

# Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

## Tennessee Lady Volunteers

## Coach Kim Caldwell

## Nya Robertson

### Postgame Press Conference



Alabama 76, Tennessee 64

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Tennessee Head Coach Kim Caldwell and student-athlete Nya Robertson. We'll begin with an opening statement from Coach and then take questions for Nya.

KIM CALDWELL: We had too many turnovers tonight. I think we got outworked, outplayed, outcoached from the very start.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Nya.

**Q. There's a bit of a break before NCAA tournament. For you as a leader on this team, what's most important thing on your mind of helping this team regroup?**

NYA ROBERTSON: I would say just having positive talk. You know, knowing that my energy feeds off on everybody else, so when I'm here, I feel like everybody else is here, so I just got to keep -- just bring energy and knowing that we got this.

**Q. Nya, the very first part of the game, you tied it at 12-12, and then it just seemed every time you got momentum, it just slipped away. What happened in that first half and second half for the game to unfold like this?**

NYA ROBERTSON: Just feel like people weren't ready. When we're not ready, it shows, so we just got to come out and be ready, punch. We got to be the first one to punch. When we punch second, then we're going to have to dig out the hole, so we just got to get out the hole, punch first, and get at it.

**Q. When you say you didn't feel like you were ready, was that something you felt during the game, or was that something you could feel during the week of preparation?**

NYA ROBERTSON: I wouldn't say we weren't ready for, like -- we just laid down a little too much.

**Q. It feels like at times the team is on the same page at certain moments. What do you feel like it's going to take to get this team all going to be able to build that momentum in the game, because it felt like at times certain players could create some momentum, but it would slip away. Do you feel like this team is where it needs to be in terms of being on the same page? How do you guys kind of get there?**

NYA ROBERTSON: I think we're on the same page. We just have to know, we're not playing for yourself, we're playing for the person beside you. And knowing what we have, we're playing for the Tennessee on our chest. Just yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Nya, thank you very much. Questions for Coach.

**Q. Coach, with seven straight losses and 10 of 12, do you feel like this team deserves to make the NCAA tournament, and if so, why? What is your argument for that?**

KIM CALDWELL: Yeah, I do. I think we've played the hardest schedule in the country. I think the majority of that came in February, but we have significant wins, and I think that we hope to get in and continue to try to be a different team.

**Q. Kim, Talaysia walked out of the arena with Heather Ervin after the game. She's not in the open locker room. Can you walk us through what happened post-game, and in that second half with her and why she left early without the team?**

KIM CALDWELL: Yeah, it was a coach's decision, and we just wanted to give her some air. I think your emotions can get running, and just wanted to get her outside and with a staff member so she could breathe.

**Q. In terms of her not coming back in the game, did you just feel like she reached a point where you felt like you weren't going to be able to get her back in the right head space to play? What led to the in-game decision for her not to return?**

KIM CALDWELL: Again, who knows if it was the right call, but we're trying to find combinations that work.

**Q. With Deniya Prawl, do you have an update on her status?**

KIM CALDWELL: Yeah, Lauren clocked her in the head the first day back of practice. So she's in concussion protocol and couldn't travel.

**Q. You mentioned finding combinations, the fourth quarter looked mostly seven players. Do you feel like you're starting to find those lineups that you like, that you felt like could build off of?**

KIM CALDWELL: I think that tonight, yes, but I think we're so inconsistent in games that you just never really know what you're going to get.

**Q. I know you've got a big break here before the NCAA brackets are announced. Are you concerned about how the team played in this game and sort of running out of ways to flip this?**

KIM CALDWELL: Yeah, we definitely need some time. Our February, the back half, has been absolutely brutal. Really need to regroup and get back to who we want to be and move forward from there.

**Q. The last month and a week or so to end the year, what gives you confidence in this group that they will bounce back and compete in the NCAA tournament?**

KIM CALDWELL: I think when you're in this profession, you don't get too high, you don't get too low. Nobody was sitting in here talking about us winning a national championship when we won six or seven in a row. We didn't do that. You try to stay consistent.

We were hopeful that we would play better today and have some juice going into it. We had great energy in warmups. We had great energy in the locker room before. Probably the best energy I've seen. So I was a little bit surprised that we came out flat and then got in a hole and we

couldn't recover.

**Q. The turnovers were the first thing that you mentioned in the statement. What do you think offensively was allowing Alabama to kind of take advantage of those turnovers?**

KIM CALDWELL: Yeah, we were trying to dribble through the zone, dribble through gaps that weren't there. I think at their place we did a good job of swinging it side to side and making it move and could attack it, and we didn't have the patience to do that tonight.

**Q. That third quarter time-out, that was pretty early. Do you feel like you're getting the responses out of them during games and you're trying to kind of get them to regroup?**

KIM CALDWELL: Not the way we'd like.

**Q. Given trying to find the right combinations and people that are playing hard, how much do you appreciate what Nya Robertson tries to bring every game?**

KIM CALDWELL: She's one of my favorite players that I've ever coached, because the version of her that you see, she's energetic, she laughs, she plays hard every single day in practice. I'm really proud of her, because she really did go through a slump there midseason, and the people that work the hardest, I think they deserve what comes, and she's playing really good basketball right now because she didn't put her head down. She just kept working and showed up every day.

**Q. When you've talked about turnovers in the past, at times it would be dribbling into traffic, and it felt like that was a lot going on with Janiah tonight specifically. Is it frustrating that this is still the reason why these turnovers are cropping up? How do you kind of, you know, get that trend to end?**

KIM CALDWELL: I think it's patience. We did talk about patience. We talked about it pregame of if you are patient enough and swing the ball around enough and everyone touches it, then you'll have a much cleaner look.

I think just the moment, and we have players that want to do it all at once. And it is frustrating, but again, we just have to continue to try.

**Q. I know some of the tough stretches on defense have kind of been a part of this skid. Over the next week or so before the NCAA tournament, how can y'all get that defense better to compete in the tournament?**

KIM CALDWELL: We have to fix our one-on-one defense. We have to fix our help side. That's, again, been a situation where we haven't -- we've had two days of practice max going into games. That's where maybe some time to put things together and to really get back after it will help.

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