

# Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 9, 2024  
Greenville, South Carolina, USA  
Bon Secours Wellness Arena

## LSU Lady Tigers Coach Kim Mulkey Aneesah Morrow Angel Reese

Postgame Press Conference

LSU 75, Ole Miss 67

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the press conference for LSU. We'll begin with questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. Angel, I've asked you about Poa before. You talked about how everybody deserves to have a Poa on their team. You were emotional when she was carted off. What was going through your mind?**

ANGEL REESE: She means so much for this team. She sacrifices her body every single night. I think she has 30 charges this year. Being able to understand that could have happened at any moment.

That's what I was telling Flau-jae. Don't blame yourself for this. Just trying to keep the team together as much as we can because Poa would want us to stay together, play hard and do this for her and win this game and play tough.

She was one of the toughest players on our team. Being able to just fight that one out, we hit a couple big shots, we all just said, That's for Poa, that's for Poa. That was the hardest last five minutes of a game I ever played.

Emotionally, physically, mentally, I think we just stayed poised and stayed together at that time.

**Q. Talk about you coming together while they were helping last year, and what were the conversations amongst you ladies while that was happening? How did you get through that last five-plus minutes tonight?**

ANEESAH MORROW: Everybody was emotional and



tearing up, but our team done been through hell. Let's be honest. We told each other we have to have each other back. We've been through worse than this. Just have Poa's back because she would want us to win this game for her.

**Q. I'm not trying to minimize what happened last year, but what does it feel like to advance to the final and maybe try and do something that you haven't done before?**

ANGEL REESE: I'm proud of this team regardless. I mean, we going to go out there and fight and give it our all and give everything that we got. We going to battle. We know what South Carolina has. We shouldn't have let them slip away at home. I'm proud of where we are. Last year we lost in the semis. Now we're going to the championship.

Like I said, everything we been through this year, from not playing games to different lineups to ACL tears to losing teammates, so many different things that has happened within the team. It's no better time than now.

I'm up for the challenge. We up for the challenge. Our coaches are up for the challenge. I'm ready for tomorrow. We going to be ready.

**Q. Aneesah, it's been a physical week for you. Nothing seems to stop you.**

ANEESAH MORROW: I know that it's going to be physical every night. I'm very aggressive, a powerful player. Sometimes teams have to throw every bow that they can at me. That's not going to stop me. I've been through worse.

I worked so hard to get to where I'm at. I'm not going to be stopped.

**Q. Angel, it seemed like through halftime, first couple minutes of third quarter, Ole Miss was dictating how this game was being played. How difficult or easy is it for the team to get itself out of that and play the way you guys want to play?**

ANGEL REESE: Yeah, I mean, understanding that the only two players that were scoring would say Marquesha and Madison Scott. Me and Madison have been teammates for three years, won AAU championships together. So I knew her game.

She was taking shots, and she's gotten better. I've seen midrange shots. Kudos to her and Marquesha. We had to understand that we had to stop those two players to win this game, understanding what it would take to win.

I'm not the Player of the Year for a reason. Obviously I work hard, do whatever it takes to win. They knew when to get me the ball, get them in foul trouble and score.

It's not all about me. I do whatever it takes to win. That was just my moment at that time. I think we all played together, Flau'jae, Nees, everybody got big rebounds. You got to give kudos to Janae. Janae came in as a freshman, off the bench, that doesn't get many reps, and made a big-time take to the basket in the first half, got a big-time rebound in the second half, played defense on some upperclassmen that she's never had to guard.

You have to realize the predicament we're in right now. We don't have Mikaylah, Sa'Myah. We're playing six or seven players. You have to be proud of where we're at, but we're not done yet.

**Q. I asked Coach Yo about you taking over in the fourth. She said it's your will. What does that mean to you, the praise she gives you?**

ANGEL REESE: I just never really want to let my team down. All day I've been trying to figure out if I was going to play today. I didn't want to give up on my team, not let us get to the championship because of me.

My ankle is as big as a tennis ball right now, but I'm going to do whatever it takes and go out there and fight and fight. Tonight I'm going to rest up, do it again. Then we'll have a couple days off to get back to the tournament and get ready because we're going to be a top seed.

Me and Nees work hard every single day. I can't do my job without Aneesah. So understanding everybody always gives me the praise, but you got to give Aneesah the praise for the things that she does too. She does a lot of great things that I don't do.

I just don't want to always get all the praise. Give Aneesah her props, her flowers. She's one of top guards, posts, whatever you want to call her, in the country. I don't want this always to be on me. I don't get the Player of the Year without Aneesah. I don't score without Aneesah.

Coaches, yeah, you can give me my props, but we both Player of the Year at this point. Period. I'm out.

KIM MULKEY: Drop the mic (laughter). By, baby. See y'all in a minute.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for Coach.

**Q. Kim, can you give us any more update on Last-Tear? She had movement in her limbs, is that the case?**

KIM MULKEY: Yes. As I was walking to this press conference, the trainer told me that her CAT scan, CT scan, whatever you call it, came back clean. So that's wonderful news.

I spoke to her mother. Of course, she's from Australia. The kid took quite a lick on the back of her head. I did not see it. I saw it on the film just a minute ago and I wouldn't even look at it. I know enough about Poa that if she can't get up, she tries to get up, she's in bad shape.

Her teammates know that. She was just a little bit unresponsive mostly is how I would describe it. She could squeeze your hand lightly. She could tell you she could feel her legs, but she couldn't really articulate good enough for you not to be afraid.

The kids were right there, so they saw it all. I sent them to the bench, told Coach Starkey to take over while I stayed with Poa.

I've been doing this a long time. I've seen some pretty bad injuries. I had a young lady that went paralyzed. Came back later. I had a young lady go blind in an eye. This is supposed to be a non-contact sport.

Poa is one of the toughest kids I've coached. I know she will be fine. I know the power of prayer. We were doing a lot of praying in that huddle.

**Q. In a moment like that when a player goes down, how do you deal with that knowing the game could go one or two ways? How do you keep your team focused?**

KIM MULKEY: Honestly, I don't give a damn about the game at that point. I really don't. That's somebody's child. That's my player. Those are my players in that huddle.

When I got to the huddle, it was bad. It was just very, very emotional. All I could do, I think Angel spoke up, I think Hailey Van Lith spoke up, We got to get through this, finish

this game.

They dug deep. It was one of the more gutsy performances of a team I've ever coached. At that point the game means nothing, it really doesn't.

I think you have to dig and think, Wow, do I really just want to call out a play here? You're thinking about, I need to be in the ambulance with Poa.

But she's in great hands with our doctor who travels with us and one of our coaches. We'll go there. Our president, Dr. Tate, and I will go as soon as we're done with y'all to the hospital.

**Q. In between the third and fourth quarter, was that your message, the objective you gave them? Let's give Angel the ball, let her get to work?**

KIM MULKEY: Look, guys, before Poa ever got hurt, we were struggling. We were tired. I mean, we play hard. When you play it will be three straight nights in a row, Ole Miss was tired. That's why these conference tournaments bother me so much. I'm not sure why we do 'em. I'm just not.

So we were struggling to run anything. Didn't have Mikaylah. Not playing Mikaylah. Angel has a tweaked ankle, so your rotation is kind of not fluid. You're playing Janae. You're playing Aalyah more, which is good for our team and good for those kids.

Then when Poa went down, it's not only emotional, you're still trying to figure out really how to win a ballgame. Did I draw up anything special or call out? I was calling anything I thought would work.

But there was a point in one of the timeouts where I looked at them and I said, I need your help right now. I'm not a very good coach right now. What do y'all want to run?

That makes them take ownership, and it also makes them take away the emotion from them that they got to play coach for a minute. Call it psychology, call it what you want, but that's what I did.

They said, Let's run this play. We got a call for all of them that doesn't matter to y'all, but each one of them wanted to say and suggest something. It kind of got the tears away from them, just making them play coach for a period of time right there.

**Q. Championship game tomorrow. Rematch with South Carolina. How do you regroup after tonight?**

KIM MULKEY: Well, this is my third year at LSU and this is the first championship in the conference tournament that we've played in. That's big. That was a goal of ours: when you get to the conference tournament, get to that championship game.

I think you're going to see two teams that are tired. They had to play hard to win today. We had to play hard. It may not be a pretty game. Who knows. But it is two of the most recognizable teams in the country.

Quite honestly, if I remember, the national championships come through the SEC, right? So maybe you're watching one of us win a national championship. It would be fun to keep it in the SEC.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach.

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