

Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 7, 2026

Greenville, South Carolina, USA

Bon Secours Wellness Arena

Texas Longhorns

Coach Vic Schaefer

Madison Booker

Kyla Oldacre

Postgame Press Conference

Texas 85, Ole Miss 68

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Vic Schaefer and student-athletes Kyla Oldacre and Madison Booker. We'll begin with an opening statement from Coach.

VIC SCHAEFER: Well, just first want to commend Mississippi. I thought Coach had her team ready. That is a tough team. The score is not indicative of how hard that game was, how tight it was, how well that game was played by both teams. I thought, again, they're really good, and there's not anybody going to be lining up going oh, goody, goody, goody, we got them in our bracket in the NCAA Tournament.

They got really good players. They got difference players, and Coach does a great job with them.

As far as my team, I couldn't be prouder. I thought their toughness today, their resilience was incredible. Really, really proud of Book. Obviously just had a special game. Got to her spots. She was ready to go. Had five assists and three steals to go with her 11 rebounds and her 31.

You know, Kyla goes 11 for 13 at the free-throw line after she missed her first two. I'm really proud of my group. They're tough. That's win number 30.

Again, it took all of us. It took my entire team. I thought everybody that played came in and gave us some really good minutes. Preston comes in and goes 2 for 2 in her four minutes and really did a nice job.

So I'm just really proud of my team. I thought they played



and were really tough today. They're going to have to bring the wood tomorrow, because we're going to have to play another great team in their home state.

As we all know, that crowd will be electric in there, but our kids will be ready. They'll be ready, and we're excited to have an opportunity to play for a championship.

Again, can't say enough about my kids. Just super proud of them. I thought they were tough and resilient today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Madison, you've seen this story before. I think by the regular season games that you guys have faced Ole Miss, last season and this season, you tend to step up when it matters the most. Even Coach Yo mentioned that. What changes for you in those clutch moments, specifically like in the fourth quarter?

MADISON BOOKER: I don't know, I feel like this year is definitely different for me. I feel like Coach Schaefer has kind of pushed me, just being aggressive at any moment, right when the game start, right when subs start, to attack the basket. I think in prior years I settled a lot for the midrange, kind of comfortable.

I've been basically uncomfortable in the moments, and he's told me just attack, attack, attack. And I think that was my mindset the whole game. Especially fourth quarter, was just get to the paint, get to the paint. It worked out good. I guess he is right about it. Just keep attacking.

But, yeah, I just wanted to win. That's really what's on my mind right now is to win, and I wasn't going to do anything else to deter from that.

Q. Kyla, after those first two misses at the free-throw line, what was working for you at the charity stripe? Because I wouldn't say that's been the strength of your game this season. So what was working with 11 straight made free throws?

KYLA OLDACRE: We have this thing at practice where we



shoot 50 free-throws before practice. And depending how Coach feels after practice, he makes us shoot pressure free-throws. He started to establish how it's mental, and he saw how I was shooting it when I missed my first two, and then I made the change. I ever since then made sure I shot it the same way, don't change a thing about it.

Q. For Maddie, obviously at the end of the third quarter they drilled that three. As a leader of the team, what are you telling your teammates going into the last ten minutes, and what is your mindset like going into these high-pressure situations?

MADISON BOOKER: Yeah, I think we played a lot of good teams this year and they've made their runs. They've hit some good shots, some last-second shots at the buzzer going to half or a quarter.

My whole message to them was just stay poised. We still got it. We're still up right now. Let's just figure out what we need to do better, let's come to the huddle, let's regroup, let's think about our identity, which is getting stops.

I mean, we held them to 13 points that quarter. So I think we responded very well. Yeah, just for me just being a leader, just staying vocal, keeping a positive vibe on the bench, just on the court, in the huddle. I make sure everybody is good, nobody is down, nobody's head is down or anything. At the end of the day, it's still a game. It's nothing to stress about. We're having fun.

But, yeah, just --

VIC SCHAEFER: She's really good in the huddle. She kind of grabbed everybody. I stood back. I wasn't even in the huddle yet, and --

MADISON BOOKER: Thanks, Coach.

VIC SCHAEFER: Yep. She got everybody, grabbed them, and said about everything she just said.

But she was the voice in the huddle. I've been trying to get her to be that voice for a while, and she's kind of taken this on here lately, which is great, because that's her next step in my opinion.

I just let her have it. I let her have the huddle, and she did a great job with it.

Q. Maddie, you just said that it's important to have fun and not sort of play panicky. It's just another game. How important is that mindset especially in the high-pressure situations where it's literally just a game, and it's important to just have fun?

MADISON BOOKER: Yeah, I mean, I think back on our losses this season. Just while we're down or we started the game kind of panicking, it kind of looks like that. You're down in that moment, and you can't really find a way to get back on top.

But, yeah, I just feel like when you really just think about where your feet are, the possession you have to worry about and not the future possessions or the past possessions, I think the game of basketball is really easy, and it's fun. It's fun to play.

So, yeah, just not trying to get too high or get too low about the game.

Q. Madison, you guys are going up against South Carolina in the SEC Tournament Championship again. Another great defensive team with Raven Johnson, Defensive Player of the Year. How would you describe going up against her as a defender, and what separates her as a defender?

MADISON BOOKER: Yeah, I mean, she's a great defender. I think she played -- she was only -- she guarded me in the Las Vegas tournament. Yeah, she makes you think. She makes you work for every bucket.

I think she's a very feisty defender. Yeah, no, yeah, honestly, she's incredible on defense. I think she really takes pride in that. Also, I feel like I played against (indiscernible) a lot too in practice. I think she has me prepared if Raven has to guard me again. But, yeah, she's a great defender.

Q. Madison, I know how much you think about things like this, but do you think tonight was your best game in a Texas uniform? Kyla, was this the best you've seen Madison play?

MADISON BOOKER: I guess. I don't know. I mean, I had five turnovers, so you can ask Coach Schaefer about that one.

Yeah, I think I've said it. Every game now I'm just trying to have a different mindset. I'm trying to win. I'm trying to help this team to win. I'm not trying to deter anything from our goals this season. I'm going in with an aggressive mindset. I have to attack the rim. I got to really attack, just like score the ball, honestly. That's just been my mindset right now.

It's a pretty good game. I feel like I could do better in some things. But, yeah, I think overall it's pretty good.

KYLA OLDACRE: My take, this is the best version of Madison I've seen ever since I've been here in Texas and being able to play with her. Her level of maturity and how much she's grown and for her to lead us and for her to still be her while helping us to facilitate how we're going to play and keep our energy up and keep our momentum up.

So I will say, yes, it's the best I've seen her play with how she even led this team and even kept her composure and everything despite how things were going with the officiating. So yeah.

Q. For both players, obviously you're familiar -- more than familiar with the team you're playing tomorrow. You split with them. You know it's probably going to be a one-possession game there at the end. Early thoughts on what can make the difference for you guys to be the champions tomorrow?

MADISON BOOKER: Yeah, I think when you know a team extremely well -- we know South Carolina, we played them so many times the past two seasons -- I think it comes down to details, who can get stops, who can get more stops, who can string together runs and stops and who can really just score the ball.

Coach talked about we don't want to have a high-scoring game. We don't want to play "Horse" with them. We want to just use our identity and play defense, but just play how we are.

KYLA OLDACRE: I mean, the same thing here. Coach says each possession matters. When we get the foul (indiscernible) and how to convert that back on defense, getting a stop and then going again and scoring.

Like, we have this drill where how fast can we score after we get a stop each possession, and I feel like that we need to bring that to the table again tomorrow, and that will help determine how we will play the game.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, ladies. Questions for Coach.

Q. Vic, same question I just asked Maddie and Kyla. Is this the best you've seen Madison play?

VIC SCHAEFER: I think, like she said, minus the turnovers, she was spectacular. I mean, five assists, three steals, 11 rebounds, three offensive. Had two blocked shots. She's plus-25, which is the highest of anybody on our team. Plays 35 minutes, almost 36.

She was pretty special today. From an offensive perspective, I think she was really, really good. I mean,

anytime somebody gets 31 against a top-20 team -- and that's hard to do, Danny, and did it in a semifinal game in SEC Tournament. She was pretty special today.

I know she's made some big shots for us in the course of her three years at Texas, but she really took over the game today. I think you got to give it to her teammates. Rori really found her a couple of times by passing a pass that maybe should have been played just to go right to her. That's what a great point guard will do. Rori had seven assists and only one turnover and ran our team.

She was pretty good, though.

Q. You're looking at three games within three days. Are there any difficulties of managing the stamina and the pace of your team?

VIC SCHAEFER: I mean, it is what it is. I can't do anything about it. The biggest problem is we lose an hour tonight with setting the clocks, and so it's really almost, whatever, 11:00, 10:00. Whatever time it is, you can add an hour to it. My kids won't even be in their rooms and be asleep before midnight.

So then it becomes problematic. Okay, what are you going to do tomorrow? Are you going to get up and have shoot-around, or what are you going to do? It's a 3:00 tip. 11:00 is pregame meal. I probably need to get this one and that one and probably four or five more to cryo tomorrow to get them recharged.

You know, this tournament is so hard because of the teams you have to play against, and then on top of that, it's problematic with times. But it is what it is. I think last year we had to play at noon the next day. I'm glad I'm not doing that.

But it's part of it. And look, Book and I were having a moment out there. Great players don't get tired. You're not tired tomorrow. You're playing for a conference championship. Come on. Potentially improving your position as a one. So we can be tired on Monday. I'll give you Monday off. Tomorrow, let's go.

Again, I think South Carolina would say the same thing. You come to this event to win a championship, and so we put ourselves in that position.

Q. Coach, everyone says they want to be the best program in the country. In a game where every mistake is magnified, what separates teams that want to be the best from teams that prove they're the best?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, I think the kids covered it earlier.

I think when you're talking about trying to be the best in the country, it's the details, you know, your toughness, your resilience. Great teams take care of the ball, they defend, they rebound, they execute on the half court.

All those things require attention to detail. You can't be sloppy with the ball. Looks like tonight we had 13 turnovers. You know, when we played South Carolina at their place, I think we had 22, and we were coming off having 19 at LSU, our two worst games of the year.

So, you know, I think when you're trying to be the best and you're trying to be elite, elite teams take care of the ball. They defend, and they execute. So when you talk about things and work on things in practice, those things have to be your focal point. They have to be what's important, because as my local media will tell you, you're either coaching it or allowing it. It's that simple.

In the big scheme of things, that's where you're at. You're either coaching it or allowing it. My kids would probably tell you, I don't allow too much. Even in victory.

Last night I'm in the locker room after the game. We win by whatever we won by, and I'm still coaching them on how to do certain things that I felt like needed to be addressed.

It's just what we do.

Q. Vic, Ashton had her most minutes by far since the first Ole Miss game. Is there something specific you liked about this match-up? Why was she the person you --

VIC SCHAEFER: She's a really good help defender. She rebounds it hard. She did some good things the first time we played them, and she's been practicing well.

Again, it's what I said last night. You work while you wait. Some kids will get down. They stop working hard, they stop working on their shot, they stop trying to get in in practice. Ashton is not like that. Her family is tremendous. Mom and Dad have really done a great job with her, and she's a competitor.

I know it's been hard for her at times, but again, just teaching her, hey, you're on -- she had to do it all last year at Missouri. Like, she was it. She was their go-to. Here she doesn't have to be that, and that's hard sometimes to learn and understand.

I'll give you a great example tonight of growth. Do you remember her turn around and handing the ball to Booker for her to shoot it on the baseline tonight? Booker made the shot. It was down on the baseline. I don't know if she

had gotten a rebound, but she knew Book was open, and instead of her taking the shot, she turned around and gave it to Book, because Book was obviously hot.

So I just -- I think it's growth for her and realizing, hey, I'm on a really good team. We got a lot of really good players, and if I can just come in here and do a couple of things, defend, rebound, keep the wheel turning on offense, make a shot when they leave me open, be a hustle player, take a charge, I thought she had -- she had a great opportunity tonight to get a couple of them and just missed, but she's really smart in that area. She's really a smart, help-side defender. That was something we really needed tonight.

Q. You kind of alluded to it already right here. You guys were still up by two at the end of the third going into the fourth quarter. You said Madison Booker got into the huddle and grabbed all her teammates. You didn't have to say much. In that time when she was talking to her teammates, what did you think, and what did you think about just the overall outlook for your team going into the fourth quarter?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, I remember telling -- I think I told Blair and then one other coach -- I was like, we just gave eight points away in the last two and a half minutes. We just had a couple of bone-head decisions and just didn't make very good decisions, kind of let the moment get us.

I just felt like after listening to Book and listening to her grab her teammates and listening to the teammates respond -- you know, there was conversation. Nobody was mad. Nobody took it the wrong way. They were all engaged. It was then, okay, I got to give them some play. We got to go out and execute here, and we got to get a play and get back up four, try to figure out a way to get a stop.

I think we made an adjustment at that moment defensively just to try to keep them in front of us, because we were really struggling at that moment. So I thought that adjustment was probably the best thing we did defensively all day and kept us out of rotation a little bit.

As a coach that's what you want to see. You know, you want to see accountability. You want to see players lead each other, be able to have communication, talk to each other, and them not take it the wrong way. So it was really good for me.

Again, that's growth with my team. That team two months ago might not have been able to -- first of all, I don't know that anybody would have grabbed everybody. Second, I don't know that they would have taken it the way they took it today.

Q. Rori said that keeping composure is going to be huge for both teams tomorrow, but especially on your side. You're basically South Carolina home game?

VIC SCHAEFER: I'm glad you pointed that out. I didn't say it.

Q. You did not say that. That was me. Just how much do you think keeping composure is going to play into the result tomorrow?

VIC SCHAEFER: Anytime you're on the road or you're playing in front of pro crowd, that becomes really important. I think the great players thrive on playing on the road. I loved playing on the road when I was a high school kid. I loved it. I think when you're a great player, man, you thrive in those moments. You love being in that moment on the road against a great team and playing well.

So, you know, it's going to be hard, because you're not only on the road, but you're playing a great team. So it's going to be really important, you know, for us, all of us, to stay in the moment and really have tunnel vision within our own bench, so to speak, and just stay within us, because we've got a few Longhorn fans here with us, but we don't have like they do.

You know, again, it's a great challenge. We love a challenge, and, you know, my kids will be ready. We're excited for the opportunity. We know we're going up against a great team, well-coached, got great players, but we've played them before. This will be another opportunity, and we'll see what shakes.

May I say one more thing? I want to commend Greenville, number one. This place does a great job with this event. I've been getting crushed. Apparently my wife tells me on social media about my comments about having to play here in the tournament, and my comment is not directed to Greenville, because Greenville does a great job. From a fan perspective, man, what a great place. So much to do.

I've run the last two days down that street that's got all the places to eat and drink and socialize. The area down there on the river -- or the creek is so pretty. They do a great job here. I just want to make sure that they know how much we appreciate their energy and their effort to put on this event.

My comments have nothing to do with Greenville. Danny, I'm not going to ask what they are about -- answer what they're about. I'm going to say Greenville has done an amazing job. They continue to. I've been coming here a long time and really appreciate everybody and everything

that this particular city does for our event and for our fans, because it is really, really special. With that being said, appreciate everybody.

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