

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - Mississippi State vs Baylor

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Raleigh, North Carolina, USA

Lenovo Center

**Mississippi State Bulldogs**

**Claudell Harris Jr.**

**KeShawn Murphy**

**Cameron Matthews**

**Josh Hubbard**

**RJ Melendez**

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'll now open the floor up for questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. This year the SEC has just been totally dominant, 14 teams in the field. How has playing in the SEC schedule basically helped prepare you for this moment?**

THE MODERATOR: Is there anybody in particular? Let's just start with Claudell.

CLAUDELL HARRIS JR: I'm sorry. Can you ask the question again?

**Q. Playing in the SEC, getting two new teams, 14 of those teams are in the tournament. How has playing in that SEC gauntlet helped prepare you for the NCAA Tournament this year?**

CLAUDELL HARRIS JR: It prepared us well for the NCAA Tournament. I feel like personally the SEC is the best league in the country, especially this year, and playing against that high level of competition and even with the guys next to me every day, it was always preparation for where we are now.

**Q. Can you guys talk about your experience in last year's NCAA Tournament, first round loss, and maybe what you learned from it and how it might help you this year? And if it's just a coincidence you're back in**



**North Carolina.**

THE MODERATOR: KeShawn, would you like to answer that?

KESHAWN MURPHY: Yes. I feel like last year, the run we had helped prepare us more for this year. We expect more, we have high expectations for this team and where we want to be with this staff and where we want to be moving forward.

**Q. This is for any of the guys who want to take this on. With the SEC getting 14 bids to the tournament, I'm curious kind of what your thoughts were on that and also how much you think the schedule prepared you guys for what you're going to see in March.**

THE MODERATOR: Cameron, could you answer that, please.

CAMERON MATTHEWS: Picking back up off of what Claudell said, just grateful that we got to play so many great teams. I feel like just us playing each other night in and night out really helped us prepare for moments like this.

**Q. As a follow-up to that, what do you think was the most difficult part of going through that grind during the regular season in the SEC?**

CAMERON MATTHEWS: I guess maybe the most difficult part is probably just the up-and-downs, just trying not to get -- beating ourselves up too much, knowing that we're playing the best teams each night, and just keep staying level-headed knowing that better times are ahead.

**Q. Josh, could you please comment on what you know about Baylor at this point.**

JOSH HUBBARD: They're a great program, much respected school. They're in a tough league as well. They have a lot of great players, a lot of skilled players. They're just a good team.

We just have to come out and do our job, get our game plan into the game, and just play some Bulldog basketball at the end of the day.



THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, thank you very much and good luck tomorrow.

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