

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

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

South Carolina Gamecocks
Coach Dawn Staley
MiLaysia Fulwiley
Joyce Edwards

Postgame Press Conference

South Carolina 93, Oklahoma 75

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by South Carolina. We'll take questions for our student-athletes.

Q. Joyce, Maryam has had a tough stretch. What have you seen from her? How nice to see her put it all together?

JOYCE EDWARDS: I've seen growth. I'm so happy for her. She comes every day in practice and gives 100% effort. She comes in the game and gives 100% effort. It showed today. I'm just really proud of her.

Q. MiLaysia, what was Coach's message to you after your performance today?

MILAYSIA FULWILEY: She was just telling me that I played good (laughter). I can't remember. It's always good talks, though.

Q. Joyce, what does it say about your team that when you have a bad day from the three-point line, get outscored by a pretty big differential, you still find a way to win?

JOYCE EDWARDS: We're resilient. The good thing about South Carolina, you have so many players that can score, whether it's midrange, layups, threes. We're not depending on one thing and it showed today.

Q. I know you don't remember what Coach told you right now. When you think back to the conversation she had when you wanted to get more playing time,



your freshman year to now, what do you think about it?

MILAYSIA FULWILEY: I think it was really all up to me. I'm glad that I finally actually understood that part, going out there and executing what she wanted me to do.

I'm glad that I just stayed positive for everything. We got great coaches. They all kept my head high and told me what it was. The outsiders, they didn't even really know for real. I'm glad that the coaching staff kept me together.

Q. With today being International Women's Day, what does it mean for you to be in this moment, on this stage, part of the bigger movement, the attention that women's sports are getting right now?

JOYCE EDWARDS: Gosh, man, women's basketball is getting a lot of attention. You have players that paved the way for us, A'ja Wilson, Diana Taurasi. We're following in their footsteps and doing everything we can to live up to their legacy.

Q. You looked confident today. How would you describe your growth in that area and how you felt today?

MILAYSIA FULWILEY: I probably would describe it like it came a long way, I can honestly say. It started in practice really. Decision making started in practice. I feel like our practices are kind of harder than the games.

Just knowing when and when not to go. I feel like I got a lot of tricks in my bag. I have to know when and when I don't need to do those. I feel like I got that today.

Q. You are playing the championship game tomorrow. What would it mean to be able to win an SEC Championship?

JOYCE EDWARDS: It was one of the reasons I came to South Carolina is to win. We're a winning program. That's what we do. Obviously I would be really honored. We're just living up to expectations.



Q. You're making an SEC record, six straight appearances in the championship game. What is it like to be part of that legacy?

MILAYSIA FULWILEY: I think it means a lot. Teams don't come out here and do what we do, how often we do it. I feel like us, as a team, we're living up to our expectations.

It starts in practice honestly. I can go back to that. I feel like everything we do in the games, it goes through and executes because we practice really hard. We compete. We push one another. We come together and grow.

I feel like all the records we're breaking, the history, it's all part of our game plan.

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

Q. Back to Maryam, what is it like to see a game like she had on both ends of the floor, especially defensively?

DAWN STALEY: I mean, the last time we played Oklahoma, she did a pretty good job, so... Coming into this game, we knew that we had that in the back pocket.

We put a lot of pressure on Feagin to guard bigger bodies, taller bodies. Then Maryam has been putting herself in a position of not only defending but just playing with calmness, poise. She's starts to put it all together.

We probably won't see the best of her till next season. But it surely is great to just have her for her confidence to come in the game and impact, because she came in the game, impacted, drew some fouls on Beers. Played really tough. I'm happy for her.

I think she had family members here that had a chance to see her play live and do well.

Q. I know you're focused on your own team, but this past Sunday, Kentucky, what were your thoughts on Kenny Brooks and his first season at Kentucky?

DAWN STALEY: He's done a tremendous job. It's hard, one, to be top four in this league in the regular season. To do it with a brand-new team. I mean, I was just listening. I didn't know all of it, but I was listening to the commentators just talk about bringing in 11 new players, getting them to play on one accord. They're really good players, but they don't play as cohesive without coaching.

He's done a great job of getting them to commit to it.

When you got a point guard like Georgia Amoore, that helps put the glue between all the pieces to make it fit and fit well.

Q. I don't know if you remember any more of your conversation with MiLaysia. Are you able to share any of that? Her decision making today, seemed like she felt super confident. How have you seen her develop and embrace that over the last month?

DAWN STALEY: I mean, she's still very young, right? Very young, very much has played probably her entire life, doing what she wants to do when she wants to do it, and does it well, right?

Some of that transfers over to this level. Some of it doesn't. So we have to figure out how we get her to be a better reader out there on the floor. What we've been working on with her is just to simplify, that's one, and making layups, direct line drive layups, utilizing her speed.

When she has the ball, there's nobody that can beat her. When she has the ball, if they don't have the ball. That is her super power. Combining making layups to knowing who she's on the floor with, betting on herself.

Any offense has a pecking order as to who you want to go to, who's the first, second, third option. She got to look around. If she feels like she's the best option on the floor, then let that be your read back, you know?

She's been great to just kind of go through this journey with because she's such a great player. You want to see her just complete her journey in a way that makes her a better pro, makes her more predictable, makes her more reliable. So all of those things, and still be who she is. We don't want to strip her away from feeling the game, being out there, taking chances sometimes, because within those chances there's some greatness that's taking place.

Q. You obviously know these next two teams pretty well. This late in the season, is there still anything you can pick up from a game like tonight?

DAWN STALEY: Yeah, I mean, we got off to a big lead. Saw our lead cut in half. You got to play. You got to be able to weather people's storms. They're coming. There's not going to be from minute one to minute 40 a straight trajectory of you playing extremely well basketball without having any resistance. You got to embrace the resistance and try to get your habits out there on the floor better than their habits out there on the floor.

I mean, it's a hard league to play in. So every win is one that you enjoy for a short period of time, then you got to



prep for the next one.

Q. When you look at getting a win like today, where do you rate this team right now?

DAWN STALEY: I think we're playing our best basketball just individually and collectively. I mean, you're seeing it. You're seeing top performances from Chloe, you're seeing MiLaysia play consistently on both sides of the basketball. You see Feagin come out and have a double-digit game. Joyce is playing her best basketball at this time. We're doing it together.

Chloe, we threw the ball down there, she made plays. But it was a collection. People dumped it off to Chloe yesterday. Joyce same thing today where she made plays. People made her life a little easier at times by getting her involved.

It's more of us individually and collectively playing our best basketball.

Q. You played a gauntlet of a schedule so far this season. How important do you think that beginning stage of season has gotten y'all to this point?

DAWN STALEY: I mean, I've always said that playing in this league, playing in the SEC, prepares you to win national championships. We don't win our three national championships without playing in this league, and only this league, only this league.

I think you sharpen your skill set as a team. Individually players sharpen their skill set. I think coaches sharpen their skill set. It is the very thing, when I decided to leave Temple to come to South Carolina, is to be challenged every day.

In the beginning, I thought it was professional suicide. But then you get used to it. You get used to being in this grind. You're either going to sink or swim.

We've had players that put us in this position. It's super great. You got to stay up with the talent because the talent is long and wide in this league, and you need it in order for you to compete at a high level.

Q. When you think back to where this program was, what's it like to reflect on the growth of this team and this program?

DAWN STALEY: I would say those earlier years are what keeps us motivated to continue to win. Because we lost a whole lot in those first three or four years. Lost a lot.

I do believe you gain by losing sometimes. It helps you sharpen your skills and sharpen who you want to be in this league. I'm just proud that I got a chance to coach some really talented individuals and some great human beings.

It doesn't always end in you winning and being successful. For us, we got the best of both worlds. So honored to represent this conference.

Q. What does it mean to be on this stage in this moment coaching the team that you have, battling teams that are also performing well on this stage?

DAWN STALEY: This league is for the ultimate competitors. Our game, women's basketball, is for the ultimate competitors. If you're not a competitor, you're probably not going to have a job very long. Your players are going to be super unhappy.

I think if you're in this game, you got to compete at the highest level. You got to bring stuff out of players that they don't see in themselves at times. Then once they get there, you have to continue to sharpen their thirst to be great.

I think it's cool. It's the most attractive thing about being in our sport, is the competitiveness.

Q. Do you have a preference for who you'd rather play tomorrow?

DAWN STALEY: Yep. The winner of a six-overtime game starting in a few minutes, yes (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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