

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 8, 2025
Greenville, South Carolina, USA
Bon Secours Wellness Arena

Oklahoma Sooners Coach Jennie Baranczyk Payton Verhulst Postgame Press Conference



South Carolina 93, Oklahoma 75

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Oklahoma. We'll take questions for Payton.

Q. What were you seeing on the court and what was South Carolina doing that got you guys off balance?

PAYTON VERHULST: Yeah, we talked about it at halftime. We really wanted our offense to dictate how they had to play defense. I think for the majority of the game, their defense dictated our offense.

Obviously I just think we weren't on the same page when we were trying to get in the paint or reverse and get skips. When we did those things, we got easy looks, wide-open threes. We needed to do that more, obviously.

Q. What do you feel like you learned about your team in your first SEC tournament?

PAYTON VERHULST: I think Jennie and our team has been saying this, like, we belong. I think obviously our first two games I think we showed that. Obviously wish we would have showed a little bit more tonight.

The reality is we have a whole 'nother tournament to look to and we're going to get better.

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

Q. Payton was talking about how you guys wanted your offense to dictate how South Carolina played defense. How difficult is that against South Carolina, the way they're playing right now?

JENNIE BARANCZYK: More we want to take what they're giving us. We want to make a lot of reads, have really good ball movement. I think they stifled us. They're very, very good. Very disciplined on the defensive end. They stretch you out on the offensive end.

They made it difficult. The whole environment made it difficult for us. You want to start a heck of a lot better than you do. You can't pass it to 'em because they're too good, they convert too easy. I thought we did a better job in the second half.

You have to show up from the tip or you're not going to make it.

Q. What do you feel like is the next step for your team in terms of making a deep run in the NCAA tournament?

JENNIE BARANCZYK: We have to step up in every game, regardless of how big it is. I think we've gotten better. We've gotten a heck of a lot better since we were in South Carolina the first time. You can see that.

But we got a long way to go. Especially the deeper you go, the more tired you get, and mental toughness comes out. That's where I feel like today we needed to be a little bit mentally tougher to start the game.

We made too many mental errors. You can't foul so much. We were in a lot of foul trouble. That got us out of rotation. We can't give up so many second chances. It's the simple things.

And offensively, we have to do a better job of being able to take what people are giving us, get a little bit more connected. When we do that, we're pretty good.

In this tournament I don't know if we necessarily shot the ball too well. Hopefully in the next one we do.

Q. Talk about shooting the ball. You made 11 three-pointers tonight. South Carolina had two. Is it



tough when you out-shoot somebody like that...

JENNIE BARANCZYK: Not when they score a hundred in the paint. We needed to do more in the paint. We knew we would have to make some outside shots. We had some really good looks that didn't go in. We needed to convert those ones in the paint a lot more than we did tonight from a variety of people.

Yeah, I mean, I don't necessarily look three for three when they're just pounding it in the paint, then stepping up to the free-throw line. We gave up too many and-ones, as well. You have to hope they only get two free throws or you can't foul. That's something that we've just got to get better.

I think when you dominate the paint, you're going to dominate the game.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

JENNIE BARANCZYK: Thank you.

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