

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

Texas A&M Aggies

Coach Joni Taylor

Sydney Bowles

Aaliyah Patty

Postgame Press Conference



Texas A&M 79, Mississippi State 72

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Texas A&M, joined by head Coach Joni Taylor and student athletes Aaliyah Patty and Sydney Bowles.

Q. Huge upset. Apparently the first 13 seed ever to make it to the quarters of the SEC Tournament. How does that feel?

SYDNEY BOWLES: Honestly, I think we were all unaware of that. I didn't know about that, but, I mean, it feels pretty good. I think just to go out there and play, it was a tough battle. They're a really good team.

I would just say it's survive and advance, so we're thinking about getting to the next game and competing. That's all I can say about that. Thank you.

Q. That second quarter things seemed to shift. I think you outscored them 18-5. What kind of changed for you guys there?

AALIYAH PATTY: I think our main focus was one, getting back in transition and stopping the ball, and then just trying to stay in front of the ball.

You know, we really focus on that and like everyone says, defense leads to offense. Getting stops and trying to get back on the offensive end and execute on the offensive end, I think that's something we have been trying to make a focal point in the last couple of games, and I think it worked out well for us.

Q. You guys just seemed to never lose your cool. After the first quarter they just couldn't get back. What do you attribute that kind of even-keeledness to?

SYDNEY BOWLES: I would say it's been our work throughout the season. One of our main things that we have been trying to become is consistent. Just consistently trying to win quarters and not letting -- like if we get hit, not letting it waver us.

I think we did a really good job of staying poised tonight. Even when we were down we never really showed that, and I think we did a really good job of staying together as a team. When things were breaking down we came together, and that's what I would attribute to our success.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies. Questions for Coach.

Q. I think I said this yesterday, too, that y'all shot far above average. Today from three you shot 65%. What do you attribute that to, that incredible jump these past two days?

COACH TAYLOR: I think it's just starting to come together for us at the right time. We have had games where we've scored with the ball and then we couldn't defend anybody; and we have had games where defended really well and couldn't score.

This last two games it's all coming together. Our babies are growing up. We still have a lot of growing up to do, but you can watch it happen in front of you. Again, they trust the process. They are starting to have a feel for -- you have to also understand we went with seven for a long time with injuries and then we brought three back, and we're still trying to get our chemistry back with the addition of our players that were hurt.

So now we have a better feel and understanding for what shots are good shots for us individually, what shots are good shots for us as a team, and how to get people the ball.

Q. Seeding will say this was an upset, but from your

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

perspective does it feel like an upset?

COACH TAYLOR: This is our third time playing Mississippi State. Let me say what Sam has done this year has been incredible, and I think they're a NCAA tournament team. We played them twice really, really hard. They battled hard when they came to College Station and we battled them when we went to Starkville.

We thought we could win either of those games. We weren't mature enough yet. We knew it was going to be a battle. They have tons of talent on the sideline over there, but we felt like we were going to be in a good position if we would do the right things and take care of the basketball.

Q. I asked your players this, but first 13 seed to make the quarters, how does that feel?

COACH TAYLOR: You know, it's something that we're not going to spend a lot of time with. It's great, right? But I think that for us the next step is getting ready for Ole Miss. We're proud of that accomplishment. We will make sure they understand that and know it, but then it's on to the next thing.

One thing we talk about is there is a reason why the rearview mirror is smaller than the windshield. We're looking forward and to what's next.

Q. You have young kids stepping up. What do you have to say about that?

COACH TAYLOR: I can't say how proud I am of this team. We have three freshman who decided to stay committed to us and three that followed us to Texas A&M and eight returners who decided to stay and could have gone other places and had a chance to play.

The immediate trust we had with those young ladies in the locker room is something you don't see every day. It was hard. We asked them to take on different roles. We asked some of them to be defensive players and we asked some of them to do some different things offensively.

And every single one of them and their parents have trusted us in this process. When you see that you're extremely proud and grateful because that doesn't happen everywhere.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, everybody.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.

