

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 3, 2022

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Bridgestone Arena

Vanderbilt Commodores Shea Ralph

Brinae Alexander

Postgame Press Conference



Florida 53, Vanderbilt 52

SHEA RALPH: I don't have much to say. I'll take questions.

Q. Brinae, with you guys playing your second game in two days, how difficult was it to keep the energy up throughout the game, especially through that fourth quarter?

BRINAE ALEXANDER: It's something that we have done before in previous tournaments, and something that we can't focus on. Like, we can't dread the fact that this is our second game in a row, but we do have to come in with energy and effort and know we have to on give it our all.

Q. Brinae, when you are in a battle like that in the fourth quarter and every possession is a grind, and then all of a sudden there was triple zeros on the clock, how harsh is that reality?

BRINAE ALEXANDER: I mean, I don't think it's too harsh because I don't think we're done. And I certainly am not done. That's really all I have to say.

Q. Brinae, how far do you think the team came this season, you know to now from the beginning?

BRINAE ALEXANDER: It's definitely a step forward from previous years, and I am thankful for Coach and her staff coming in and taking over, but I am really proud of my teammates. I'm proud of our girls throughout the season.

Q. Following up on that, Brinae, in what ways did you guys grow the most this year, do you feel like?

BRINAE ALEXANDER: I think as our culture was big, as she says, that quote all the time, but I think we grew as our mental strength and our mental toughness and being able to push through things and push through those lapses that we've had in previous games.

Q. Just one of the couple of calls there late that went against you guys, the charge on Jordyn, what did you think of that, and just, I guess, the ending in general the way it all went down?

SHEA RALPH: I have been instructed several times not to talk about the officiating on my walk here, so I won't say anything about it, but I can tell you if you want to look back at my reaction, you'll get exactly what I think about it.

But at the end of the day I talk to these guys all the time about controlling what you can control, and I have got to say that for myself too. I can't control that. We can't control that. You hope to put yourself in position there at the end of the game where it's not a one-point game or a tie. You got to make plays the whole game, and we talk about our small victories and the choices that we make that drift us closer to the championship team we want to be and further away from laziness and fatigue and things that are easier to choose when it's a kind of grind-it-out game, two games in a row, whatever you want to say. It's a tough thing to play this game in March when everyone wants to win. Everybody that loses goes home.

I understand that at the end of the game that's usually not what wins or loses games, but I think for me in particular, I will say I probably would have made a couple of different decisions down the stretch.

I'm really proud of our team. I think that they battled as hard as they could. The ball didn't bounce our way. Sometimes we had open shots that didn't go in. We missed some free-throws. That happens. That's the game of basketball, but in the future I hope it doesn't come to that, but if it does, we have to be able to make the plays that we need to make to win the game, and that's all there is to it.

Q. With eight seconds left it looked like you were

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trying to get Brinae, is that essentially the play?

SHEA RALPH: I probably should have left it the way that it was before. That's what I mean by making a couple of different decisions, but I thought we could get something easier if we brought her in from outside because of the kid they had in the lane where we wanted it, right? Everybody knows with .4 seconds where the ball is going to go. I thought if we lifted it over that kid, we might have a better shot, but at the end of the day hindsight is 20/20.

Q. I think I'll pick up there. Right before that with eight seconds, did you get what you were trying to get --

SHEA RALPH: No, no.

Q. Okay. And then another question down the stretch. How frustrating was it? You played great defense for three quarters. Pretty much every possession. It seemed like it was harder to get stops in the fourth quarter. What changed that?

SHEA RALPH: I don't think anything changed. They made some tougher shots. We did pretty much the same thing. I think our rotations weren't great. I will say that. We probably could have taken some more charges than we did. So I'll have to look back at the film, but I felt like our defense was pretty good. They missed a lot of open jump shots, and then they made a couple of big ones when they needed to make them, and that's the game of basketball.

But absolutely down the stretch I think our execution on both ends of the floor could have been a lot better, so we'll take that into whatever we have next as part of our growth.

Thank you.

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