

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 7, 2025

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

Texas Longhorns

Coach Vic Schaefer

Madison Booker

Rori Harmon

Postgame Press Conference



Texas 70, Ole Miss 63

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas. We'll start with an opening statement from Coach.

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, just going to give God the glory for number 30. This is an incredible team, so much toughness. Beat a really good Mississippi team tonight. They are a really talented, veteran group. They're tough. They're aggressive, they're physical. I certainly think they're a top-16 team.

We've seen a lot of them this year. They're as tough as anybody we've played.

But I'm proud of my kids, man. They played so hard. These two just out there competing their tail off, playing their guts out. In a game like that, it's so physical and so tough. You've got to be able to execute.

I thought the first half we did a great job of executing. I thought Rori ran our offense really good. Only had three turnovers at halftime. We had 10 the second half. We just had some uncharacteristic things, uncharacteristic turnovers, some charges that we don't typically have.

Again, give your opponent credit. They certainly made some plays like that. Probably the biggest thing in the game was both my fives had three fouls, I think, at halftime. They managed to survive in the second half, deal with some things that quite frankly are concerning, just really unusual.

I mean, y'all have heard of Hack-a-Shaq, for those of y'all

that had been around back in the day. They had a kid play tonight that doesn't play hardly at all, got her five fouls worth. It just creates some issues down there.

My kids haven't been in foul trouble like that all year. So for us, my kids got to be better. I got to coach better, teach better. We got to be better in that area, and handle it.

We'll learn from it. Made some big free throws down the stretch. We had to adjust. We were up 10. I felt like they were trying to drive it, after being up 15. We went to matchup. We give up a three off a full-court. They inbounded on one end, dribble down, throw it to the wing, and our wing is sitting there asleep, we give up three. The next possession, the same thing.

I don't think we played as hard in the matchup as we did man. But they wanted to go back to man, and they did, and they found a way to get it done.

Seven-point third quarter was really big. Again, these kids are playing so hard. They've played so many minutes all year long. You get to this point in the season, you're asking 'em now to try to make it two and three games in a row.

We'll get some good rest tonight and get an ice tub, get ready to play obviously another top 10, potentially top 10, team tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Rori, in the fourth quarter you got a lot of different plays from a lot of different people. Speak to the team effort.

RORI HARMON: Yeah, we talk about winning plays. We can go down the line with the whole team who contributed with just creating a winning play. Just super proud of my teammates for being able to lock in and just get the job done for that game. Obviously job's not done, but for that game it was tough.

We played a really great team, Ole Miss. We knew what

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we were going to come up against. We had a lot of great winning plays. Those are what win games, so yeah.

Q. How do y'all take the positives from this one after such a physical game? How do you recover and prepare for tomorrow?

MADISON BOOKER: I think we have to look at the positive to see what we did well this game. We have to kind of look at it and see how we can contribute, doing well with those positive things we did to win this game, the winning plays we made.

We just came up with the negatives too bad. It's a game, we won. We got to move on and see what we can do more well positive than negative.

RORI HARMON: Yep, exactly what she said.

Q. Third quarter, Madison loses her shoe. Take us through that play.

MADISON BOOKER: Oh.

RORI HARMON: I'll start off, then you can add.

I saw her shoe go off. I'm like, Are you serious? She's not tying her shoes. Okay. I'm like guarding KK Deans in the corner. Do I pick up the shoe or face guard her? Taylor and the other post player were about to step all over her shoe. That's a hazard. I went over that and I picked it up. I could throw it to the sideline, but then she won't have it. I was like, I can do this, I can guard with the shoe in my hand.

Of course, we got a good stop, Maddie gets the rebound. We just exchange it. That's what good chemistry is. We pass it to Shay, and she gets an and-one. Winning play right there.

MADISON BOOKER: I think I play well with one shoe on. The little exchange, the ball for a shoe is a good pass.

Also, let's talk about Rori being a great point guard. After she passed me the shoe and she got the ball, she passed to Shay Holle in transition, she got an and-one layup. Great point guard right here. Nothing more to say to that. Little pass-off.

RORI HARMON: Thanks (laughter).

Q. Obviously you get the win. When you're going through the fourth quarter, Ole Miss is making their run, how do you stay composed? What was Coach's message?

MADISON BOOKER: To be honest, Coach didn't really, like, say anything. We've been through this before. We've been through this through all of conference.

I just think that we're prepared for this moment. Like, people make runs all the time. It's get one big stop, get a score. You just gotta kind of get back together, gather yourself, kind of look in the mirror, see what's the problem, what's the leak?

I think just the leaders like Rori, Shay, Taylor, Kyla, people talking, encouraging, just get a stop, let's make a run. I think the message we said today was we have this drill called Longhorn. Straight, four minutes, all fast-break points, up and down, up and down, no stopping, no timeouts, no nothing.

We just told the team two Longhorns, just two more. That's like, what, eight minutes? That kind of mindset got us through the game.

RORI HARMON: Yeah, very well said.

Yeah, there was a lot of moments where we could have definitely just been like, Dang, put our heads down. That's just not what we do here. Like she said, we have really good leadership on this team that are just able to pick us up.

We've been in this situation, like Maddie said. We've been in this situation, we understand what's at stake. We're just going to make sure that we don't get punched, and we did, yeah.

Q. Rori, you have so many experienced upperclassmen on the roster, but you had to sit last year. You've had good college experiences. What is the sense of urgency in the locker room in games? You're aware you don't have opportunities to waste.

RORI HARMON: Yeah, I mean, like you said, we do have some great people that we really don't know what is next in the future for them.

That's the thing, like, when it comes down to those NCAA games or even now, it's the game or you go home. I think everyone understands that in the locker room. They want to play for each other.

We truly want to play for each other. We know what's at stake, like I said. We understand what's at stake. We just don't want to turn back and look back and just regret not doing what we could, doing the best that we could in the game, so...



THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies. We'll continue with questions for Coach.

Q. How do you quickly turn around and prepare for the game tomorrow?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, your toughness and your competitive spirit will be challenged now. You're going to have to get back to play in probably less than 24 hours.

I feel like my teams always this time of year are prepared for something like this. I really haven't had any teams in the past that, when they play that second game, they're all fried and can't function, you know?

I think there's a method to our madness throughout the course of the season. I'm a creature of habit. I follow the same practice plans. Practice No. 90 this year was the same as last year other than who we were preparing for, for the most part. The only difference in that is what we're doing on offense and guarding 'em.

I always feel good about my teams and their conditioning. Again, they're competitors, man. These two right here, ain't two better competitors in the country. Shay Holle. Shay ain't been tired a day in her life. She's like the Energizer Bunny.

Q. A lot of fouls tonight.

VIC SCHAEFER: You think?

Q. How do you go about keeping your players out of foul trouble tomorrow?

VIC SCHAEFER: Beats the hell out of me. I'm telling you. You all saw me. I was pretty frustrated. I don't really have an answer for that. I just don't.

I praise my five players because they adjusted in the second half. I thought they did a nice job. Again, it's really frustrating 'cause I feel like Taylor is 6'4" with 6'6" wingspan. Kyla is 6'6". I feel like they get penalized sometimes because they're tall. Really, it feels that way. It is what it is. So we'll move on.

Q. Yolett was a little offended that her team is not ranked. Where do you think they stand among college basketball teams?

VIC SCHAEFER: They just beat No. 6 or 7 on the road. They played us really well two times this season. They're certainly worthy of being in the top 25. I don't think there's any question about that.

Again, I think when you start talking about -- I don't know what their net is. I don't have any idea about all that, strength of schedule. Just from who I've played this season, who they are, the kids that they have. I mean, Madison Scott, monster. We did a great job with Starr Jacobs tonight. She's a really good player. The left-handed post inside is really, really special.

I think probably the most -- the kid that's played the best for them is Kennedy Todd-Williams. She's really been impressive to me. Sadler has been playing really well. I thought Kennedy Todd-Williams has really played well for them. I was really concerned about her going in. We did a decent job on her. She was 3 for 10. We did a good job on her. Still had three offensive rebounds.

I think they're really good. I certainly think when you start thinking about, again, I don't have any information as far as what their net is and all that.

Q. Was there anything that you saw out of the way KK shot the ball in the fourth quarter that had you concerned about your defense?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, I mean, we played H-O-R-S-E with a shooter. Again, we gave up eight points on out of bounds defense tonight. That's not my MO. We spend way too much time day before, day of on out of bounds defense for our kids to make those mistakes.

My five players, because we're having to protect backside a lot of times, my five players have got to do a better job of denying on the frontside. First play of the game, Taylor let's them catch it. Rori is not going to get there. It's impossible. Deans makes the shot in the corner. We've been through that, y'all, for a week. Everybody else runs it, too.

It's just a fundamental thing that drives me crazy. We gave up eight points on out of bounds plays. Like, man, that bothers me. I feel like we spend a lot of time on it.

Again, it doesn't matter, y'all. Doesn't matter. I go in after every game, I write the pros and cons on the board. We have gotten away with a lot of cons and still won this year. That's what bothers me.

You want to know what keeps me up at night? Tonight we had four things on the positive side, five things, and probably 10 on the other side. I keep telling 'em we're able to learn from these mistakes through victories.

I don't want them to take it any way wrong, but if I just go in there and it's Kumbaya, how are we going to learn

anything? I want them to learn and understand.

Free throw blockout. Missed one again tonight. It's been a problem all year. That's toughness. Out of bounds defense. Eight points we gave up. Two threes. It's toughness. So there's things that we have to continue to focus on.

Again, it's not personal for me. I'm just trying to help. I'm trying to do my job as a coach, show 'em and teach 'em, Hey, we can't continue to have these issues.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you.

VIC SCHAEFER: Appreciate your coverage. Praise the Lord and hook 'em horns.

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