

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Four

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Dayton, Ohio, USA

UD Arena

SMU Mustangs
Coach Andy Enfield
Corey Washington
Jaron Pierre Jr.
Boopie Miller

Media Conference

Miami (Ohio) 89, SMU 79

ANDY ENFIELD: Well, we're very proud of these players seated next to me and the rest of our team. We had a really good year at SMU, made March Madness, first time in nine years at the school. So they've meant a lot to this program, especially Boopie and B.J. and Samet, the returnees, and of course Corey and Jaron and Sam were transfers that came this year and to do what they -- won 20 games and competed at the highest level. Basically B.J. is not up here, he had a serious injury and tried to get back. But overall just a terrific season. These guys mean so much to our program and the Dallas community. Just very proud of them.

Tonight didn't go our way. Miami played an outstanding basketball game. We had our chances.

We'll take any questions.

Q. You guys came into the game knowing that they're a great offensive team, but actually playing against them, what made them so difficult to slow down?

COREY WASHINGTON: I would say their ability to play together, to spread the ball the way they did. We have to give credit to them. They made some tough shots.

JARON PIERRE JR.: Piggybacking off what Corey said, they shot the ball very well tonight, and they had a lot of assists and they played together.

BOOPIE MILLER: They played well, they shot a lot of threes, and when we closed out, they made the extra pass.



It was a good team and I felt like they did a great job tonight.

Q. Obviously the crowd was very heavy in Miami's favor. How much do you think that impacted you, and how difficult was that to play in a game that should have been a neutral site game for you guys?

BOOPIE MILLER: It was a good game, a good crowd. I feel like we played against games like that with crowds like that before. But they just came out with the win. They played harder than us tonight.

JARON PIERRE JR.: Same thing that Boopie said. They played better than us tonight. They shot the ball very well. It wasn't nothing new playing in front of a crowd like that.

COREY WASHINGTON: Yeah, really nothing new. I would just tell they were feeling energy from the crowd, that's about it. But that's a normal thing.

Q. In terms of B.J.'s availability, you guys have watched him trying to come back. How tough was it for him not to be able to go today and watching him fight back from his injury and not be able to play with you guys tonight?

COREY WASHINGTON: I know for sure he would give anything to be able to play tonight, but that wasn't the case. He just made the best decision for himself. At the end of the day, I respect that. But he means a lot to this team.

JARON PIERRE JR.: Just like Corey said, he means everything to this team. He tried his best to get back for us tonight. He made the best decision he could as far as his injury. But he means a lot to this team, and he always will.

BOOPIE MILLER: B.J. is an amazing player. He cares about the team. He would have did anything for this team. Amazing player like him out for us is a big loss. I love B.J.; that's my brother. We're going to be family forever.

Q. Leaving this program now, how do you feel about the state of it and where it's going and how much it's grown in your time here? And just to get back to the tournament and be a part of it, what did that mean?



BOOPIE MILLER: I feel like we did a good job at just getting here. Wish it would have ended better, but I hope I helped a lot of the young guys get motivation to want to get to this spot, go harder, and just do the right things from the beginning of the season so they can end up at the end of the season with a better outcome.

JARON PIERRE JR.: Piggybacking off Boopie, I hope that definitely those younger dudes were able to see that us as leaders that Coach can get on us a lot, and he'll bring out something else in you, so I hope they can learn from that.

COREY WASHINGTON: Yeah, I think we paved the way. We set a standard here, and we just expect those guys to come out next year and get right back to it.

Q. Just to get this out of the way, to start, you guys put a statement out saying B.J. is expected to be available for the tournament. He doesn't play. The selection committee says a big reason why they put you guys in is they expected B.J. to play. How do you explain what happened? Did something change? How do you justify what happened over the last couple days here?

ANDY ENFIELD: B.J. has done a terrific job with our trainer, Ray, and our doctors, of getting back into shape and rehabbing and taking care of the injury to his ankle. He looked really good in practice today, the last couple days. He shot the ball well. He's moving well.

But I think there's a thing called game readiness, and he just didn't feel like he was quite game ready. He said, I could definitely play on Friday if we win this game, definitely going to play on Friday. But just not quite game ready.

So really that was a -- we're probably a day short on that. It was heartbreaking when he said, I'm just not quite -- we thought he'd be right there. But it's a very heartbreaking thing to have someone that wants to be out there and just can't do it. It didn't feel comfortable quite yet.

He means so much to our team and just an incredible young man. I know he wanted to be out there more than anybody. That's kind of where it was. He feels worse than we all do.

Q. I know a lot of teams shoot a lot of threes these days, but is there anything unique to the way they go about it?

ANDY ENFIELD: Well, they share the ball. They put five guys on the court that can shoot the three, so they're hard to guard. Especially we're big and we have the size

advantage. We outscored them in the paint 46 to 20 tonight, which is our game plan to really try to score the ball in the lane with our size and our athleticism.

The three-point line can be a great equalizer at times and it hurt us probably three, four times. They were able to get offensive rebounds and kick it out and made threes. And that was disheartening because you get a defensive stop and they get a rebound and kick it out and make a three on you right away. That happened at least three times, and those are big points in the game.

Q. With how the committee kind of described B.J.'s injury factoring into their decision, do you have any concern moving forward that they might think a little differently about you guys in the future?

ANDY ENFIELD: Well, if you look at our whole body of work, we deserved to be in the NCAA Tournament. Our NET was 37, the quality of wins we had. And one person is -- B.J. is important, but it's a team sport. A lot of other teams have injuries.

We deserved to be in the NCAA Tournament if you look at all our metrics and our wins. We all thought that B.J. would be back, but this was a situation where, as I just described -- I just went over that.

As far as the committee, what they're -- we deserved to be in the NCAA Tournament, bottom line. That's pretty to the point right there.

Q. Corey mentioned he felt like they did get some energy off the crowd. What was your take and reaction to the atmosphere?

ANDY ENFIELD: That was a great crowd. Home game for Miami, they probably had 12,000 fans here, it felt like. Maybe 40 or 50,000, but the arena only seats 14. So they were loud and they fed off the energy. It was like a home game for them.

But hey, our guys have played in front of big crowds in hostile environments. It helped Miami because I think their energy really fed off the environment. But it was March Madness, so our guys were excited to be out there, too.

Q. For some of your younger guys like Jaden, Jermaine, just to get this opportunity as freshmen to play on a stage like this, how can that help them moving forward in their careers?

ANDY ENFIELD: Well, it's a goal to be here every year to compete for a National Championship. We had seven freshmen and six upperclassmen, and the goal was for the

freshmen to come off the bench and improve, which they did, and then get some great game experience. And also learn by sitting on the bench when they're not playing and watching the upperclassmen and being exposed to all these great environments that the ACC has to offer.

When we go on the road, we're playing some very historical great basketball programs with great players and great environments. So I think it was an awesome year for our young players to not only contribute to winning but also learn and watch, and hopefully they'll take that and have a huge off-season and improve.

Q. What are you going to remember most about this group and that it's their first time being here, for SMU, in nine years, and also, what excites you about SMU basketball and where it can go in the future?

ANDY ENFIELD: It's a great question. Boopie Miller, B.J. Edwards, Samet, they're the returnees. What they've done for this program the last two years, you can't really put into words because we won 24 games our first year in the ACC last season. Boopie was injured last year for five games. That hurt us down the stretch. We just fell probably a game or two short from being an at-large team last year.

This year they come back and we have some great wins. Moody Coliseum is packed, the student body at SMU is now supporting us at a great level.

The community of Dallas comes to our games, and it's just a really cool thing to see these young men and their teammates build a program so quickly. It's because of them. As coaches, we try to recruit them and develop them and put them in a system to help them succeed. But what they've done means a lot to SMU, and we're very, very proud of them.

We feel great about the future of our program. We feel great about the support we're getting from the SMU administration, the student body and the surrounding community.

So we think this is just a start. We have to keep doing our part, and the players have to improve, and then we have to go and keep recruiting quality guys like we have on our team right now.

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