

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 8, 2024

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

LSU Lady Tigers

Coach Kim Mulkey

Flau'jae Johnson

Angel Reese

Postgame Press Conference



you looking to do tomorrow, or are you focused on your team rather than focusing on the opponent?

ANGEL REESE: Of course, just resting up tonight. Going back and watching film of the mistakes. We're going to go out there and watch the game, of course. Playing either Ole Miss again or Florida again. Both teams physical teams, athletic teams.

We'll see who we're playing.

Q. Flau'jae, you had a great game tonight. How are you looking to carry over that momentum to tomorrow?

FLAU'JAE JOHNSON: I mean, it's just like whatever I got to do. Like, I got to rebound, I got to play defense. I had four steals tonight, so I was super excited about that.

Whatever I got to do for the team. We down a man in Mikaylah. She is a big part of whatever we do. Just kind of picking up that slack for her, I feel like, you know what I'm saying, till she come back.

Q. Angel, you made a statement coming out of the gate like that. Was there a little bit of I don't want to say revenge, but was it your intention as a team of making a statement for the world to see?

ANGEL REESE: Of course, playing a team three times is hard because both teams know each other's strengths and weaknesses. I think tonight we wanted to show who the Tigers were. Coming out and execute.

Honesty is a great player. Both games she killed us. First half, not have her score, I think she only scored the fourth quarter, four minutes, able to score two buckets.

Being able to take things personal, it's March now. It's either win or go home. I told the team before the game, win or go home. I think we just locked in and focused on defense and on less turnovers, and then we came out on top.

Q. Speaking of Honesty being clamped down, Hailey

LSU 78, Auburn 48

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by LSU. We'll take questions for the student-athletes first.

Q. 25 points for you, Flau'jae. Can you give me your thoughts on the game overall. Physical out there.

FLAU'JAE JOHNSON: Was it?

Q. Was it as physical as it looked?

FLAU'JAE JOHNSON: It was 100% as physical as it looked. All of my players on the floor, every part of the game posting, beating down low. That's how Auburn plays. I wouldn't say dirty. But really, really, really physical. We had to adjust to it.

We kind of expected it. First game they played us physical. At our house they played us physical. Just got to keep the game in order so it doesn't get too crazy.

Q. (No microphone.)

FLAU'JAE JOHNSON: Yeah, my performance was cool, I guess. It was good in the first quarter, I think. Second quarter I got kind of sloppy. We just finished out strong, though. Poa had an amazing game. Hailey defended. Angel and Aneesah did what they do. It was a great team effort.

Q. Angel, I wanted to ask about tomorrow's matchup. You'll either be facing Ole Miss or Florida. Took care of both those squads in the regular season. What are



did quite a job on her. What did you see?

ANGEL REESE: Her confidence. Her confidence is building within our defense. Her coming to LSU, she said she wanted to focus on defense. I think she's done a great job transitioning into that. Point guard is tough. Her sliding her feet, she works hard every day.

I'm really happy for Hailey. Everybody on the outside doubts her. I try to give her as much confidence as we can. We need her. We need every single person. Being able to have a confident point guard is something you need. We had Alexis Morris last year, so it's a tough pickup to clean up.

Q. Angel, how confident is this group now? You have nine wins in a row.

ANGEL REESE: Yeah, I think we're in a really good place right now. Everybody knows their role. Everybody knows where to get the ball, where to help each other on defense.

There's no time like now. No time like March. We had a couple of hiccups in the beginning of the season. That Colorado loss humbled us, a couple losses in our regular season. We got humbled at the right point.

Right now it's March time, and like I said, it's win or go home. We're in a great place with our team and just understanding what it's going to take to win. We have great leadership by our vets. Just being able to keep the team together is something that's important right now.

THE MODERATOR: At this time we'll let the student-athletes head back to the locker room. We'll continue with questions for head coach.

Q. What did you see from Hailey defensively tonight that maybe some other people hadn't seen her play?

KIM MULKEY: I thought Hailey was just really intense. I thought she guarded all perimeter players very intently and with a purpose. She kept 'em in front of her.

Auburn likes to get by you. They're athletic. They're quick. I thought Hailey fought over screens. I thought our posts were there to allow her to get over or under those screens.

She was just relentless. She guarded 'em all. Whoever was in the game, Hailey would take whoever Coach Bob assigned her to.

Q. Coming out like you guys did made a statement. Was that something that you said before the game, or it's March like Angel said?

KIM MULKEY: No, we don't have a statement to make. I said it before we won tonight. We don't have to come here and win a championship to be a top 16 seed. I don't think you had to come here and win a game to be a top 16 seed. We've done our work.

But we're playing good basketball at the right time. I think I looked on your guys' week. We held a team that beat us and then came within five of us this year, we held them to 5% shooting in the first quarter.

Honesty didn't score till the game's over. That's a bunch of kids locked in on the defensive end of the floor. They got sloppy in the fourth quarter, a lot of fouling, frustration stuff going on out there.

That was quite a start to a ballgame.

Q. How is Mikaylah, and what's her status going forward tomorrow?

KIM MULKEY: Mikaylah can play. She has a uniform on under there. Mikaylah, her foot aches. I'm just so paranoid. I've gone into playoffs with kids that have had what you call injuries, they're unable to play. She's not unable to play, but I'm going to make sure nobody steps on that foot. I'm going to make sure she doesn't come out here and exert and something happens, then she's unable to play for what I consider the most important part of the season.

But, yeah, she's champing at the bit to play. I want her to play. It's precautionary. Why in the world would you do it? She has no broken bones. She has no anything. When you're tender and you take your shoe off, it's like... It's not worth it.

Q. Flau'jae came out on fire. What did you see from her, especially in the first quarter?

KIM MULKEY: Flau'jae, golly, she's so good. She's improved so many areas of her game. Confidence has never been a problem for Flau'jae. She was stroking it out there. The great part is she was also defending. She was assigned to guard Honesty when the game started, in the scouting report. Man, she just gets better and better.

Q. Attacking off the dribble, is that something you saw from her tonight?

KIM MULKEY: Until she got tired. She got tired in the third and fourth quarter. Probably got a little frustrated, too, because she hadn't touched the ball in a while. Tried to create some things on her own.

But you want them to want the ball. You want them to want to make plays. She got a little frustrated.

The defense set the tone for us. More important than anything was the turnovers. We didn't have but eight turnovers. It's going to say 16 on that stat sheet, but that's when the game was over. We took care of the basketball. That's where we struggled in the other two games with Auburn. Tonight we took care of the ball.

A lot of that had to do with take 'em off the dribble. If they're not going to let you get open on a wing, take 'em off the dribble. If you can't get the ball, take 'em off the dribble.

I thought Poa stepping in to run the show out there at the point with Mikaylah not playing, I just thought she was extra special tonight. She really was. That allows Hailey, it gives them all confidence. I thought Poa was really, really good.

Yeah, 5% in the first quarter. I don't know that we've done that all year. We'd have to go back and look. 1-for-17 I think they were. That's pretty good defense. That's listening to a scouting report.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Coach, we thank you again.

KIM MULKEY: Thank y'all.

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