

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - Troy vs Kentucky

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

Fiserv Forum

## Troy Trojans

## Jackson Fields

## Tayton Conerway

### Media Conference



THE MODERATOR: About to be joined by Troy student-athletes, Jackson Fields and Tayton Conerway. Troy against Kentucky at 6:10 tomorrow night.

**Q. The Sun Belt is very competitive this year, with four co-champions. You've heard a lot about the SEC, how tough it is. What do you think you've learned from competition in your own conference that can maybe take you down the SEC?**

JACKSON FIELDS: First off, I want to give thanks to the man above. Without him, none of this would be possible.

We have a tough schedule, 14 teams. You have to win in order to get out, so I feel like just going through that schedule of playing those guys in our conference, just getting us ready for this competition and trusting in who we have in our locker room and who we have on our team. Go out there and play the way we play and hope for the best result.

**Q. For both of you, just what were your impressions of Kentucky basketball growing up? How excited are you to play Kentucky tomorrow?**

TAYTON CONERWAY: Growing up, I feel like Kentucky was always like one of those NBA schools and they always had legendary coaches and stuff. That was kind of a team that was always on TV. It was just an honor always watching them. Now we get to play against them. So it feels even better now.

JACKSON FIELDS: I'd have to agree with him as well. I didn't really grow up watching a lot of basketball. When I did watch, it was either one of those blue bloods, Kansas, Kentucky, or Duke. To have an opportunity to play against

them is something I look forward to doing.

**Q. I'm curious as to where you guys were last year at this time and if you caught the Kentucky game and what you felt when they went down to Oakland?**

JACKSON FIELDS: Well, this time last year, I think we might have been on the beach enjoying a little bit of time relaxing, tanning, chillin' with the team. But I didn't really watch the game. I don't really look at past, previous stuff. Just focus on what we have to do tomorrow.

**Q. Speaking of that game and Kentucky being a 3 seed again. They haven't gotten past the second round as a 3 seed the last couple years. How confident are you guys that you can kind of keep that going?**

JACKSON FIELDS: You know, just go out there and play the game. I feel like we have confidence -- like I said previously, confidence in our guys and coaches and the game plan we have set to win this game tomorrow.

TAYTON CONERWAY: I feel like as long as we just be ourselves and lock into the stuff we've been practicing on, I feel like we'll be okay.

**Q. Tayton, you're one of the top steals guys in the country. How did you make yourself into the defender you've become? How have you been able to thrive on steals?**

TAYTON CONERWAY: Just figuring out people's tendencies. People are creatures of habit. Everybody has tendencies they go to. Trying to figure them out early in the first half. When it comes down to the stretch in the second half, you can get in there and get you a couple.

**Q. When I hear people talk about your team, I hear the word toughness a lot. What is it about you guys that makes you so tough?**

TAYTON CONERWAY: Our defense for sure. The way we defend and the way we rebound, I feel like that's two of our big attributes. And our coach is always preaching, no matter who you are, the toughest team will always win. As long as we can be the toughest team, we like our chances.



**Q. Jackson, I'm fascinated by your season statistic line. I think you started the line 3 of 28 on 3-pointers. Since then, you're 16 of 29. How did you turn that around?**

JACKSON FIELDS: Well, you know, just confidence in my coaches and my teammates, telling me to keep shooting. I didn't really, I want to say, switch anything up. Maybe a mental boost. After I hit one, kept flowing and kept shooting. Just extra work with my coaches off the court as well.

**Q. Tayton, let's ask you, what do you hope the nation sees particularly from Troy? When everybody watches, by the end of the game, regardless of the outcome, what do you hope will have struck the nation about Troy basketball?**

TAYTON CONERWAY: I just want to be one of those teams that's so tough that nobody wants to play. Every time they hear they got to play Troy, I want them to put their head down and dread the whole night. As long as we can be the toughest team, that's what we're going for.

JACKSON FIELDS: I definitely agree. We want to show we're not a pushover team. We'll compete, play hard, get scruffy and get down and try to win the game.

**Q. Were you able to get in one last Waffle House trip before you came?**

JACKSON FIELDS: A couple of us went as a team. They hook us up out there. They got great people at Waffle House. They sent us off with good vibes and good waffles. That's always good.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys. Good luck tomorrow.

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