

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Alabama vs Louisville

Sunday, March 22, 2026

Louisville, Kentucky, USA

KFC YUM! Center

Alabama Crimson Tide

Kristy Curry

Jessica Timmons

Diana Collins

Karly Weathers

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions for our Alabama student-athletes.

Q. For any, all of you, what did you learn from yesterday's game that you are hoping to take with you into tomorrow's game against Louisville?

JESSICA TIMMONS: I think some things that we learned about our last game was that we have to continue to play together, play gritty, and then understanding that rebound is going to be important and each possession in March Madness matters.

We know how great of a team that we played yesterday, and the team that we're going to play, Louisville, is going to be very competitive. They're coached well.

If we execute our game plan and what our coaches just tell us, we'll end up having a great game and coming out with a win on our side.

DIANA COLLINS: I would say togetherness is something we would take. Also, I feel like making sure we're still getting out in transition and adding that to our game.

KARLY WEATHERS: Yeah, for sure. Also, too Bama not beating Bama. Just making sure we take care of the ball, do the little things on our end, kind of what Jess was saying, just making sure we're rebounding the ball. Everybody at this point is a really good team, so we have to come out ready to go from the opening tip and play and put four quarters together.



Q. You maybe have watched Louisville where here and there. Can you tell me what is your plan right now or what do you need to shore up to beat a Louisville team?

KARLY WEATHERS: Play Bama basketball. I think that the thing that we kind of emphasize all the time is we want to do the same things in every single game, so we want to be a really gritty team, we want to be a team that plays together. We want to be a team that our defense creates our offense, and that does not change based on who we play.

So Louisville is a really good team, but we also -- you know, like what Jess was saying, we have to do whatever our coaches are asking us to do, but night in and night out they ask those things of us. Rebound the basketball, play with an extreme amount of tough, and play together.

DIANA COLLINS: Karly basically said the majority of it. We got to play Alabama basketball, but I also think, like, we got to make sure that we're getting on the floor, getting hustle plays, boxing out, rebounding, all those sorts of things, yeah.

JESSICA TIMMONS: We've had a chance to go over personnel. A couple of our girls from the previous day had a chance to watch the game against Vermont in halftime. I think for us understanding that they have a deep group of girls. They're able to come in and rotate, but we have a deep group of girls as well. We play in the SEC. We play a lot of competitive teams, so I think that's going to prepare us to have a great game against them, but they are a very good coached team.

Louisville, they have a lot of great fans, so we're going to feed off that energy and feed off the fans that we have here as well.

Q. Did it help that you had kind of a scrappy team the first round that you had to adjust a few things? Rhode Island wasn't just -- they had some talent and some really good players. Do you feel that that helped not just having a walk-over like an easy first opponent?



JESSICA TIMMONS: Yeah, definitely. Rhode Island, they were very competitive, very physical. It kind of reminded us of Auburn, like we mentioned in our post-conference the other day. We understand that each game has possessions. Each game's teams are going to go on runs. Rhode Island went on their run, and our run was a little bit longer. So just preparing us for March.

Every team is going to have a run. Every team is good, like Karly said, but as long as we execute our game plan and we play together, we'll have that longer run.

DIANA COLLINS: Yeah, I mean, I think that it was good that we played against a team that was more gritty, yeah.

KARLY WEATHERS: Yeah, I mean, they're a very well-coached team, too. You can tell by the way that they just moved defensively and offensively that they play very well together.

So any time that, you know, you play in the NCAA Tournament, it's just good to get a win under your belt. We're just really thankful that we had the opportunity to come out with a win yesterday, but it was a great game to prepare us, because they made us do things that kind of put us outside of our comfort zone at times and stuff like that. Just playing a team that played with so much togetherness and just everything was kind of fluid, like what they did. Playing a team like that will prepare you to play anybody.

Q. What would it mean for this program to get back to the Sweet 16? Obviously something that none of you were alive for, and even I wasn't alive for it back in '98.

KARLY WEATHERS: We were actually joke about that this morning. Jess asked one of us if we were alive. We were, like, Well, Jess, were you alive? I mean, it would be really cool.

We've made it to the second round the last for years, and so just to take another step forward with this program would just be awesome. I wouldn't want to do it with another group of girls. Like, this team has just been so fun to play with this year. We've spoke about it a lot. A lot of people counted us out when we began this year because we lost so much.

So just, again, to move the program forward just a little bit. Coach Curry has worked so hard in the last 13 years to move this program, and she's done an awesome job. We continue to take strides in this program, so this is just the next step.

As she always says, it's just the next game up, so we want to win the next game up.

DIANA COLLINS: Yeah, I mean, I think it means a lot going to the Sweet 16. I mean, we have a lot of seniors that are part of our, like, core group and stuff, and it means a lot for us to take them to the Sweet 16. Overall, yeah, it means a lot.

JESSICA TIMMONS: Yeah, why not Bama? A lot of people counted us out. They didn't believe we were going to be a top-25 team. They didn't believe that we were going to be this competitive and be able to compete with the girls in the SEC, with the class that left us a humongous standard.

That team last year, man, they come back, they support us. They're able to be in our practices. They text us. They text our group chat the other day telling us to go get the Sweet 16.

So just understanding what Coach Kristy has built in this program. You know, Alabama, we have a program that every sport is good. We want this time to be for women's basketball, and I think this will be proven this year.

Q. Just kind of what about playing in the SEC gives you the confidence after those three ranked wins during regular season?

JESSICA TIMMONS: SEC just means more. I think it's that simple. A lot of people -- I believe our record is 9-2 so far when it comes to March Madness, so I mean, we're rooting for SEC teams right now just because we've played in that conference. But from the top to the bottom, if you are in the SEC, you can lose to the team that's all the way at the bottom if you're not prepared and coming ready to play.

That's the same thing that we're going to carry on to March Madness. It's one game at a time. We have to bring it all your first game. Rhode Island was a great example. It doesn't matter what I team is ranked. It doesn't matter what conference they're in. A team is able to bring their A game, they're able to come out with a win.

DIANA COLLINS: Yeah, I mean, I think the SEC is a very physical league. I think it prepares us in ways that, like, every time we go into a game, it's not going to be a cake-walk. It's going to be a dogfight every time. So I think that's what prepares us.

KARLY WEATHERS: I think it's no different than what we faced all season long. If you look on paper, I mean, probably half of our games in the SEC looked like we

would have to pull an upset to win the game.

We talked about this yesterday. Like, we've played against top-5 teams, top-10 teams, top-25 teams all season long. So those things have only prepared us for this moment, and I'm a firm believer that we were created for a time such as this.

Again, it goes back to it only matters what's being said in our locker room. So if we feel like we have the confidence to go out there and get a win, we don't really care what the number is in front of the team.

Q. Coach Kristy talked about what an emotional leader you are, Diana. You want to talk about what each of your roles is off the court, what you feel like your role off the court is? Yours seemed to be a spiritual leader, such a good teammate, and you got to put the name on the bracket when you got chosen to do that. Why don't you talk about what your role is off the court with the team?

KARLY WEATHERS: I think everybody calls me Mama Karly. Joy nicknamed me that this year. I just tried to be the calm in the storm with our team. I always try to be as level-headed as I can. I'm very passionate about the game of basketball, so I have to find a very fine -- that's a very fine line. I have to have a heavy balance with that.

But I just try to support my girls no matter what. Whether that be me being a Mama Bear for our team or just me coming up and picking somebody up, that's kind of my role. I just try to do whatever I can, whatever the team needs me to do in that day, and I just really try to meet people where they are.

DIANA COLLINS: Yeah, I don't know. I kind of like to have, I guess, a little bit of fun at times. I guess bringing, like, I guess, a little bit of fun to the team, but -- yeah, pretty much (smiling).

JESSICA TIMMONS: I guess they'll say I'm the meany, the one that's always getting on them and just holding them accountable. When you love the girls, when you love your sisters, you're going to hold them accountable because you know how good they're able to be. I mean, Diana stepped up tremendously the other day, and Diana knows I'm always on her. Essence stepped up tremendously.

It's just shows the love that we have for each other, and it just comes from the heart because we know how good this team can be, and we just want to prove it to the world.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies, thank you very much. We have Coach Curry. We welcome you in.

KRISTY CURRY: Thank you. We're excited to advance to the Round of 32 and the opportunity that tomorrow presents. We were here a year ago and definitely didn't like the feeling that we felt, and we want to make that feeling and take another step toward a Sweet 16.

We're playing a great Louisville team on their home floor. 27 wins. Jeff is elite. His staff is elite, and we're just honored to have the opportunity to compete against them tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Coach, Mackenly Randolph has been on a tear lately for Louisville. Can you talk a little bit about what kind of match-up problems she presents, especially for your team and your front court?

KRISTY CURRY: She definitely is a match-up nightmare. She has done a great job, what, five out of the last six games. I may be off a game or two, but has been phenomenal. I had a chance to watch her out of high school and called her a couple of times in the recruiting process and understand that's Zach's daughter and just how talented she is.

You know, she's phenomenal in transition. She infuses them with the energy and just brings a lot of toughness and grit. I think they're really good around her. I mean, obviously their versatility and depth as a team is what their size really impresses me.

So, yeah, I mean, we have our hands full, but I mean, we're in the SEC, so we have match-ups. We've seen this type of size consistently. We need to draw from our experiences of competing in the SEC.

Q. You mentioned not liking the feeling that you had last year. What have you learned -- or what did you learn from that experience that you're taking with you and maybe making some adjustments this season?

KRISTY CURRY: Yeah, I mean, I think we've been here in my past before and know how we've gotten to the Sweet 16 and how we haven't. There's been a few years in between, but certainly I think the biggest thing is we just need to be Bama. When we've been Bama, we've been at our best and had some really great wins in the SEC.

So I think that tomorrow it's our next game. We be where our feet are, we be Bama, and we'll put ourselves in a position if we do all the things to the standard that we expect every day, we'll put ourselves in a position to compete and take another step forward.

So we're just trying to focus on the positives. We go out and prepare and execute the game plan. That's who we are.

Q. When you say, "Be Bama," what does that mean and what do you have to do on the court.

KRISTY CURRY: You have to defend the boards at a really high level. They're exceptional. I think they get -- when you look at their team, I mean, they're getting 14 offensive rebounds a game. They're phenomenal on the glass. We've got to do a really good job of being a strong rebounding team and boxing out. We didn't do a very good job of that yesterday and gave up too many.

You know, that's typical in our league as well. When we've rebounded the ball, we've put ourselves in more of a position to be successful. I think the thing is they have 72 possessions a game. We have 69. We both love to play fast and get to the rim. They're elite with their rim finishing from an analytical standpoint, so we have to defend the boards and defend them in transition and not give up easy baskets.

Secondly, I think the transition, but also, you can't have live-ball turnovers. They do a phenomenal job of forcing turnovers. I think 17 a game. So we have to do a really good job of -- our goal is always 12 and less. When you rebound is, you defend in transition, don't give up easy baskets, and then you don't turn the ball over, you can't come in here and turn the ball over, and you can't come in here and not win the rebounding battle.

So they're physical, and we've got to do a good job in those three areas of matching their physicality to give ourselves a chance.

Q. Kristy, you just talked about how the SEC has prepared you for this game. Is there a team or which team is comparable to Louisville, and how did that game maybe help you prepare in scouting this one and getting ready for this one?

KRISTY CURRY: Yeah, they played South Carolina extremely close. I actually had a chance to watch that game in preparation for South Carolina. Then, you know, Kentucky beat them. So I had a chance to watch them against Kentucky in scout preparation.

You know, when you're not playing, you're always watching basketball. So I just have a lot of respect for Jeff and love watching their team and how he plays. You know, he's just done a phenomenal job. They love to shoot the three a little more than I've ever seen them at multiple positions,

and we love to shoot the three.

I think we've definitely watched them, not necessarily thinking we would be playing them, but we'll draw from those experiences. I mean, those are two common opponents.

I think the thing is that they're just so well-coached. They do a great job of executing in special situations as well, end of game, end of quarter, baseline, sideline. I enjoy watching him and how well that he does a good job in those special situations.

Q. What would it mean for this program if you guys could get over the hump and make the Sweet 16 for the first time since '98?

KRISTY CURRY: I'm not sure I have the words. Just be so proud for the players in that locker room and the players that believed 13 years ago that we could be back at this position to put ourselves in a position to do this. Especially in back-to-back years.

It's just always about the players and young women in that locker room that have given so much to the front of their chest. I mean, there's nothing better as a coach than watch your team celebrate. It's not about you. It's about them.

You know, we've just tried to come in and do everything that we could to put them in this position. It would be an absolute joy to watch this group have that experience of advancing to Fort Worth.

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