

# Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Sunday, March 12, 2023

## Texas A&M Aggies

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Bridgestone Arena

## Coach Buzz Williams IV Wade Taylor

## Dexter Dennis

Postgame Press Conference



Alabama 82, Texas A&M 63

THE MODERATOR: We're ready to begin with Texas A&M. We'll start with questions for the two student-athletes.

**Q. Dexter, how long does it take to take a disappointing loss like that and put it behind you and focus on what's ahead?**

DEXTER DENNIS: I think it depends from person to person. It may take a short time, may take a long amount of time.

I think in preparation for Selection Sunday, we do have to put our emotions behind us and start thinking about the future and what's next for us as a program.

I say we have to have a short memory in this situation.

**Q. Wade, how different was this game than when y'all played them there? How difficult was it to find the dribble penetration space?**

WADE TAYLOR IV: Just a different atmosphere, totally different game for a championship, it really was just at the end of the conference.

Credit to Alabama, they played some good defense tonight. We couldn't get the best of rhythm like we normally do.

I don't think it was too big of a difference in the game. We just still need to execute the things we needed to, but we didn't do it to the best of our ability today.

**Q. A few hours till Selection Show, but how do you feel you stacked up your résumé this season?**

WADE TAYLOR IV: I feel like starting from December 20th we did a pretty good job showing how resilient we are. Going from 6-5, now I think we're 25-9. I think that's a pretty good résumé we have.

DEXTER DENNIS: Just piggybacking on what bro said, we covered a lot of ground. We did a lot of work to put ourselves in a great position for the NCAA tournament.

Obviously this didn't end the way we wanted to, but we still have great things to look forward to in the future.

**Q. Talk about how far you have come. You were so close last year, got to this point, thought you were going to be able to sneak into the tournament. How much has this team improved in the last year?**

WADE TAYLOR IV: We've improved a lot. Coach preaches to us every day about being resilient, staying together through the ups and downs. We've had a lot of ups and downs through these last 65 days.

I'm excited for what the future holds. We've been through a lot. We can carry that on for momentum going to the next game too.

DEXTER DENNIS: Pretty much like the same thing. That's it. What Wade said.

**Q. Wade, what can y'all learn from something like today moving forward into the NCAA tournament?**

WADE TAYLOR IV: Just defensive rebounding better. We didn't do a good job on the glass today. Defensive rotation, things like that. Taking the way Alabama played, using it to our advantage because we might see a team like that in the tournament.

Just staying together, being resilient, that's it.

**Q. Wade, they just announced you made the All-Tournament team. What are your thoughts on that?**



WADE TAYLOR IV: Say it again.

**Q. Making the All-Tournament team.**

WADE TAYLOR IV: It's a blessing. Thank my coaches and teammates for putting me in a position to show my talents and be the best I can for this team.

THE MODERATOR: We'll excuse the student-athletes and continue with questions for Coach Williams.

**Q. What did Alabama do differently in this game? What's going to be the key for your team in March?**

BUZZ WILLIAMS: To reiterate what IV said, I think the thing that hurt us today was their offensive rebounds. We have done a good job. We did a better job last Saturday in that regard against Alabama specifically.

But in conference play, we didn't give up near as many offensive rebounds as we did today. They put so much stress on you with their pace, with their talent, when they're able to get extra shot after extra shot, it keeps you in rotation.

I think this is a one-week season. The next season we're going into can be four days or it can be three and a half weeks. So I think our identity has evolved and morphed into a lot of good things over the last couple of months. We did not play to that exactly the way we needed to today.

We'll have to be better regardless of who we play this week.

**Q. You said two seasons complete. How do you feel like the résumé has shaped up with it being complete?**

BUZZ WILLIAMS: I wish we would have done better today. I probably should be a better leader, maybe even more mature than I actually am.

I think what's transpired is remarkable. I think it's historical. I'm very thankful for the seat that I've been able to sit in over the last couple of months.

I've learned so much from our guys. I've learned so much from our staff. 6-5 with two quad four losses, and since then we lost at Arkansas after traveling the world, on the way to Fayetteville. We lost at Kentucky. We lost at Mississippi State when we were playing for the conference championship to some degree. And we lost today.

In the last 29 SEC competitions, I think we've won 24. I

know that rewinds to a little bit of last year. Record after record after record in the SEC, specific to Texas A&M, has been broken over the last 65 days.

As cool as the results are, and the things that have changed, and the support, et cetera, et cetera, the lessons will last our guys and our program a lifetime.

**Q. Every time y'all lost, y'all have bounced back pretty strong. How much encouragement can you glean from that going into the NCAA tournament?**

BUZZ WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think our response, as I've mentioned to you before, I think the greatest form of toughness is the consistency to do it every day regardless of result.

I think our guys have been evidence of that level of toughness. Yes, we lost three conference games. We really hate that we lost three. We went 15-3. The response after the loss was just as mature as the response was after winning multiple games.

I hope that that continues on. They're hurt, as any person would be, to play in a championship and lose. But I think we've had reps of responding the right way. I anticipate, hope and pray, that's the same going forward.

**Q. I know there's more than one answer to this. What is it that makes Brandon Miller special as a college player?**

BUZZ WILLIAMS: His length, his size, his skill. Can really shoot. He's a mismatch nightmare. Who's going to guard him? He can pass, dribble and shoot. He's a position-less player that has size. He has that same versatility on that other end.

You're going to be in a quandary no matter what your ball screen coverage is, no matter what the matchup is. Really, really, really good player.

**Q. What can you say about the SEC as a basketball conference?**

BUZZ WILLIAMS: I think it's really changed even in the time that I've been in the league. I think there were four coaches hired in the cycle when we came to A&M. I think there were six hired this time last year.

A broad answer to the question would be the commitment that Commissioner Sankey and Coach Leibovitz made to basketball. But I also think it's each individual campus: the administration, presidents, chancellors, et cetera, but also the ADS.

I think I'm as big a -- actually, I like football more than basketball. Someway when I'm not coaching, I want to go to an SEC football game at each place. I thought that would happen at Texas A&M, but they never invite me.

I think what has happened, though, is the commitment level and the notoriety and the exposure that has always seemed to be there for SEC football since I was young, that same trajectory in the time that I've been here has continued to grow.

Are we the best league? If you study different numbers, it's worth arguing about. But with each passing year, you can see that we're in that discussion.

Four years ago, we weren't in that discussion. Multiple Hall of Fame players, multiple Hall of Fame coaches in this league. With each transpiring recruiting class, better and better long-time NBA players in this league.

**Q. You were asked about the state of basketball in Texas.**

BUZZ WILLIAMS: What story is he writing?

**Q. How enticing do you find it that the Final Four is being held a hundred miles from campus.**

BUZZ WILLIAMS: The kids have talked about it a few times. Roc has talked about it a few times.

What year was it in Houston?

**Q. '16.**

BUZZ WILLIAMS: 2016. I think it's a good city. I think it seems as though there's going to end up being four or five cities that it rotates through. I think Houston and Indianapolis and some of those other places that can host it, I do think it's kind of cool, not that I'm using it to entice our guys, it's hard to win a game regardless of locale, but that it's just down the street, maybe it will be an easier drive for you than driving to Nashville (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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