

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 5, 2021

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Georgia Bulldogs

Jenna Staiti

Postgame Press Conference

Georgia 78, Kentucky 66

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Jenna Staiti. We'll take questions.

Q. Can you take me through the team's confidence. Seemed like right from the start you were loose, getting into it. What was said in the huddle before the tipoff? In terms of confidence, where were you at in this game?

JENNA STAITI: First, everybody came out ready to play. I think from the start, we had a bad taste in our mouth from the last time we played them at home. I felt like we didn't play like ourselves. That was a big emphasis coming into this game. We need to play like us, play our defense, our defense would lead to our offense. We really need to get it together.

Yeah, from the start I think we came out ready to go and it showed.

Q. I know tomorrow obviously is your opportunity to get to the finals when you play Texas A&M. Does the game represent anything else to Georgia, maybe kind of a declaration or a signature game that y'all need to be included in the conversation with the elite teams in the nation?

JENNA STAITI: I mean, I think -- that's the SEC. I think we've been dealing with that all year, so... I think we have a great opportunity tomorrow. What Coach Joni said, like tomorrow is not guaranteed for us to play, so we have to have the same mentality we had today to bring into tomorrow.

Q. In terms of your performance, you reached your thousand-point milestone. What's the significance of that? In your own game, do you feel like you've gotten



more physical in terms of getting in the paint and drawing fouls?

JENNA STAITI: Well, I think I just found out that was my thousandth point. I think that's something I bring to the table for this team. I'm glad I can help them in scoring.

I think I have not really done my job being super physical. I'm not getting to the free-throw line enough. I think today just being strong, staying low, posting hard, they're going to foul me. Doing strong moves, going to the basket instead of fading away, stuff like that, I really need to emphasize on. I think, like I said, I don't think I go to the free-throw line enough. Today just playing more big, more strong, I think it helped.

Q. The last time the core four in your group made it to the SEC finals was when you were freshmen. What kind of fight did you have in you to get to the semifinals?

JENNA STAITI: I think when our seniors were freshmen, I wasn't able to play either. So I wasn't here. This is big for me. This is my first time for this team being able to do something like this.

I'm trying to leave my legacy here. I want something big for Georgia basketball. I want to put Georgia basketball back on the map. Like I said, taking one game at a time. I'm going 1-0 tomorrow. Hopefully we'll bring my legacy here.

Q. I know you only have had a couple of seconds to think about who you're playing tomorrow, the game. It's been a while, the end of January, since you played Texas A&M. I'm not going to ask you for a scouting report, but can you talk a little bit about how Georgia is different now than they were on January 31st when you played Texas A&M the first time?

JENNA STAITI: I think we're more disciplined. I think it's been a month. I think we've matured. I think we know our roles, we know what everyone needs to bring every single night.

Me personally, I can't foul. I need to stay in the game. I don't feel like I played that much against Texas A&M. I really feel like I need to do my part not fouling and having to sit on the bench because that doesn't help us at all.

Q. Can you pinpoint a moment in this game where you felt like you weren't going to give up at all? Watching from the seat, I felt like y'all played like y'all wouldn't be denied at all.

JENNA STAITI: I would just say, you know, first off, Rhyne Howard is a great player. She's going to make plays. I think we had that engraved in our head and stuff in the scouting report. We know she's going to make plays, score, do it all for them. We can't get frustrated with that.

I think what showed when she would come down and drop a contested three in our face, us coming back down the other end and being calm and scoring, not freaking out with the press. I can't pinpoint exactly where, but the way this team showed how calm they were, nothing really I would say like scared us or made us go crazy, I feel like just from the tip everybody was ready to go.

Q. How does this game rank today? This was one of the most consistent performances from you guys. No first quarter drop, no third-quarter lull, no end-of-the-game... Where does this rank in terms of how well y'all played and executed the plan and stayed consistent?

JENNA STAITI: I mean, definitely one of the top for me. We were ready to go from the tip. I think we were really excited to play because sitting out all week, I think everyone was really antsy to play.

Everyone was excited to go today. I definitely think this is one of my best games that I've ever seen all of us go one, two, three, four quarters. I hope we can carry on for tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

JENNA STAITI: Thank you, guys.

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