

2026 Phillips 66 Big 12 Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 6, 2026
Kansas City, Missouri, USA
T-Mobile Center

Baylor Bears Coach Nicki Collen Ella Brow

Postgame Press Conference



Colorado 62, Baylor 53

THE MODERATOR: Coach, if you could start with a few opening comments, please.

NICKI COLLEN: Yeah, super disappointed. Don't think we brought our A game or even our B game tonight. If I had to grade us, it might be a D. I also think that Colorado is really good at what they do. They know who they are. I think the toughest teams win in March. So ultimately, if we want to be good in March, the rest of March, we're going to have to toughen up a little bit.

3 for 21 from three and 12 for 21 from the line is not going to beat anybody. We're going to have to get better shots. I thought the key part of the game, there were two key parts, but I thought eight-and-a-half minutes into the second quarter, actually, a minute-and-a-half in the second half, we were in the bonus, and we just fired threes.

And we did a poor job of understanding in that scenario that we had to get downhill and put pressure on the rim because every hand check was going to put us to the foul line.

I thought Ella, Kayla, Ting with Buggs and Taliah were really good together tonight. They fought. They helped us fight back into the game, and I thought they played really, really well.

Q. Coach, you mentioned the shooting performance. What about Colorado's defense made it difficult to shoot the ball tonight?

NICKI COLLEN: I think shot selection is a problem. I do think they're a very good defensive team. I think their

length, their switchability. I don't think we played fast enough. I thought we looked like the more tired team until, I thought, the second half, we had way more of a burst. Getting up and down the floor, and I thought we were -- when we could get into a step-up, we got pretty -- we got good shots. We didn't make them, but I just think what makes them hard to play against sometimes is just their length and switchability.

They can emergency switch. We didn't do a good enough job of playing to those mismatches when we had post-ups inside.

Q. Coach, that starting group has been pretty reliable all year. Why does it seem like they were a step behind early on?

NICKI COLLEN: I think the best question would probably be to ask them that. I don't think it was a lack of want. I just think we had warned them that -- I had our guys be really, really physical in practice.

I thought Colorado was going to win that opening match-up and we didn't like it. We don't like the physicality. We want our GAs to call fouls.

I don't think we were locked in. I think we missed defensive assignments early. That's what was the most frustrating thing. Our ball string coverage wasn't good enough. Our rotations weren't good enough. We didn't guard the ball well enough. I thought the breakdowns with that starting group was defensively, and they didn't make up for it by making shots at the offensive end.

So that's a group that's reliable because they're the group that defends and is the most connected defensively. When they weren't connected defensively, I thought they all, in their own way, tried to make plays on offense that weren't necessarily in the best interest of our team, but they were trying to do it for the sake of our team. I just thought our shot selection wasn't great.

Q. Coach, looking at this game, what do you feel the

team needs to change the most before going into March Madness?

NICKI COLLEN: They got to be tougher. We have to be tougher. I thought you look at the beginning of the game, and I remember looking and Buggs had one offensive rebound, and it just felt like she had more than that. And then I looked down at the number of fouls she drew, and they were fouling her going to the glass because they couldn't keep her off the glass.

So we challenged them to go to the boards, and all of a sudden, you started to see Ting get on to the glass and Kyla started to get on the glass, and people started to come along and get on board with creating extra possessions. If you're not making shots, you've got to get extra possessions.

So what do we have to be better at? We have to be more connected. If we're supposed to be hard hedging ball screens, we hard hedge ball screens. We don't drop coverage, and we missed those assignments. We were never supposed to be in drop coverage. We got to be connected. We got to talk and we got to stop talking and start doing.

Q. Ella, did you expect to play that much? And when you did, were you able to find some sort of a rhythm?

ELLA BROW: Yeah, I think my mentality is always to be ready. I can be called on at any moment, so to be able to have that opportunity and go into the game, I knew that our team needed something, and that was energy, changing the momentum of the game, and that's what I tried to do when I was in the game, but it wasn't enough.

Q. Yeah, Coach, what can you say about Ella coming off the bench tonight?

NICKI COLLEN: I thought she was phenomenal. I thought our pace increased. I thought she did a good job pushing the ball in transition. Ella's greatest strength is she is ready. I don't think there's a game we've put her in that she doesn't understand personnel. She doesn't understand scheme. They through a it into the post and she dug off 13, and we had not done that all game long, but she knew that's a kid that isn't a big scorer for them, and Kayla could use help.

She does the little things. I think the toughest part for Ella, she probably could speak to this better than I can, but she had a great summer. She had a really good fall, and then she got a stress fracture. And then that six weeks turned into at eight and Christmas, and then you're in the thick of things. And I think that even though she's not gotten as

many minutes as I'm sure she wanted, it's not that we didn't think that she was capable. I just thought her confidence was the greatest thing that I saw out there tonight. They jumped into a zone out of a time-out, and for the first time, and she went right down the middle and dropped it off for a lay-up.

So that says a lot that in that moment you've called a play, you've got to abort that play, get in something else she was aggressive, you know? She made plays. And she can make a three without banking it in, too, so.

ELLA BROW: I called it.

Q. Yeah, Ella, I'm curious, your perspective on the Big 12's glass floor. Did you feel any difference from a hard wood floor?

ELLA BROW: To be honest, I just play, so, no, but obviously, some people slipping and sliding, but it is what it has. You got to get out there and play at the end of the day.

Q. Coach, I know this is not an ideal way to play this late this the season, but is this a game that you're at least kind of hoping that you guys can get out of the way and maybe it's like the only way we can go from here is up?

NICKI COLLEN: I would love to tell you that's how I feel right now. Right now, I'm disappointed that we won't be game planning for West Virginia tonight. I'm disappointed that I think we had a chance to increase our seed line, and I think we did the opposite.

I'm not real focused on the positives right now. I've got a 10:00 rule. I've told the players this. I'm pretty miserable. I won't sleep. But by 10:00 a.m. tomorrow, I'll have moved on because my team needs me to move on. I have to force myself to do that sometimes, but I owe them that. I'm going to ask a lot from them, and I'm going to give everything that I've got.

So, if it doesn't wake them up, then, you know, it's going to be a real short trip in the NCAA Tournament for us.

We've got to be tougher. We've got to execute better. We've got to be more connected. We need each other. We need each other. I feel like the group when the group had success, when you look at plus seven, plus eight, when you look at that group, they were connected. That's not our best defensive lineup.

It's not our best offensive lineup, but they were connected. They executed. They ran their stuff. They screened, they

moved the ball. The ball moved around, didn't necessarily go in, but we had one possession that Ting got a wide open three on a corner on an offensive rebound, and everybody touched it, and the ball was popping around. That's Baylor basketball. We don't do that enough. I think we've got to trust that the ball can have energy.

There's going to be a lot of film watching from this. The last time we played Colorado, we were at home and we had a stretch of 2 for 20, but our defense kept us in the game. When we were struggling offensively, our defense led us down and our defense, we relayed on our defense all year long. When we get going offensively, then we look like a really, really good basketball team.

We can win ugly, and we just didn't want to win ugly tonight. We didn't have enough energy to get the stops that we needed, to get the rotations that we needed. I think we took six charges against them when we played them at our place and I think we took one tonight. We didn't have that same sense of urgency in our rotations. But our ball screen coverage was bad, and we didn't really guard your yard very well.

Q. Coach, you normally don't go to your bench -- that deep in your bench as early as you did like you did in the second quarter. You mentioned they were disconnected, but, I don't know, were you trying to send a message at all to your starters? Why did you go to your bench that early?

NICKI COLLEN: Because our starters weren't getting it done. They were also in a little bit of foul trouble. I was looking for a spark. I was looking for a spark. I felt like Kiera probably plays downhill as good as anyone on our team. We were in the bonus, and I thought she could play downhill and draw a foul, and she took a jumper.

But there was a method. I don't know that it was madness. Everyone who is on our team is on our team for a reason, but I thought we needed energy.

I just -- at that point, it wasn't about perfect execution. To me, if your execution isn't perfect but your energy is elite, you can cover up mistakes. But when your execution isn't good and your energy isn't good, you're not going to cover up mistakes. You're going to be late to rotations. You're going to be late to coverages. It was just better. To me, if I'm a fan, I want to watch people play hard. I want to see them compete with everything they've got, and I thought that's what we did. I thought that's what that group did.

That doesn't mean I don't believe in that starting lineup and I don't think they're elite players and they're not going to learn from this, but today, they didn't have it. They didn't

have -- they didn't make plays. They did not make defensive plays. And so we needed to start by making defensive plays and then sharing the basketball.

I thought that's what that group did. I thought they looked for Kayla on the post-up when she had a mismatch. They, you know? Ella got downhill when she got a switch and made a lay-up. They moved the basketball. They did a really good job of moving the basketball, and she got ahead to Taliah quickly or got us into action quickly. So all of a sudden, like, we played so much faster so, yeah.

I mean, I don't know that I was trying to send a message. The thing about me, I don't play games. I'll tell them exactly how I feel. I'm never going to cuss or call them names or anything like that. I'm going to challenge. I'm going to set expectations and standards.

And when they're not playing, there's a reason. I'm happy to tell them what it is. But I don't play games. I'm not trying to send any messages other than we were trying to win a basketball game, and I was putting people on the floor that would give us some energy and hopefully help us get back in the game. Which, I thought they did. If you take away that first quarter, it was a pretty good basketball game after that first quarter. Thank you.

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