

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 7, 2024

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

Texas A&M Aggies

Coach Joni Taylor

Janiah Barker

Aicha Coulibaly

Postgame Press Conference



AICHA COULIBALY: Like she said, I feel like it's fun when we play together and share the. Seeing the ball go in the hole, it makes it easy for it. Get stops after stops and get kills, it was pretty good.

Q. You had the opportunity to win two games last year in this tournament. How do you move on from the high of winning, going into the next day?

JANIAH BARKER: I just think it's the mental focus. I think we came in here mentally focused for this game. I think we got to come back and do the same thing.

Of course, take care of our bodies, stay hydrated, eat well. It's strenuous on your body doing games back to back. Stay locked in and follow the game plan.

Q. AC, how good was it to have Endyia back on the court?

AICHA COULIBALY: It was great. I was happy for her coming back. We knew that we needed her. She put up the show. She did what she usually do. It hasn't changed. It's going to just bring up our momentum going into the next game now.

Q. How do you look forward to South Carolina and what challenges they present?

JANIAH BARKER: We going to follow the game plan. I don't know what J.T. and the coaching staff have ready for us. Probably as soon as we get back to the hotel, we'll have film, we'll have scout, probably a walk-through, tell us what we need to do. I know whatever they say is the best thing for us.

AICHA COULIBALY: I just like the first game wasn't the best. Didn't have the best outcome. We got to come out and fight like every minute of the game. Like she said, just follow the game plan and stay composed and play our game, not get intimidated.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies, you can be dismissed. We'll continue with questions for Coach Taylor.

Texas A&M 72, Mississippi State 56

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the postgame press conference for Texas A&M.

We'll begin with an opening statement from Coach Taylor, then take questions.

JONI TAYLOR: My thought from start to finish, we played a complete game. Mississippi State obviously is a really good team. They put five scorers on the floor. I thought we were really locked in, disciplined in our approach on both sides of the basketball. We shared it well, rebounded it well. When we're clicking on both sides of the ball, we're pretty hard to beat.

Need to have that same focus when we go back to the film room tonight and tomorrow to get ready obviously for the No. 1 team in the country.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. How did it feel to come out and really put up a great offensive performance as well as a great defensive performance?

JANIAH BARKER: It felt really good. I feel like when we play like that, it's super fun. We have a good time out, really enjoy ourselves. It feels like a party.

If we continue to do that from now on until whenever we keep playing, I think we're going to have a lot of fun and it will be hard to stop us.

Q. Happy birthday.

JONI TAYLOR: Thank you.

Q. How was it to see the team really put together 40 minutes today?

JONI TAYLOR: It is what we always knew we were capable of. We tell them all the time, potential is just potential. Being capable of something doesn't mean anything if you don't do it.

I thought we had an extreme level of focus. I thought that everyone that touched the floor contributed in some way offensively and defensively.

We didn't have any lulls. There's been times where we have a quarter that we obviously didn't click or defensively gave up too many partnerships. I thought from start to finish, we put together our best basketball. That's what you want to do in March.

We have to take that and bottle it up but also prepare for a really good team tomorrow.

Q. What was working defensively and rebounding? Rebounding dipped the past few games, but getting back to that dominance on the boards?

JONI TAYLOR: I think it's a mindset. We're a team that prides itself as rebounding the basketball at a high level. We just haven't done that. It was a direct correlation to us losing games. It was as simple as saying: Here are the numbers.

For our team, when we put those types of numbers or facts or statements in front of them, they've always responded.

We knew it was going to be important today, obviously, with Jessika Carter on the floor, the way they get the ball to her, the way she offensive rebounds. It was one of the things that was very important and led to us winning.

Q. Endyia had a huge impact today in limited minutes. What does she bring to your team moving forward?

JONI TAYLOR: First of all, I want to say she's worked extremely hard to get herself back. You finish the season the last six games without her, you can see the effect it had on our team when she's not on the floor.

When she is on the floor, number one, she gets us in our offense, she gives us great confidence. She's a three-level scorer: She shoots it, she has midrange, can get to the rim, creates for other players. It just opens things up.

It was nice to see us get back in a rhythm. It looked like she never missed a beat, and we never missed a beat without her. I can't again say enough how hard she's worked, how hard Stacey Kisil and Sheri Walters have rehabbed her and done a great job of getting her back on the floor.

Q. No. 1 South Carolina tomorrow. How do you continue preparation moving forward with them?

JONI TAYLOR: Yeah, obviously they present huge, huge challenges. Dawn has a great, great team. I think we lacked aggression the last time we played them. We let them score in transition. We didn't rebound well. We had a really, really bad game. South Carolina was the reason why. Let's give them full credit for that. They took us out of what we wanted to do.

We have to stay composed, make sure we force them into the halfcourt, not let them get out and score in transition, because they're electric there. Their best shot is their second and third shot. We have to make sure we do a good job on the glass and limit them the longshot.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

JONI TAYLOR: Thank you.

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