

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 14, 2025

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Bridgestone Arena

Texas Longhorns

Coach Rodney Terry

Kadin Shedrick

Jordan Pope

Postgame Press Conference

Tennessee 83, Texas 72

THE MODERATOR: We'll continue on with Texas. We'll ask Coach Terry for a couple of general comments on the game, then take questions.

RODNEY TERRY: Good afternoon. Again, another hard-fought contest in the SEC. Knew we were going to play a really physical team in Tennessee today.

We knew, again, it was going to be a big premium, our rebounding was going to be a big part of the game. They had eight offensive rebounds in the first half, still down one possession. I thought the second half they really came out and guarded really hard.

Their defense were tough to go against all night long. When you have two of the top defenders in all of college basketball, Mashack and Zeigler, you talk about disrupting the game, causing all kinds of problems on both ends of the floor, he's done that throughout the course of his career. Man, he's tough to go against.

He's made us better. They have a team that's built to go a long ways in March.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. A lot of coaches have said sometimes the third game in three days is the time in a tournament when your legs start... It gets tougher. In the second half, did that have anything to do with it? Out of gas at all?

JORDAN POPE: I don't think we were gassed. My body felt fine, I think our bodies felt fine. Maybe lack of focus a little bit, maybe mentally our lapses on defense, not getting



boards when we need to, allowing them to get second-chance points and opportunities like that that put ourselves in a hole, which made it hard to go for the second half.

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, I'd agree. I think over the course of the game, your adrenaline kind of gets you through whatever you might be feeling.

I thought that personally I felt good to keep going. I think a lot of my teammates would say the same. Just didn't bounce our way tonight. Hopefully we can learn from this, and next time...

Q. Kadin, you played a year at Virginia with Igor Milicic. What do you remember about him at Virginia?

KADIN SHEDRICK: I always thought Igor was going to be a really good player. He was really talented at Virginia. I think his only limitation was he had a hard time guarding. I think that he's definitely, as he's gotten older, better on the defensive side of the court. His offense has always been -- he's always been a really talented player. That has shown all year. I watched him play a lot this year. He's really done well.

I'm really happy to see him doing well. Yeah, that's my boy, so it's good to see him doing well.

Q. You talked about the adrenaline getting you through physically. Emotionally, can you talk about the mindset coming in?

KADIN SHEDRICK: Yeah, I wouldn't say it was too hard to get those emotions back up. We all know we're playing for something in that locker room. I think we were all really excited for the opportunity to play basketball again today. It's not always promised.

I would say our energy was good, like our effort was good. We all really wanted to win. There's no question of that. I think we did give it our all tonight. There were areas we had some lapses in that we can't have lapses in.

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Q. Jordan, on Sunday what's going to be your level of nerves watching the Selection Show? Why should y'all be in the field? What would you tell the Selection Committee?

JORDAN POPE: Yeah, it's definitely going to be nerve-wracking for me. This is my first time in this process. I understand we're a team I guess that's on the bubble. It's out of our hands. It's not in our control.

We feel like we've proved throughout the season that we deserve to be in the tournament with games we won. Even games we lost, we showed up and competed at the highest level with everybody. Try not to stress too much over it because there's nothing we can do about it besides sit and watch and wait.

Q. Kadin, what do you think the next 48 hours are going to be like? Do you think there will be some nerves?

KADIN SHEDRICK: There's nothing to be nervous about. It's not in our control. What will happen will happen. I thought we fought hard this week, the whole season, to try to stay the course. We'll see how what it comes down to on Sunday.

Obviously I hope we're able to get the opportunity to continue playing. So we're going to keep going about our business as if we're going to be playing next week. We'll be watching with y'all on Sunday. Hopefully our name's called.

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

Q. Last year in Charlotte, you said you felt like you had a second-weekend type of team. What do you think their ceiling is with this team if they make the NCAA tournament?

RODNEY TERRY: We'd be a dangerous matchup in the NCAA tournament because we're finally healthy. We have our full allotment of guys. We're playing pretty good at the right time of year. We have a guy that can go into the tournament and he can score 30 points in a game. You have a guy that can come into a tournament setting, score 30 points in a game, you're nervous dealing with that. Tennessee had that last year. At any time they could have a guy that could explode for 30.

When you have scoring and star power like that, you're always a dangerous team. Tramon played well down the stretch for us. I thought everybody was playing at the kind of level they would play for us all season, to be honest.

Q. Jordan mentioned mental fatigue caught up with him a little bit after three games. What's the toughest thing about that schedule? Did Rick and his guys try to take advantage of y'all's legs at all?

RODNEY TERRY: Again, I mean, we don't make any excuses. This time of year, you lace 'em up and you're ready to go anytime it's a competitive situation and you have a scoreboard. I have some competitors over in that locker room. When we do that in practice, we become competitive, it's about winning or losing, doesn't matter if they're tired or not, they're going to go full tilt.

I thought we did that for the better part of the game. We were in really good position I thought at halftime. I thought coming out the first four minutes was really going to tell the tale in terms of who was going to put whose will on who to start the second half.

They came out physical. Second-chance opportunities. We had some opportunities as well. You give them a lot of credit. They're hard to play against because, again, I go back to the fact that they've got Zeigler out there, having a stake on the ball, causing all kinds of problems. Mashack is a problem, too. When you have two of the best defenders in college basketball, man, it's hard. It's hard.

Q. It looked like early on it might be one of those games where Lanier was going to have one of those 40-pointers. After a couple timeouts, you shut the tap off there. What were you able to change?

RODNEY TERRY: Man, he's a really good player. He's had a great year this year for Tennessee. The games I've watched him play, outside of our games, he's one of those kind of guys that wants to get off to a fast start. We knew coming in he likes to try to find a groove early. You got to be in his jersey from the time the ball goes up. He's trying to get off to a great start.

Watching his Texas A&M game, he kind of got off to the start he got off to tonight. He had three early threes in our game tonight. He had 20 points at the half at A&M. Kept them in the game and put them in striking distance to win the game at College Station.

He is one of those guys. Has one of the quickest releases in all of college basketball. When he's got it cooking, he's a hard guard. They run him off with lot of wide pin-downs. He's really good at making the reads and curls.

Q. You mentioned Zakai and Jahmai. Is it more difficult to deal with them these short tournaments, short turnaround, than regular-season games?



THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach.

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RODNEY TERRY: Those are older, seasoned, veteran guys. They've been through some battles, they've won a lot of ballgames.

Again, we've seen those guys four years, man. They make it extremely difficult for you to run your offense. If you let 'em play a little bit the way they played today in terms of having their hands on you, it's even more tougher to get around those guys and deal with them.

You've got to be somewhere where the whistle is going to blow a little bit quicker in terms of backing them off. They're some aggressive defenders. The minute they see they can play that way, it's going to be a long night for you.

Q. Looked like Chendall hurt his ankle in the second half. What went behind the decision to put him back in? Can you talk about his impact in this tournament so far.

RODNEY TERRY: Chendall is the toughest player on our team. He brings toughness, energy, winning basketball, Texas basketball. He's one of those guys, you basically have to have his leg cut off for him not to be on the floor. He's going to be on the floor. He's one of those guys like a Brock Cunningham that can play through no matter what. He's going to be on that floor. He's one of those guys that can play through injuries. He tweaked it again pretty good, that ankle. But he wanted to stay in the game, continue to play.

He's the toughest guy we have in that locker room.

Q. Metric-wise, your profile is a quintessential bubble team. Do you think you've done enough?

RODNEY TERRY: When you look at body of work, we have seven quad one wins. I think last year we got in with five quad one wins. We play in the best conference in the history of college basketball this season. Seven of those quad wins are against the field that's going into the tournament.

Never say we had bad losses. I think we've done a pretty good job in terms of when we have lost, I think they've been pretty good. Ohio State, they're a quad one loss, you know? South Carolina, they're tough at home. That's probably our one tough game.

Outside of that, we really didn't have any losses that I think that were bad losses. No one wants to hear a bad loss. A loss is a loss, right? When you look at the profile, I think it's pretty good in that regard.

