

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 7, 2025

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

Oklahoma Sooners

Coach Jennie Baranczyk

Raegan Beers

Postgame Press Conference



Oklahoma 69, Kentucky 65

THE MODERATOR: We welcome Oklahoma. We'll start with questions for Raegan.

Q. At the end of that third period, you were able to put Oklahoma over Kentucky. How were you able to carry that momentum into the final 10 minutes of the game?

RAEGAN BEERS: When we have a lot of energy on the bench like we did, coming out in that third quarter, going into the fourth, that energy from the bench onto the court just fuels us. It fuels every good team.

Today I feel like we played with intensity and we played with fun. When we play with that energy and we have fun as a team, it really pushes us over that hump which you saw in the third quarter leading into the fourth.

Q. Will you please talk about what it's like to match up against Clara Strack?

RAEGAN BEERS: Man, she's phenomenal. Obviously a great defender, long, lengthy, really hard, moves well. Has a beautiful shot on the outside. Great person to go up against.

I love going up against great players like that because it just makes me better. It was a great test for us today as a team. I feel like defensively we guarded her for the most part really well. Kind of digging in when we needed to. Our guards were kind of getting in there. If our post got too buried...

When we play team defense like that against good players like her and teams like Georgia, we come out on top, which

we ended up doing today.

Q. You were named one of the five finalists for the Center of the Year award. Talk about what that means to you.

RAEGAN BEERS: That's cool. That means a lot. That's really cool to be put on that list. There's a lot of phenomenal people on that list. I didn't see it before the game, but I can guarantee probably Lauren Betts is on there, Audi Crooks, I would assume, names like that. To be at the top with those players is pretty phenomenal because those are great players. The people in the past that have won that award are even better.

To be on that list, one of the top five, is an honor. I'm thankful to be a part of it.

Q. Two pretty intense games so far. How much gas is left in the tank for you guys?

RAEGAN BEERS: Enough to come back and play tomorrow. I mean, we got to come back. Obviously recovery is going to be important. We'll prioritize that tonight like we did yesterday. There's cold tubs in the locker room that they set up for us so we'll be using those.

Getting good rest tonight. Obviously South Carolina is a phenomenal team. We're going to prep tonight and be ready for tomorrow.

Q. On a lighter note, as you were leaving the court, I saw you talking with the pep band. They started in cheers of, Beers, Beers, Beers. Do you get that a lot?

RAEGAN BEERS: Yeah, obviously my last name is popular. Beers, Beers. The band started that chant here, a little bit back in Norman. They just love to chant that. It's just fun having that energy. Obviously on the court when you're with the team, you can have that energy within the team. But when your band and cheer and your fans bring that energy with you. Our fans were up cheering defense. I heard them. When you have that energy, that fuels you even more.



So to have a band like that that's willing to do all that, bring the energy with us, along with our team and fans, it's a fun environment to play in.

THE MODERATOR: Raegan, thank you.

RAEGAN BEERS: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: We'll continue with questions for Coach.

Q. Last time you played this Kentucky team, you really struggled to stop specifically Georgia, the whole offense. What did you tell your team tonight? What did you know had to change?

JENNIE BARANCZYK: Well, I tell you what, Kentucky is really, really good. They're balanced. They can spread you out. When you have an elite forward like that, it's really challenging. I don't know how many times I was asked the question, How you going to stop her? Every time you can't stop her. She does so many things.

I think what we had to do was make her work a little bit more. I do feel like us playing them once helps you to play 'em twice. That's something that we'd never played her before, and she was really great.

What she does so well, she creates so much for them. Even though she's such an efficient scorer, an elite scorer, she can create so much for other people, even when it doesn't come out as an assist. Might be a hockey assist.

We had to do a better job of making her work. I thought we did a really nice job, especially compared to the last time, of not running around and trying to chase her. You still have to move, still have to work.

How about Skylar Vann, our freshman. I thought she did a phenomenal job. I feel like the rest of our team did a better job of staying disciplined and not over-helping. I thought we did a better job of position defense.

I haven't watched the film. I'm sure I'll find plenty of holes in it. She's just good, really, really good.

Q. What do you like about having Raegan on your team, other than the fact she's a great basketball player? She seems upbeat and positive.

JENNIE BARANCZYK: Yeah, that's real, how she was talking. She's just a really nice person. She made blankets for everyone on the team for Christmas. She spends her days at Hobby Lobby. She's just a really good

person.

I think the culture of our team, you can tell our team, what she says, when we have fun we're really good, and when we have the chemistry it comes out in assists and team defense today. But this team has really built a lot.

When she's really assertive on the floor the way that she was, she's really inserting her personality. She's a leader. At the same time it took her a long time to really want to fit in. That took us a long time for that on-court chemistry because she's such a great person.

We have a locker room full of incredible women that absolutely cheer for each other and want each other to do well. I think that's really special. Raegan is no different.

Q. The bench energy and the energy from the fans tonight seemed to be prevalent. How much does that mean to your team?

JENNIE BARANCZYK: Well, I think it's funny. I'll tell the story of my parents. Their flight got canceled and they drove. They have live in Iowa. That's not close. I'm lucky to have our family travel like that. I'm lucky that I'm at a place like Oklahoma.

We want more people to be here. Obviously it's pretty far for us. But the people that are here were on their feet the whole time. They're not all families. A lot of our staff brought their families and they're invested in this team and program because these women are really easy to cheer for. They're just an incredible group.

I love that Landry Allen was in the locker room. She stepped up. You have to have a Landry on your team who comes in every day with a smile on her face. We don't see this a lot in college athletics. She's on scout team every day. She just has a good attitude. She doesn't get in a lot of games. Today she came up really big in 'the biggest game of the season'.

The biggest person cheering for her is Beatrice Culliton. She's a player whose time got taken by Raegan. Landry took Beatrice's time today. When they're all cheering, that's real. You can't make that up.

This team is a fun team. It's a deep, deep team, not just from a talent standpoint, but deep connections. It's easy to have some energy on the floor.

You didn't need all that, but you got it. Sorry (smiling).

Q. Kentucky has been known to be susceptible to teams that play physically. They've had depth issues.



How much of your strategy was geared towards those areas, beating them up and tiring them out?

JENNIE BARANCZYK: Let's not act like it wasn't physical both ways. I think it was physical both ways.

Their length, you can't go over that in a hotel ballroom in a scout. You can't go over that with scout teams. This league is physical.

It wasn't our intent to come in and just be physical. In fact, I think we need to get more physical in a lot of the games, especially on the rebounding edge. They got the rebounding edge.

I feel like it was just an SEC game that was a physical game.

The intent is just to do whatever you can to continue to get better. I feel like we were lucky to be able to make the run at the right time.

But they're very good. They're very good. This league is good.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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