

# Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 10, 2022

## Vanderbilt Commodores

Tampa, Florida, USA

Amalie Arena

## Jerry Stackhouse Scotty Pippen, Jr. Rodney Chatman

Postgame Press Conference



Vanderbilt 82, Alabama 76

**JERRY STACKHOUSE:** It was an awesome game. I thought hats off to Nate and his team. Those guys really compete at a high level. Very, very tough to defend. We needed all the effort and contribution that we got from our guys tonight. We needed every one of them to beat that team.

We knew they were going to do well in the tournament as well, man, but we feel really good about tonight's win, how we competed, how our guys continued to fight. Didn't have a great first half, but we got down early, but our guys just continued to fight in that second half, stayed together, and we got some wonderful results in the end.

**Q. Scotty, this is for you. A lot of people that are Alabama fans were not happy with your comments last night when you called this a very winnable game. How sweet is it to back up those words with a victory tonight?**

**SCOTTY PIPPEN, JR.:** Me and Coach Stackhouse were just talking about that. The other team wasn't too excited I said that either, so it put a chip on their shoulder as well as a chip on ours because I had to back it up, the team had to back it up, so we knew it was going to be a fight tonight, but obviously, it was good to get the win after saying that.

**Q. Scotty, I think you mentioned something about a Bama coach saying something that sort of gave you guys fuel. When was that, and Sopher how did that motivate you?**

**SCOTTY PIPPEN, JR.:** Before the game, one of the Bama coaches said that you asked for it, so you're going to get it

or something like that, so it's kind of good to get back at him and get the win.

**Q. That was something that the players --**

**SCOTTY PIPPEN, JR.:** It's something we all heard and talked about. Now we got to go out there and back up what I said. It's good to get the win.

**Q. Either of the guys. What kind of change in the second half that enabled you all to go on that run and get back in the game?**

**RODNEY CHATMAN:** Harder. We trusted each other more. The first two minutes I was out there, I was tired and I was trying to play my butt off, and it was just contagious. Everybody else. We rebounded better, took care of the ball and made shots. Stute hit six threes. That was big for us. Scotty got to the line a lot. We did a good job in the second half making adjustments. Credit to Coach Stackhouse. He is a great coach, and we came out with the victory.

**Q. For Scotty, what's the key to your ability to draw fouls in the lane?**

**SCOTTY PIPPEN, JR.:** People say it's a talent. I just am used to playing against bigger players. I have an old-school game. Just using a lot of shot fakes and drawing contact using my size as an advantage. I just have been practicing a lot. Getting players off balance and using it to my benefit.

**Q. For Rodney, it looked like you were on the bike there for a few minutes before you came back in the game. How did it react tonight? How does it feel now, and how tough was it to get back into the game at that point and make those plays?**

**RODNEY CHATMAN:** I was just trying to stay warm. I was feeling good, but just me and B. Wells just focused on staying warm when I'm sitting out for a period of time, so we just use the bike when I'm sitting down on the bench for a little minute to stay warm so I can be ready when I get back on the court.



**Q. Rodney, after all you've been through to get to this point, what did it mean to step up and hit those big shots there in the last five minutes?**

RODNEY CHATMAN: It meant a lot. Before that I even airballed a shot, but Scotty told me, just keep shooting. I just trust my work I put in. He found me in the corner, and it was a big shot. It came off a ball screen and hit another three, and it just felt good. Just trusting myself.

I've been through a lot. I've persevered through a lot, so it's nothing to me just to keep going. I created myself on my mentality, the perseverance just to push on for it.

**Q. Actually for both of you guys, on the corner shot you're talking about, Scotty, it looked like you were kind of in the lane with the air. Were you first thinking shot on that play and then last second kicked it out to him, and what did you see there, Rodney? It looked like you had to put it higher on that shot too.**

SCOTTY PIPPEN, JR.: One of the things on our offense is getting it to out bail out spot I knew someone was going to be there. I knew blindly I could throw it, and someone was going to be there and make the shot. Better for Rodney for getting in the right spot.

RODNEY CHATMAN: I just got to the bail out. Coach Stackhouse preached paying attention to details. You know, when somebody gets in the lane and they don't have nothing, we know a guy is going to be blindly, and they had a 6'8" dude closing out, so I airballed one before that, so I just tried to get it up in the air, and it went in.

**Q. For both of you again. Now it's Kentucky. What about the opportunity ahead of you now tomorrow?**

SCOTTY PIPPEN, JR.: They've beaten us twice. Haven't beat them since I have been here, so a little bit of payback going into this game with a chip on our shoulder. A little bit of momentum we have, so it's good to see them again and excited about it.

RODNEY CHATMAN: It's March. These are games that we live for, games we grew up watching on TV. It's the moment now, so I think we're going to be ready for tomorrow. We're going to show up and perform on the court.

Like Scotty said, they beat us twice, so it's March. Anything can happen. As long as we believe and trust in ourselves, anything can happen.

**Q. Jerry, what was the change in terms of just the**

**space and getting better shots and things like that first half to second half? What was the adjustment?**

JERRY STACKHOUSE: I think our guys were a little, I don't know if it's tight, but we were -- they came out, and they were aggressive. Got into us a little bit, sped us up a little bit. I think Scotty was pressing. I think he had the quote last night that everybody kind of ran with, that it was a winnable game.

Nobody in this tournament is unbeaten, so it's definitely a winnable game. So I think that's what he said was true, but, again, everybody talk about bulletin board material and all that, but they had to go out there and play the game and prove it, and I thought they did a good job of doing that.

Once we settled down, got some good looks and rebounded the basketball, that was the key. I thought we played really good defense, and they still got some second chance opportunities. Have to credit Jordan Wright getting ten defensive rebounds from that spot is huge. That was the key to the game. You look at nobody else.

Quentin had seven, but those guys were key. Everybody liked the pretty threes. I like pretty threes too. Myles was good. 6 for 10. We got to get -- got to get a few. Myles had four rebounds too, but, again, that's the key for us. Especially tomorrow. We're going to enjoy this one tonight, but tomorrow with Kentucky and what they present, especially with Tshiebwe being on the boards, I think we can defend their initial actions, but we've got to be able to rebound the basketball, so that's what I'm looking forward to that challenge.

We got a couple of games on tape. I always tell our guys kind of like a playoff mentality. March Madness is different. It's one game, you're done. But in the pros, it's a series. So once you got a game or two on tape, then you can make those adjustments. So we have a couple of games from the regular season where we played pretty well, had an opportunity to win those games. Now hopefully we can go back and clean up a few things and come out and have a heck of a performance tomorrow night as well.

**Q. Just on Rodney there, I guess he was just keeping it warm, but what does it mean to see someone come in in that situation, hit shots like that when he hasn't been on the floor a whole lot this season?**

JERRY STACKHOUSE: Rodney is a winner. I talk about it all the time. Again, our guys have had great development. I feel Quentin, Scotty, Jordan, those guys have grown. They've matured, not only on the court, but off the court. They're great young men.



In that process of us learning how to win, I felt like we needed to infuse somebody that had won, and Rodney was that guy. He was there on that Dayton team. I told him when I was recruiting him, I felt like he could be the gold standard of what we want here as a point guard because he has a super basketball IQ, mentality, but it's just his calmness under pressure. The guys, they feed off of that. He gives Scotty confidence. He gives Jordan confidence. He gives our whole team confidence just because.

I mean, he is the coolest dude in the room, no doubt about it. Everybody thinks Scotty is the coolest one, but Rod really is the coolest guy. He is talking to them, and he is an unbelievable basketball mind. He could easily be a coach one day. I know he has aspirations of playing at the next level, but whenever that's done, he definitely has the mentality and the IQ to coach the game.

**Q. You've talked about it a little bit, but how big was Myles for you all tonight from behind the ark, especially with that late three to build the five-point lead with a little over a minute left?**

JERRY STACKHOUSE: It was huge. Myles, whenever he gets a good look at it and gets his feet set, he is one of the best shooters in the country, and I think he has proven that from a percentage standpoint. He is up there amongst the leaders, top two or three in our conference. And he just has an edge about him. That can get a little crazy sometimes, but that's all right too. I think we need that. We need that edge.

It just kind of takes the edge off of our team a little bit when you are a little bit uptight and you got a guy like that that makes some shots and start clapping and doing what he does, but it's fun to be around those guys, and it's fun to see them have success because he has had some over the last couple of years. I mean, he has some highs and lows, and some growing pains, and it's good to see these guys take those growing pains, take those tough film sessions when things didn't go well with us. We sit through them.

I don't -- there's never -- no matter how bad it is, it's not a day that we're not going to watch the film, and we're going to try to get better from it, and I think that's what we've done, and our guys have grown through that, and the hard work and some of the lumps that we've taken are helping us to have some successes that we're having right now.

**Q. Jerry, forgive me if you have answered this already. Do you feel like the nation is starting to see what this team can be fully healthy because you've got your full complement now?**

JERRY STACKHOUSE: I've been saying it all year, but nobody believed me. I think it's fun to see it, what we envisioned with the healthy Liam, healthy Rodney. That was the key. That was my selling point to Scotty in this offseason to come back because we were going to put some pieces around him to help him not have to carry so much of the load. Didn't work out exactly that way. He still had to, but it worked to his benefit. He was still able to be one of the top scorers in the country. Had high usage and perform at a high level and kept us afloat.

Him on the offensive end, Quentin Millora-Brown on the defensive end, I say those guys are co-MVPs. What he does for us just anchoring our defense, making sure they're out there talking, setting screens getting those guys open. Like I said, we see the end result, those threes, but it's the screens that Quentin sets to get Myles open, to get Scotty free just because the teams pay a lot of attention to him.

It is fun to finally behold and for the country to start to take notice of the type of team that we have and type of capabilities we have.

I got two suits down and three to go. That's the thought process. I told all the coaches, don't get on the plane if you don't bring five suits. I'm pretty sure they probably didn't bring five suits, but hopefully they brought five shirt and ties.

**Q. Was this game especially chippy, Jerry? It seemed like it a little bit, a little bit of back and forth with the benches. Also, how difficult is it when a game is called that way when there's so many fouls that kind of break up the flow of the game?**

JERRY STACKHOUSE: It's tough when you've got high level athletes out there and they're banging and what not, you know, as coaches you feel like they miss a few that are on your end, and they never call enough for you. And then probably Nate feels the same way, but at the end of the day, those guys got a tough job to do.

And I thought as much as I felt kind of one-sided that we didn't get the calls that I felt that we could have got in the first half, the free-throws were even at halftime, so that's all you want. At the end of the day, you want to have some balance there, but I guess they did read the article what Scotty said. I guess one of the coaches might have said something to him, and that's fine. That's part of the game of basketball. It's part of the gamesmanship, but at the end of the day, we did what we came out there and backed it up, got off to a little bit of a slow start, but at the end of the day, he made the plays down the stretch to help us win the game and help us survive another day.



