

# American Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Birmingham, Alabama, USA

Legacy Arena At The BJCC

## Temple Owls

## Coach Diane Richardson

## Jaleesa Molina

## Kaylah Turner

### Postgame Press Conference



UTSA 60, Temple 51

DIANE RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thanks, everybody, for being here. It's a tough way to lose our game and end our season. There were some things we pointed out in the locker room, and it was a tough loss, tough loss for us, and we'll go back and go home and get ready for the next one.

**Q. Kaylah and Jaleesa, I'll start with you guys. Kind of that first half, especially the second quarter was really high energy, energy you guys aimed to play with, and it felt like that kind of started to dwindle in the third quarter. Felt like the confidence dipped a little bit. Can you talk me through what happened after halftime, what maybe adjustments UTSA made that stumped you guys or what kind of contributed to the change of pace in that game for you guys?**

KAYLAH TURNER: I mean, I'll probably say our missed shots probably changed our energy. I think that's what it was.

JALEESA MOLINA: I also think our that energy was just not there. Like we didn't start with the amount of energy you said we had in the first quarter. It wasn't there in the third quarter. And, yeah, we just needed that. It wasn't there.

**Q. What was the physicality like in that game? UTSA's defense like they came in as the best scoring defense and the first teams you guys played against them. That was kind of on display and coming into today, what did you see on film coming in and talk about like how you prepared for the physicality of today's game and the defense that they were going to display?**

KAYLAH TURNER: Yeah. That also contributed to the loss. I don't think we matched their physicality on offense or defense. They were playing the gaps a lot and that was kind of stopping our drive and our momentum on offense.

DIANE RICHARDSON: I just want to say in terms of the physicality, it was a very physical game. We have a kid with a concussion and a kid that needs stitches over her eyes. So that tells you how physical this game was.

**Q. Kaylah, I wanted to ask you did you feel like in the second quarter you guys created a lot of live ball turnovers. Did you feel like missed opportunity there to not capitalize on the mistakes they were making.**

KAYLAH TURNER: Yeah. We definitely had a lot of turnovers and missed shots down the stretch that also contributed to the loss.

**Q. Is there something specifically defensively what they do, because all these games were pretty similar in how they kept you in check and the team in general?**

KAYLAH TURNER: Yeah. They were playing the gaps a lot, and so on our drives we were not able to get downhill like we would like.

And then, yeah, they had a really good on-ball defense, I would say. Just gotta read it better and watch more and more and more film and lock in for next year, next season.

**Q. Diane, I want to ask you sort of broadly speaking, coming off two 20-win seasons where you feel like that trajectory is still, where it's been and where you go?**

DIANE RICHARDSON: Thank you, Sean. I think we still have a very talented team. We've had some ups and downs and we've had some injuries this year. But I stand by my team. I know we didn't have any seniors, so the experience portion of it.

But I still stand by my kids, and I think we have a very good team. And we'll be ready for next year. I mean, how many

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games did we win this year? Where are we at? 20 the last two years and how many this year?

**Q. 14.**

DIANE RICHARDSON: 14? Slightly off what our trajectory was. But we've got some things we gotta work on, obviously. And we had two kids out for the year, and then three injuries throughout the year to our starters. So we'll get back in and we'll work.

And we'll have another year of experience next year. And, you know, I told them in the locker room that other than the South Florida game, we lost all of our conference games by single digits, which means we were in every single game. And if you look at the win-loss record, you don't see that.

But I gotta tell my kids that you all played and you played well. Just a little bit more, a little bit more to get over the hump to get those wins.

**Q. Diane, I wanted to kind of expand on what next season can look like and the off season can look like. You said you have no seniors and the possibility to return everyone on the roster plus the two players out for the year. That could change with the transfer portal obviously; players can come and go as they please. How are you looking to continue it build this in the offseason with potentially bringing back everybody, all five starters who played off the bench and build that more, build that consistency up with that experience? How important would it be to see that retention come back again like it kind of came back this past offseason?**

DIANE RICHARDSON: Yeah. Hopefully we do get everybody back. They've got some experience playing together, and the one thing about the transfer portal, it's just starting over.

So hopefully we don't have to get to that. But hopefully our players will stay and understand that they've worked hard for these couple years and it's just one more year where we can go out as a champion, where we're not starting over, not starting from scratch with players and stuff like that.

And I know a lot of teams have gone through that, and I think we have the advantage by them -- for them having played together for so many years and not have to go somewhere and start over or we bring somebody else in to start over.

**Q. Coach, obviously you talked about the injuries up**

**and down season, a lot of close games. What lessons did you and your staff learn from this year and can kind of take into next year going forward?**

DIANE RICHARDSON: Yeah, well, you know, my staff and I believe in our kids. And one of the things that we teach all year is confidence. And when we look at our losses, single-digit losses, it's just that one little extra bit of confidence where you go after one more loose ball, one more rebound. And we believe in them. And what we've been doing all year is trying to feed them that confidence and those confidence boosters, and we still believe in them.

But, you know, as a lesson for them, understand that we believe in them and they've gotta believe in themselves.

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