

NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - Missouri State vs Texas

Friday, March 20, 2026

Austin, Texas, USA

Moody Center

Texas Longhorns

Coach Vic Schaefer

Rori Harmon

Jordan Lee

Madison Booker

Media Conference

Texas 87, Missouri State 45

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by University of Texas head coach Vic Schaefer and players Rori Harmon, Jordan Lee, and Madison Booker. Coach and ladies, congratulations on the victory today.

Coach, if you would like to just make a few opening remarks, please.

VIC SCHAEFER: Okay. Well, first, just proud of our kids, proud of my team and I also want to give credit to Missouri State. I just thought those kids were really tough and resilient. I thought they came back in the second half, like I knew they would, like I knew their coach would have them do and they came back and really competing well. Scored 33 points on us after only having 12 in the first half. I think that speaks a lot about an individual, a team, a coach, a coaching staff and so we want to tip our hat to them. Again, I thought they were really tough.

I thought we did some really good things today at times. And at times, we just weren't very sharp. I played a lot of people and that's great, but we just weren't real sharp in a lot of areas. We shot it okay, shot 50%. They shot 69% the second half. Like, that's bad. Good for them, bad for us.

Book had a double-double. Rori is now top ten all-time I think in year assists in NCAA history. It's quite a feat. I'm proud of her. As I told her at halftime, to me, when she's out there on the floor, it's just different. Defensively, I think



our intensity is different, people around her are different. I think she took three charges today.

So, again, hopefully we can have a couple days to learn from it. I thought Jordan was 8 for 15, shot it pretty well. Got to her spots and did some good things. Obviously we shot free throws really well. Out-rebounded them 22 and about the only thing I'm worried about is the turnovers. We had 11 turnovers.

But I thought those kids for them played really well. We only forced 19 turnovers and believe me, we tried to force more than that, but we didn't play very good on that end. So we'll hopefully have a good day tomorrow and come back ready to go on Sunday.

Q. Maddie, it looked like you came up a little hobbled in the fourth quarter. Can you talk about what you're feeling or what happened then?

MADISON BOOKER: What happened in the fourth quarter? Oh, I don't know, probably just a little step wrong a little bit. But I don't know, I'm cool. I'm cool. Thank you for asking.

Q. This question is for all three of the players. You had an unbelievable game today. Your defense was off the chart, but I wanted to ask you about a very special moment at the end when Sarah went into the game. She took her opportunity to the next level when she scored. What was going through your mind and your heart just to see her get that shot in?

RORI HARMON: She pours so much into us every day and I have been here with Sarah for quite some time, and so I truly feel that from the bottom of my heart how excited I get and our teammates get for her because she's always just giving and giving and never expects anything.

She's a great leader. She's a great culture kid. She does so much for us. When she goes out there and has a great attitude every time she gets in the game and she does something like that. We see it in practice and not a lot of people see that but that turnaround fade in the paint that she had is a great shot to have.



JORDAN LEE: Yeah, echoing what Rori said. We're super excited for her. She's a great friend to all of us and a great teammate as well. Any time she gets her opportunity, we light up, I think, more than she does.

MADISON BOOKER: Yeah, I think when we score in the game, she's always first one off the bench and everything. We kind of wanted to that back to her when she scored, when the ball was going through the hoop. We wanted her to see how much we appreciate her on the bench and just give her back energy, but, yeah, we love Sarah to death over here.

Q. For the three of youse, consistency has been an issue off and on at some point this season and you guys haven't played in two weeks. Rori's throw out of bounds assist sort of jump-started the defense for y'all in the second quarter. How do y'all sort of get that energy to come back when you haven't played another team in about two weeks?

JORDAN LEE: I think you have a different kind of mindset. At the same time, it's March and there's a huge emphasis on every single game but at the same time, we're dusting off some rust and that we haven't played two weeks ago, but when we last took the floor, we had amazing momentum and so we're really focused on doing the things we can to keep that forward for these last five.

MADISON BOOKER: Yeah, just to piggyback on what Jordan said, I think it's all about the mentality you have to have as a team. I think it's just having that mindset of we're not done yet. Yeah, we did good the last two weeks, but we still have a season in front of us. We still have more games and great teams ahead. Also we can't get to game six without playing game two now, so we have to keep that mindset of whoever is in front of us, we have to go out there and kill.

Q. Jordan, obviously you led the scoring for your team today. None of the points came from behind three. They were all in the paint, they were all downhill. Aggressive driving performance. How has that development before for you adds a downhill scorer and where do you continue to use that?

JORDAN LEE: I think one of the things that makes Texas so special is just the environment with our assistant coaches and so for me, my roll dog, per se, has been Coach Syd. She's been very persistent with me in the gym daily and you see that development, like you mentioned, and a variety of different ways of scoring.

Q. Madison, you were wearing some KD19s today.

How does it feel to officially show off and be part of KD's brand with your recent NIL deal?

MADISON BOOKER: I don't know, I really can't put it into words but it still feels surreal to wear my favorite player's shoes. But, yeah, they feel great. Honestly, it's still surreal. I can't believe that happened. I'm just happy to represent the brand now.

Q. Y'all won by 42 points and your coach basically just said y'all had an all right game. Rori, what can you personally do as a leader on both ends of the court to make sure your team does better than all right?

RORI HARMON: Yeah, I agree with him. I think it starts with practice. We have to have more intensity and what one of you guys said about our consistency, so that does start with some leadership and holding people accountable.

But like Jordan was saying earlier, we're just knocking off some rust. I'm sure we'll regroup and come bang. It starts in practice tomorrow, but I do expect us to play a lot better.

Q. Jordan, this is for you. It seemed like every time you got the ball, especially at half-court, you were looking for a lane and you took it without hesitation. It's like you had a path. As you're coming up the court, tell us what you're thinking about and what you see to be so confident to take that aggressive lane.

JORDAN LEE: I think it's just preparation and practice. We make a lot of the same reads against our practice guys every single day. One of the best things about playing a team that's so deep is everything is a little more wide open. There's not as many people in the point this year. Just taking the point when it comes.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions for our three student-athletes? Seeing none, ladies, thank you very much. We'll see you tomorrow and congratulations on the victory.

Questions for Coach.

Q. Vic, went you saw you're coaching against ghosts, what do you mean by that?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, it's a pretty broad kind of statement. I'm worried about what somebody might do, maybe something that we maybe haven't seen on film but they might do to us. Always worried about something new and different that maybe we're just not prepared for or we haven't seen in a while.

I've got ghosts on this team sometimes that I'm befuddled right thousand with my third quarter. We played so well that first half, and it's not the first time it's happened. But, you know, when I say the ghost piece, I'm always worried about what somebody might do that maybe I haven't put our kids through in a while, so I'm always trying to be prepared for that.

Q. What specifically did you see in that third quarter defensively from your team?

VIC SCHAEFER: I just didn't think we were locked in. I didn't think we played very hard. We let them catch whatever they wanted to. We didn't do a good job denying. We didn't have great ball pressure. We had a lot of issues, really, to be honest with you. Quite different. They scored 12 points the first half and then 22 in the third quarter. That's a big difference, so you're not -- a lot of that has to do, in my mind, with playing hard. That's not a -- it's not like they just came out and started running something different.

Q. So your defense was stifling. Full-court press. They didn't give up hardly anything. What's your take on how they played defensively? I realize the third quarter was a little bit different but they were just insane.

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, I thought our first half was good. Disappointed in the third quarter for sure. 69% is not good. That's what they shot in the third quarter. Our field goal percentage defense for the night was 28, which is great, and we chased them off the line, so they made 20% out there, but it's hard for me to get past the third quarter.

Unfortunately, it doesn't matter what we did the first two quarters. It's hard for me to see that when I can't get past that third quarter.

Q. Coach, you played a lot through your bigs today with that size advantage you had low 50 point points. How would you judge the performance of your big man, particularly Brea, Kyla, And justice taking into account or taking out of account the foul trouble.

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, again. Kyla and Brea have got to be smarter on their fouls. Kyla was 5 for 9. Brea was 3 for 3, so you're 8 for 2 at the five, which is great. Justice struggled a little bit making layups and it bothered her. I told her, hey, it's fine. I get it. It's bothers me too, but you can't let it consume you.

And she'll be fine. Like, Justice will be fine. She'll be looked in and ready to go on Sunday, I don't have any doubt, but she had four rebounds. She had an assist. She

didn't turn the ball over. She had two steals.

I thought Teya played good today. Did some really good things. So, again, our five position has been our two-headed monster most of the year. We just got to stop with the silly fouls. You get five, man, earn them. That's what I tell them. Go get it. If you're going to foul somebody, go on and get 'em. Don't foul somebody 20 feet from the rim. That's ridiculous.

Q. Coach, you talk about how Justice can kind of sneak up on people. You said the other day that she can score 10 points on you sometimes before you even know what's happening. How do you make sure you keep a player like that involved on the scoring effort throughout all four quarters with these fast starts?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, we went to her early and, again, she just missed some bunnies, but she got seven shots. That's pretty good. I think they were all pretty good. Always going to -- to me, she's a mismatch for a lot of people. She's been so good for us on a lot of nights. We'll always keep her involved. We'll always run some good stuff for her and put her in a position to be successful.

Q. Bryanna has showed a new level of confidence of play-making in this game. How has that shown throughout practice or just her leadership for the team in general?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, she's been practicing well and played really well tonight. Four assists, no turnovers, was 4 for 5 from the field. 2 for 2 at the line. Yeah, she played really well. Just trying to, begun, she'll tell you if she were here, get in the press a little quicker. She had some switches tonight and then we didn't get to where we were going to deny. She needs to -- but she played great tonight and she's been practicing really well. Really pleased with her and I have a lot of confidence in Bryanna Preston.

Q. Vic, you said earlier that you had a lot of players check into the game. Why is it important to have as many of your players on the court for this game when minutes could get a little tighter as the season goes on?

VIC SCHAEFER: Well, again, you want to -- I don't ever just sub to sub. Typically I make substitutions for a reason and the ones I made tonight were for a reason too. You need to get these kids in this environment.

What a great crowd today at 3:00 in the afternoon on a Friday. A lot of people missing work, I hope and not

getting in trouble, but 7,900 people. A great atmosphere for both teams. I want our kids -- our kids, all of them, are going to be in that moment potentially down the line. I want them to be comfortable in that moment.

We have had so many of these types of games throughout the court of the season, so it's really nothing unusual for them as far as the environment goes. We just need to play better. We need to shoot it better.

Q. Can you talk us through the decision to bring in Sarah. As soon as she stood up, the crowd went bananas. Then she went on the court. It's almost like either you had plays designed for her or she made the opportunities for herself because she was all over the court looking for that ball.

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, Sarah, her and Grace, Grace smoked a layup. She had a good look at a layup and missed it and, you know, Sarah, both these kids work so hard in practice. Sarah is probably as comfortable as anybody I got on my team in our offense. She knows how to probably run the five position if I put her there.

Just, again, it's a way to show those kids a level of appreciation that we have for them. Her teammates were -- they care deeply about her because they know she cares deeply about them. It's a fun time. It's great that you can play those kids in that moment and of course the crowd, you though, the crowd's pretty cool, too.

Q. Vic, can you just talk about Oregon, what you expect to see from them? And Amina Muhammad, I guess a little reunion there. Your thoughts?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, obviously very happy for Amina. I'm glad she's found a home in Oregon and is doing so well. I've gone against Oregon before several times in my career at Mississippi State and so I know they'll be well-coached and prepared and obviously Fiso is a tremendous point guard and we'll have to have a really good plan for her. I think they've got other players around her, too. You can't come off these kids on the perimeter. They can all make shots.

Etute is really special. We'll have our hands full down there with her and Amina as well. They're a well-coached team. They come from a really good league and we'll have to play well. We'll have to play better than we played today I feel like. We'll have to really have a good plan, which I'm sure we will. I've had coaches on both Virginia Tech and Oregon for a while. Obviously we're all in on Oregon now, so.

Q. You talked about the amount of turnovers you guys

had. How do you plan to lower that, especially going against Oregon?

VIC SCHAEFER: Yeah, I think it was just our lackadaisicalness with the ball more than anything. I think we have to have a different level of focus than what we had today in a lot of areas, certainly ball security is one of them. I don't worry about it too much.

I didn't think we were just reckless with the ball today, but 11 turnovers against Missouri State is probably a few more than I was thinking we would have. It's frustrating for me as a coach because we have so many good shooters, so many great scorers and when you give the other team the ball, you're just taking away opportunities to score the ball. We'll be better and we'll have a better focus hopefully on Sunday. Do we know what time we play? We don't play or we don't have a time? I thought we won. (Laughter)

Okay. I appreciate y'all being here today and your coverage of our great game. It was a great day and for a guy that's been in a long time to be in this room with so many people that care deeply about our game, I greatly appreciate you being here and all that you do and your coverage for our kids, so thank you and we'll see you tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks so much, Coach, see you tomorrow.

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