the high-ball screen with him and Jizzle. We didn't get downhill off of it. I thought we could touch the paint with Bol in it. We threw it back to Mou, and I was okay if he shot it. Once I saw him kind of put the dribble down, I tried to call timeout.

And then I thought we executed really well in that side-out play. I have to watch the tape, I don't know if the lob was there or not. But Day Day was kind of wide open for a 3 there.

**Q. What did you just tell the guys after this one?**

WES MILLER: I think some things stay in the locker room. But the main thing I told them was that -- and again I'll paraphrase a little bit -- but just how much I've enjoyed these last two months and that we dealt with more crap before Christmas, stuff you can't even make up.

And their resiliency in how they stuck together, it's what coaching's all about. I just told them how much I appreciated that. They're heartbroken, and so that was kind of, again, paraphrasing the message a little bit. Some things deserve to stay in the locker room.

**Q. Coach, Baba got teed up, had seven turnovers. What were the conversations with him like to try to get him to keep his composure and just keep him mentally involved in the game?**

WES MILLER: Just that. He's a big-time player. He's one of -- all-league player in the Big 12, which is saying something. Just kind of telling him to keep his composure, keep his head and come back out and make some winning plays.

**Q. Do you feel you got outphysicaled? And if so how tough was it with Baba on the bench, not able to be in the game?**

WES MILLER: I thought it was a very physical game. I



thought there were moments that both teams were winning the physicality battle. I mean, we were following the rebounding war the entire game, and it kind of kept swinging back and forth. I think we were plus-5 there at one point late in the second half.

So I wouldn't say we got out-physicaled, but there's certainly some possessions and moments that we did. And then there were some possessions and moments that we were the more physical team and better on the backboards.

**Q. Coach, end of the first half -- not the first half, but end of first regulation, you don't get that timeout in. Another chance to kind of get that timeout in the last sequence. Could you just walk us through what happened there?**

WES MILLER: Which last? The end of overtime? I talked about the end of regulation.

At the end of overtime, we get a key stop, and Mou gets the rebound. And Jalen Celestine gets a wide-open 3 on the right wing. What can you call with the defense set to get a better look than that?

So we pushed. Obviously I'm sitting there, I know I can call timeout under 2. We pushed. I'm waiting to see if we get a great look. If not, I was going to call timeout again. We pitched it up. I thought he had a great look. He's one of the best 3-point shooters in the Big 12. I'll take that in that situation.

Again, you go against a set defense, it's going to probably be a more difficult shot.

I was frustrated that we couldn't get -- we were in the bonus -- I was frustrated. We called some stuff to get downhill. And we weren't able to get to the foul line more at the end of regulation and overtime.

That would be something that we were talking about and frustrated with. But the shot at the end of overtime by Celestine, I believe in him. I would take that 10 times out of 10.

**Q. Mou, their press was giving you troubles -- 19 turnovers I think you all had. What was it like having to fight through some of that defense and just kind of try to keep the momentum going in the second half?**

MOUSTAPHA THIAM: I think their press was really good, and I think our guys did a good job executing. Turnovers happen, so it's just what it is, I think. We could have done a better job just handling the press, but I don't know what

happened. It is just what it is.

**Q. This was not the goal, but do you still hold out hope and watch Sunday? And do you have any idea what's going to happen in the next few days?**

WES MILLER: I think, again, I'm not in the room with the selection committee, so I don't understand all the guidelines of it. But if it's about the best teams at this point, we're one of the best teams in the country. Like, we're an NCAA Tournament team.

If it's about overall resumé, I'm sure that you can make some arguments that we're not. But I think we've won seven out of our last 10 Big 12 games; is that right? Seven out of 10. When's the last time somebody won seven out of 10 in the Big 12 and didn't play in the NCAA Tournament? Honestly? Like, we won seven out of 10 in this league, including a 20-point win on the road at Kansas.

I mean, again, I don't know what goes on. I certainly feel that we belong. I know tonight would have helped, but it wasn't like we got run out of the gym tonight. We have a three- or four-possession lead there late in the game.

Again, if it's about the best teams, I do believe we'd be in the field. But, again, I don't pretend to understand what goes on. So certainly we'll hold out hope, but I realize tonight, tonight was difficult. I think everybody in our locker room understands that.

**Q. Keyshaun played 15 minutes during that first half, primarily with Jizzle in foul trouble. He only played eight minutes in the second half. What led to that decision?**

WES MILLER: We've been closing out games with our starting five quite a bit, and it's been very good to us. So we chose to do that. Again, you go to the last two minutes, we're in really good position there with that decision.

But Keyshaun, he's really grown up as a player. You guys that follow us know I've said this: He's going to be one of the best point guards in college basketball. And his play tonight was really, really vital for us in the first half and even in the second half.

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