

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Bridgestone Arena

LSU Tigers

Coach Matt McMahon

Jordan Sears

Robert Miller III

Postgame Press Conference



Mississippi State 91, LSU 62

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by LSU. We'll ask coach for a couple of general thoughts on the game, then take questions.

MATT McMAHON: Disappointing end to a challenging couple of months for us and our team. But really want to give a lot of credit to Mississippi State. I thought they were terrific. They were locked in and ready to go. They played with incredible efficiency on the offensive end. We just played 'em 10, 11 days ago. Obviously very concerned about Hubbard, his shot-making, just phenomenal. Even when we trapped him, he was still able to defeat the traps and get buckets.

Then I thought their bunch was huge, Murphy, Harris and Jones. Those three came in and played at a high level.

Unfortunately in the first half turnovers and missed free throws were really detrimental to us and our opportunity to hang around in the game. Mississippi State certainly made us pay by their best three-point shooting night of the season.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Jordan, you had 20 points, five steals. Did you try to come out with an extra level of aggression?

JORDAN SEARS: Yeah, of course. You always want to come out, play aggressive, be the attacker. Just kind of throw the first punch, so to say.

But yeah, just come out, be aggressive, do all you can do, especially on the defensive end.

Q. Rob, good outing in the first SEC tournament game. What did you see out there?

ROBERT MILLER III: Repeat that again.

Q. What did you see out there? Obviously missed one shot.

ROBERT MILLER III: My teammates being able to get me open and keep the confidence rolling. Just knowing that I can be consistent when I have the ball in my hands, making the right plays for everybody.

Q. We talked about how Mississippi State shot the three ball really well. You struggled from beyond the arc. How hard is it to match a team like Mississippi State when they're hitting?

JORDAN SEARS: I would say it's tough. It's tough. You got to kind of keep fighting through it, try to find ways, other ways, to score the ball and be efficient on the offensive side, especially when the three ball is not falling, whether that's attacking more or drawing fouls, things like that.

But credit them, they shot the heck out of the ball.

It's tough sometimes when you can't master the three-point barrage, I guess you could say. Yeah, just trying to find other ways to stay efficient and score the ball, see if we can cut different things down.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, fellas. We'll continue with questions for Coach McMahon.

Q. When you got to the locker room, what did you tell your team? What was the message?

MATT McMAHON: I just thanked them for the opportunity to coach them season, then just talked about some of the life lessons that you encounter along the journey. Obviously it's a lot more fun when you win and things go the way you would like. But how you respond and handle that, the lessons you take from it, the things you learn, the

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

relationships you hope have been built, as you move forward.

It was a very brief and short message there.

Q. They got a lot of steals, aggressive on the ball. What little things do they do defensively that can frustrate teams?

MATT McMAHON: I think Coach Jans has always done an outstanding job on the defensive side of the ball. They have great, number one, on-ball defenders. Matthews I think is as good as anyone in the country guarding the basketball.

Then when you do get a slight advantage and you beat 'em, they do a great job of converging on the basketball, very active hands, get a lot of steals. That's why they gave up such a high percentage of three-point shots, not necessarily the shooting percent, I'm saying percentage of shots taken. When they converge on the ball, you got to spray it out and be able to step up and knock down threes against them.

I think in SEC play, they gave up 11 made threes a game. We just weren't able to knock down some of those shots down today. Credit to them for their pressure and aggressiveness on the defensive side.

Q. Vyctorius and Corey were both out due to injury. Is that why they didn't travel today?

MATT McMAHON: Yeah, both still out. Have not been able to return to practice. Corey has had the foot injury. Vyctorius has had the ankle sprain from the last game against Mississippi State. With them being injured, no reason to miss a week of school. So they're back doing their rehab and handling their academics.

Q. Obviously this ends the SEC part of the season. Any thought about potential NIT qualification?

MATT McMAHON: We haven't even looked that far down the road. Just been locked in on trying to figure out ways to give ourselves a chance as we've had some of these injuries and illnesses and stuff down the stretch. Haven't even thought about what the next step would be there.

Q. If this does turn out to be the last game you coach this team, how will you remember this season?

MATT McMAHON: There will be plenty of time to reflect on that. The disappointing piece is it felt like our trajectory was good, winning the nine games in the league last year to get in the top half, having a strong non-conference

schedule there, going 11-2. Just unable to get the job done at the level required, combination of injuries, the overwhelming level of talent and quality of teams in the SEC. Just weren't able to produce the type of results we wanted in league play.

Q. Pretty linear line between NIL investment and the place in the standings for teams. Can you give us a snapshot of what you hope next year looks like for you? Things will be a little bit different for LSU.

MATT McMAHON: I think there's great credit there to the SEC as a whole. That's why you've seen the separation in college basketball.

The SEC has been really good in the past two years, eight teams in the tournament having great success. Because of the NIL investment that's been made, retention has been incredible in the league. Some guys could be playing in the NBA or the G Leagues.

Because of the continued investment, you've seen teams go out and bring in other teams' best players from the Power Five leagues. I think that combination of age, experience and talent acquisition has led to historical season for the SEC.

It's great credit to those programs. We certainly want to be a part of that.

Q. What is it like to go through a league like this?

MATT McMAHON: This year has obviously been a gauntlet. You look at the quality of the teams, the talent, the age and experience. Over the last five years, the SEC has clearly had the most NBA Draft picks. Now a lot of the retention in the league. Getting Virginia Tech's best player coming into the league. Michigan State's starting point guard. Iowa's starting point guard. Duke's starting power forward, on down the line. Not to mention the fact you have Hall of Fame coaches. It's the best of the best. That's why you've seen this historical season for the league.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

MATT McMAHON: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

