

2026 Phillips 66 Big 12 Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

Kansas Jayhawks

Coach Brandon Schneider

Sania Copeland

S'Mya Nichols

Postgame Press Conference



Colorado - 55, Kansas - 48

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: I think I'm grateful that there were 19 players that participated in the game, and I'm grateful that no one left with a serious injury. I thought it was a pretty dangerous two hours. So fortunate that nobody was seriously hurt.

Q. Obviously with that statement, Coach, can you kind of expound on why you thought the game was so dangerous?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: I thought it was very, very physical. We changed the rules in 2011, started using phrases like "freedom of movement," we wanted more scoring.

I think tonight, you take Jade Masogayo and Jaliya Davis, for example, two probably of the best power forwards in our league, and that would have been a great match-up to have them go against each other in a way that was less physical, where their skills could have been on display.

But I felt like it was two teams just beating the shit out of each other. And that's not necessarily what anybody wants to watch, in my opinion.

Q. What kind of things do you kind of want to see, when you have a game as physical as that?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: I think when there's two teams that have a lot that they're playing for, and it is physical early, then I think you can call it really tight, and the players are smart enough to adjust, would be my preference.

I've been doing it 31 years, and we had a situation where we had an injured player, and we had the ball and they didn't stop play. I mean, it cost us five points and a timeout because I was told I had to take a timeout to get the injured player off the floor. One, that's not the rule. And two, I've never experienced that before.

Listen, I want to give Colorado a tremendous amount of credit. They've had an unbelievable season. I think that JR -- Krista Gerlich won coach of the year, but I think there were numerous other people who've had phenomenal seasons. And JR should be in that mix. So I don't want to take away from it.

I just don't like how our game is played in certain situations where it's so physical that really, really good players cannot display all the things that they work on to our fan bases.

Q. S'Mya and Sania, can you talk about the physicality of the game and what y'all told yourselves and your teammates just throughout?

S'MYA NICHOLS: We came into the game knowing that it was going to be a physical game. We've already played them previous. So I mean we knew what we were getting ourselves into.

I do think that there were a lot of calls that were uncalled and a lot of really itty bitty fouls that we got called for. But that was just the flow of the game and we can't really do anything about that. The best thing we could have done is just keep our composure.

Q. Coach, you were just over a month removed from your last match-up with Colorado. What did you really take away from that game that you took going into this game? And how did you -- just compare the two games on the physicality side?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: Well, I think that game was more physical late, in my opinion, where it was physical for the entirety today.

We shot a bunch of free throws. They shot a bunch of free throws. We took better care of the basketball today.

But two of our best players are out early. Two of their best players are out early. I like the best players playing, especially in situations where there's so much on the line.

Q. Short time ago, one of the Colorado players said that she did not like playing on this court because it was like glass. Was your opening statement attributable at all to the court? And, S'Mya, can you share your thoughts playing on this court?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: I don't have a comment on the court because I didn't play on it. I didn't dive for a loose ball. I didn't take a charge. So I think the players, both in the women's tournament and then in the men's tournament, will be the ones to give feedback. That's not probably my role.

S'MYA NICHOLS: I would say, I don't know, like Nia and I have talked about it previously and it's different. It's cool that it's historic and we're the first to play on it.

I think it made us a bit timid just being the first time and it's a different --

(Audio lost)

And we all had previous injuries that we're still working with. You're in your head mentally about it because it's not the same as a regular court. But at the end of the day we're just trying to compete out there.

Q. Overall, how would you reflect on this season as a whole?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: Well, I don't think it's time for us to reflect because it's not over. We've had a lot of adversity and injuries. But I do think that as we got into February and we were healthier, we were able to put the best version of ourselves out there.

We've competed really hard and won games against a lot of teams that are in strong consideration for the tournament.

Q. S'Mya, Colorado held Jaliya to eight points, her lowest of the season. What did it look like trying to adjust to that on the court? How did you change your mindset, change what you guys were doing on the court?

S'MYA NICHOLS: Just like yesterday, I felt like our

offense wasn't just flowing for us. I do think that we had a bit of a better flow today. And I do think our forwards were a little more confident, just with their shots.

Everybody's been fronting and backing in Liya. She's a freshman, that's hard to deal with, especially mentally. So, I mean, we just kept trying to lock in on the defensive side. It was a low-scoring game for really both sides. And we were just trying. That's all I've got.

Q. Coach, 15 percent from 3. What did you see from Colorado's defense that kind of held you limited from perimeter?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: I think it was hard to get to spots. Again, they took away space. I think from a scouting-report perspective, they do a good job getting into our shooters.

Q. Coach, you talked about how aggressive they were early. What adjustments did you and your coaching staff make?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: Well, we were just trying to get some heat off of our ball handlers, I think, in the open floor. And then it was difficult. Obviously they were fronting and backing in Jaliya and then obviously bringing a trap at times too. So, hard to run offense on your spots.

Q. Sania, even though you guys didn't get the win today, you were able to hold Zyanna Walker to six points. In the last match-up she had 24. Can you talk about what you were able to do to limit her shots this time around?

SANIA COPELAND: Yeah, as a team we were focused on packing the paint, and most of her shot selection is mid-range. As a team we didn't let her get to the spots that she wanted to and get those easy mid-range jump shots that she was getting to last game.

Q. S'Mya, I saw, I think it was right before halftime where you were telling Regan to try to shoot some wide-open shots there. I mean, y'all kind of had looks like that throughout the game. But what kind of talks amongst yourselves did you all have in those moments?

S'MYA NICHOLS: At halftime, we definitely did a good debrief. I think a lot of it did help. Once Brandon came in, we really all had the same ideas. I was really just trying to tell them to shoot the shots that they shoot all the time and just not to complicate it. And I think she answered well. She was just like, yes, okay, I got you. Just the feedback, knowing that she heard me and that she understood me

and then she executed it.

Q. You mentioned the season not being over. You're sitting on the bubble at the NCAA Tournament. First, just what's your message to the committee with this team?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: Well, I go back to, we had a hard December and January, even, because of injuries.

We have maybe the best win, non-conference win, in the Big 12, with Minnesota, who is going to be a host team. Going to be a 4 seed. I think Tech's projected to be a 5 seed and we have a win there. You look back at how we played TCU.

So I know today was important. But we'll see. I do know this. I think if you look at the Big 12 and you look at how the higher seeds have done in this tournament, it speaks to the depth and the strength of this league. And I don't know that our league as a whole gets the credit that it deserves.

There was a lot of bubble teams that lost first round and lost by wide margins. So we'll see.

Q. Building on that, Brandon, if you're left out of the NCAA Tournament, would you accept a bid to another tournament like the WBIT or NIT?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: The first one you mentioned, yes, I don't think that's one that we would be left out of just based on our net and where we are. And I think very much so if it's not the NCAA Tournament, that would be the tournament that we would play in.

Q. Coach, even though your season's not over, what has this year's senior group meant to this program during their time at Kansas?

BRANDON SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I think you look at Nadira, who was with us five years, and then we have three that transferred in. And I've said this even going back to senior night, when a player chooses the University of Kansas as an educational institution and our basketball program, they're also choosing me to be their coach, and that's something that I'm extremely grateful for, and I know that our culture has grown tremendously under their guidance.

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