

# Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

**Tennessee Lady Volunteers**

**Coach Kim Caldwell**

**Jewel Spear**

**Talaysia Cooper**

Postgame Press Conference



Tennessee 77, Texas A&M 37

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Tennessee.

We'll begin with an opening statement from coach.

KIM CALDWELL: After a slow start, I was happy that we got it together, we continued to play hard, we saw some shots go in. It was a good day to get one under our belt in this arena. We got something from everyone.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. Coach, what did you see from Talaysia that you felt like she was good to go? How much did her performance impact the confidence of both herself and the team?**

THE MODERATOR: We'll do questions for the athletes first. If you have questions for the players...

Talaysia, how did it feel to be back out there today?

TALAYSIA COOPER: It feel great. That's it (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. How was the practice after the last two games leading into today? What was that like?**

JEWEL SPEAR: I thought practices were really focused. We focused on what we could control, which is our energy and effort, being more solid on defense, and knowing the

scout.

I thought we executed the scout really well against a really good Texas A&M basketball team. I'm just really proud of my teammates.

THE MODERATOR: Talaysia, would you like to answer that, as well?

TALAYSIA COOPER: No, I don't.

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

KIM CALDWELL: Same question?

**Q. Yes.**

KIM CALDWELL: It was good to have her out there. She practiced the day before. She was still a little limpy. So we watched her, did treatment last night, watched her in warm-ups. She did a really good job today. That was what we needed from her. We needed her to go downhill, get up in the front of the press. When she does that, our team is better. We really feed off of her.

**Q. Far from the first person to ask you about the toughness of the SEC. I wonder what you attribute that to, especially a couple years. It's your first year, but there were so many coaches hired in '22, '22? What are you seeing conference wide?**

KIM CALDWELL: I think it's such a balanced conference. It's a physical conference. It's a very athletic conference. It's a situation where anyone can beat anyone. You have to show up every single night and you have to be mentally tough. There's a swagger and mental toughness that I learned this year. You really have to show up every single night and make sure your players are focused. It's a long SEC season. It's only 16 games, but it feels long.

I think next year we can do a better job of managing that. I was a little taken aback on the physical toll this league has on players.



**Q. What did you see defensively today that maybe we didn't see last week in SEC play?**

KIM CALDWELL: Yeah, I think we got up, pressured, played with a sense of urgency, all flying around. I think it was just effort.

**Q. Looking forward to tomorrow, in a rematch with Vanderbilt, what are you looking forward to most about that?**

KIM CALDWELL: I mean, thankful that we have the opportunity to play them again. It's a really hard team to play with zero prep. They run a lot of sets, are very disciplined. They definitely had our number. We didn't play very well against them when we had two days' prep. Having to do it on none, it's going to be a tall task for our players.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach.

KIM CALDWELL: Thank you.

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