

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Bridgestone Arena

Florida Gators

Coach Todd Golden

Alex Condon

Thomas Haugh

Postgame Press Conference

jjVanderbilt 91, Florida 74

THE MODERATOR: Coach, an opening comment, and then questions for the players.

TODD GOLDEN: Credit to Vandy, I thought they played really great. Played well start to finish. They did a good job beating the scout in terms of their front court guys really letting it fly and make threes. I think they had seven three-pointers from their front court which is going to be tough to beat.

Things that we can control that we did a poor job of. First half, taking care of the ball. 20 points off of our turnovers in the first half. They're too good of a team to play that way and expect to win.

A lot that we can improve upon over the next couple days before we get ready for the NCAA tournament. As I told the team in the locker room, very disappointed to not be playing on Sunday again. But everything that we -- our goal at the beginning of the year is still in front of us in terms of being able to play for a national championship.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. What did you think of the uncontested shots they had today?

ALEX CONDON: Yeah, I think the bigs, they shot it well tonight. We got to do a better job of -- I think in the first game they made a lot of midrange shots that were wide open. I know I need to take some accountability with that. Getting my hand up on their big guys, just making it harder for them. I think they played with a good level of physicality. We have to do the same thing down the other



end of the court.

Q. What is your level of concern right now with the ball security issues, the three-point shots not falling?

THOMAS HAUGH: I mean, I think as a coaching staff, us players, we're still confident in our shots. I think the thing we didn't do great today, when we do miss those shots, not grabbing enough boards, leading to second-chance points that we usually get. When we can't do that and we're missing shots and turning the ball over, that's the recipe you're going to get that we got today.

We need to clean that up in practice and we'll get back to it next week.

Q. The game got very physical. Seemed you got frustrated with the physicality. Talk about that.

ALEX CONDON: Yes, I think they made an effort to be really physical from the jump. I know in some of our elbow-catching plays, I was getting elbowed in the back. A lot of rebounding. They made a big emphasis to try and out-physical us. That's our identity, defense and bringing physicality.

Credit to them. They did a good job. But it's fueling the fire for us. I think it's not the worst thing in the world to have a little wake-up call this time of year. I know everyone's going to be super motivated this week in practice, not let this affect our March performance.

THOMAS HAUGH: Yeah, I mean, I think they had a great game plan coming in to just be a little pest and stuff like that on us. We got to not let that happen when it comes tournament time. Not get flustered by that stuff, get back to who we are.

Q. What is it that they do well? What makes them so difficult to guard?

THOMAS HAUGH: They have a great offensive team. Tanner bringing the ball up, Duke has been playing college basketball for a while. All of them are pretty skilled. They



can shoot quick. Might not be the tallest team, but they all are just hoopers. We didn't have a good defensive effort out there today. I think the coaches gave us a good game plan. We just didn't execute it.

THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, thank you, you're dismissed. We'll continue with questions for Coach Golden.

Q. What kind of jumps out to you from Vanderbilt from seeing them earlier until now? Do you feel they're the kind of team that's starting to peak at the right time?

TODD GOLDEN: I mean, like Tommy said, they're a really talented offensive team. When you have front court players that can shoot, that's going to be a little bit of a challenge for us. When you have five guys on the floor that can shoot it, it gets really tough.

They went seven for 10 from the three-point line, between Okereke, McGlockton and Washington. You have to tip your cap a little bit. You have to decide against a team like that, that's definitely much better on the offensive end than defensive end in terms of what you want to live with. We wanted to live with their front court shooting threes. They took advantage of it. They knocked it down. When we tried to switch defenses, they had answers.

We didn't guard them very well the first time either. We played flawless on the offensive end. They were playing well early, kind of tapered out when Duke got hurt. Him coming back is obviously giving them a good lift. But they're a very good team.

Q. Do you think it was a matter of maybe underestimating Vanderbilt, or did it just kind of take your team a little bit to find that rhythm?

TODD GOLDEN: Definitely wasn't underestimating them. We have a lot of respect for them. I think Mark's a great coach. Mark Byington is a great coach. Have a great program. They do a really good job running good offense.

To be honest, we don't underestimate opponents. We have a lot of respect for them.

We didn't play great. Obviously the turnovers and the physicality that they played with bothered us. We usually do that to other teams. Again, credit to them.

Q. Your team won the rebounding battle by double figures. What did they do so well defensively to limit your front court?

TODD GOLDEN: In regards to our second chances or just

overall?

Q. Second chances.

TODD GOLDEN: It's hard to tell. Kind of in the heat of the moment just watching. They did a good job being physical, for sure. I think they knocked us off our spots. When we get 20 offensive rebounds, in theory we should be scoring 25 or even a bucket more on that. We only had 14 second-chance points.

We fought hard on the glass. We got back over 55%, almost 60% of our misses, which is insane. We did a very poor job of taking advantage of that and getting second chances, finishing our second chances I should say.

Q. What did you think were the issues with the uncontested shots, wide-open threes they had?

TODD GOLDEN: We gave them to the bigs. We talked about that. We got to live with something. Ball screen coverage, they're popping, not rolling. Thought we did a great job on their perimeter for three. Nickel was one for six. Tanner only got one up. Miles was one for three. We did a good job that way.

It was, again, their bigs taking advantage, popping in the ball screen. I'll live with big guys shooting some uncontested shots. Okereke, a guy we should have probably tried to take away more. McGlockton, solid three-point shooter. Cable, not great. Did a great job today. When Jalen Washington is throwing them in, it's one of those days. Credit to them.

Q. The last time you lost was January 24th to Auburn. You had a really good bounce-back. How did you make that transition from that loss to winning so many? How is that going to have to happen again?

TODD GOLDEN: We're pretty consistent, as you know. We're just going to go back to practicing hard and doing what we do, focusing on defending, rebounding, taking care of the ball.

My biggest disappointment of the last two days was our ball security. That's an area that we have been making shots. We've been pretty good offensively, top 10 offense all year. We can't be a team that just gives up offensive possessions.

Again, in the first half I think we had nine or something. It led to 20 points for Vanderbilt. I mean, you're not giving yourself a chance to win with that ball security issue that's getting them 20 points in transition, free looks. They're too good of a team and they're going to take advantage of that

every time.

Q. A lot of the big picture discourse will be about you guys as a No. 1 seed. Do you feel like you've done enough this season to secure the fourth No. 1?

TODD GOLDEN: You know what, I do. I'd be curious who the third team is in that conversation.

Q. Houston.

TODD GOLDEN: Houston? Okay, yeah. Looking at Quad 1 wins, I think we're in a good spot that way. Analytically, the predictive metrics, whether it's KenPom, Torvik, we're top four in all those by a wide margin. It's really not close.

We had our early-season tough start where we played really good, competitive opponents, and road or semi-away venues where we fell a little bit short. We haven't lost in 54 days or something leading up to this game, playing some of the best basketball in America. I do believe we've done enough to be the fourth 1 seed. But we'll find out tomorrow night.

Q. It's been kind of mentioned, but can you talk about more so how this game can be similar to that Auburn game, using it at the right time. You hate losing, using it the right way.

TODD GOLDEN: Again, we get back tonight, we'll take tomorrow off. Probably watch the Selection Show together. Get back to practice on Monday.

Again, we try to be very consistent with our program. We're not going to be reactive in regards to when we're winning that we don't practice hard, and we kind of go with the flow, we're okay, as soon as we lose we're going to change everything, be really aggressive in practice.

Part of what makes our program what it is is our consistency. We are not going to change a lot. We are going to get back to defending, rebounding, taking care of the ball.

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