

# Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 4, 2022  
Nashville, Tennessee, USA  
Bridgestone Arena

**Florida Gators**

**Kelly Rae Finley**

**Kiara Smith**

**Zippy Broughton**

Postgame Press Conference

Ole Miss 70, Florida 60

**KELLY RAE FINLEY:** First of all, thank you guys for coming and thank you for joining us today.

I was really proud of our team's effort and our resiliency like we've had all season long. I thought that we played with a tremendous effort all over the floor. People were in different positions, and that's been characteristic of us all season, to adjust and adapt to whatever adversity comes our way, and today was no different.

I thought we had a tremendous fight, to be in a one- or two-possession ball game with five minutes to go in the game, I thought was very impressive.

Hats off to our student-athletes.

**Q. KiKi, I was wondering if you could share with us the diagnosis and prognosis or how you're feeling and what the next steps are.**

**KIARA SMITH:** Yeah, so I am out for the remainder of the season. I feel fine. I'm just glad I'll still be a part of the team, and I'm proud of them.

Our season is nowhere near over yet, so I'm just happy that I could still be a voice and a leader although I'm not on the court. I can still bring the same energy that I would bring on the court off the court. I can still say the same things off the court that I would say on the court. Still implementing myself in a way that can still help the team, whether I'm playing or not.



**Q. Zippy, what did KiKi tell you before the game and what was that feeling today changing positions and stepping up again?**

**ZIPPY BROUGHTON:** Well, losing KiKi, that's a lot of points. That's a lot of rebounds, a lot of assists, and that was a big role I had to step into. But KiKi believed in me, she told me I got it, and any time-outs we had, any breaks we had at the free-throw line, I was always looking at her. KiKi's voice is very, very important to the team, and today she did a great job of staying in my ear, telling me what I need to tell the team, and I miss her a lot. We needed her, but like she said, we just have to move forward and she can continue to do things off the court to help us.

**Q. KiKi, can you reflect on your time as a Gator?**

**KIARA SMITH:** I had a great time. Definitely a lot of ups and downs, but I don't regret anything including this injury. I know all things happen for a reason. I was supposed to come to Florida, and I'm just glad I was able to be a part of a team who could go down one day as one of the best teams at the University of Florida. I'm glad I made the decision to stay. I'm glad I did what I did while I was there, and I'm just proud of the team, proud of Coach Kelly. I'm proud of just the whole staff and their support of me, and the fans love me, so yeah, I definitely am very grateful for the time I had at Florida for sure.

**Q. Coach, you go into this first game without KiKi and everybody has to take on their new roles. What can you say you've taken from this heading into the NCAA Tournament?**

**KELLY RAE FINLEY:** I think there's a lot of great takeaways. You know, I think our offense didn't flow quite as well as we would have wanted it to, but we didn't have a practice between yesterday and today. I thought we were extremely focused. I thought we were very locked into our game plan. I thought we executed and made adjustments on the floor.

I think just embracing and believing that you can adapt and adjust and find success.

KiKi does a lot for us on the court, she does a lot for us off the court, and to not have her or Jordyn today, it hurt us for sure, but I was really proud of all of our student-athletes and their effort, their mindset, and it never changed and it never wavered, and that's what we would expect from our student-athletes and our staff.

**Q. Yesterday Jeriah came in and had two great defensive stops and then today obviously more playing time and was a factor again. Talk about how proud you are of your freshmen, as well.**

KELLY RAE FINLEY: Yeah, I think all of our freshmen have continued to grow. They've embraced their roles and have committed to improving every single day. Jeriah, Taliyah, Tatyana and Birdie, they've just had a relentless work ethic. They have a desire to improve and to help our team in whatever ways that they can.

It's been really fun to see their growth over the season, and I think you'll continue to see them grow in postseason and beyond into next season.

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