

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 4, 2021
Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Kentucky Wildcats

Rhyme Howard

Postgame Press Conference



Kentucky 73, Florida 64

Q. Could you talk about it seemed like the whole team's energy really picked up in the fourth quarter, and also you who didn't get but one or two shots in the third quarter, the offense came back together for you.

RHYNE HOWARD: We knew we couldn't get down. We were losing by like only a couple points I think. We knew we had to come back together and keep the energy that we had in the first half, keep playing hard and stay poised and stay focused.

Q. More about Treasure Hunt. She had a real good game today. What have y'all been talking to her about right before she goes into these last two games?

RHYNE HOWARD: We all know she can play, she can produce for us, she can do great things for us. We just had to stay ready because her number is going to get called. We need her to come in, not be scared, not be nervous or anything, just play like she knows how to play.

Q. I wanted to ask you about the Georgia game that's coming up tomorrow. Does it help or hurt you guys just had them a week ago? What type of things do y'all take away from that game, especially with your performance that night, how you guys were able to buckle down on the defensive end?

RHYNE HOWARD: It definitely helps us because now we can go back and watch some of our own plays that we did that worked for us, or see what we did against them that didn't work, change it from there. We already have an idea of what they're going to do, how they're going to play us defensively, what they're going to run offensively.

We just go back to our own game and take some clips from there.

Q. Can you talk about the two shots Blair Green came in and hit for you guys, what kind of lift that gave for you guys.

RHYNE HOWARD: She shoots those in practice. She shoots those in other games. We told her to come in and shoot them. We know she's going to take that shot. She drives middle, everyone knows she's looking to pull up. We know she's going to knock it down. So we tell, Keep shooting. That's what you do.

Q. Florida's Kiki Smith went off for a gazillion points. You've been in that position where you felt you were unstoppable. When a player gets in that mindset, what does a team have to do in order to slow her down?

RHYNE HOWARD: We can't be scared. We have to get up there and at least try to slow her down, just have trust in my teammates that they're going to be helped back there.

We know she was going to keep trying to score. We knew they were going to keep going to her. We just had to lock in and focus defensively.

Q. Speaking of players getting into a zone, locking in, when it's Rhyme time, as they like to say, who determines that? Is that just you deciding it's time to lock in or does Coach Elzy or someone else give you a nudge that maybe it's time for you to take over?

RHYNE HOWARD: It's definitely me. Sometimes I just feel like, just give me the ball, and I'll call my own plays. Call on plays that I know will work or that will get us open looks. I say, All right, give me the ball, I'm going to create for us, I'm going to make good things happen for us. We're going to get back on top and we're going to win this game.

Q. Sticking with Kiki Smith there. Towards the end it looked like you took it upon yourself to guard her in the last two or three minutes. What was the game plan down the stretch defending her?

RHYNE HOWARD: Just slow her down. Like, she was getting too many easy looks around the rim, too many

uncontested shots. I just took it upon myself to get up there, make it tough on her, make her uncomfortable, make her take harder shots or at least give the ball up and deny it so she can't get it back.

Q. You play again in less than 24 hours. Can you take us through your schedule for the rest of the day and into the morning tomorrow.

RHYNE HOWARD: Something like dinner, we'll have film on Georgia, get some rest, stay off our feet. Next morning we'll have a walk-through, breakfast, do it all over again.

Q. Today you played in the blue Jordan 5s. Are you superstitious with wearing the same shoes to keep playing at a certain level? What goes into that for you determining what you're going to wear on game day?

RHYNE HOWARD: Well, I really didn't even plan on wearing those today. I was going to wear my 13s. The coach is like, Yeah, you should hoop in those, you should wear those. I wore them today.

I am superstitious, but I'm not at the same time. I'll wear a shoe that I played good in previously in a big game, but I'm probably not going to wear those tomorrow.

Q. You're always cool, calm and collected out there. Hard to read your emotions. Were you nervous at all? Do you think some nerves attributed to the team's slow start?

RHYNE HOWARD: I wasn't nervous. I don't think any of us were really, you know, nervous. We've played them before. We knew what they were going to do. We knew they were going to come out looking for a win because we got the best of them last time.

So we knew to stay poised, not get too high, not get too low. We knew the outcome of the game was going to be a win for the Cats. We just stayed poised.

THE MODERATOR: That's all the questions we have. Thank you.

RHYNE HOWARD: Thank you.

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