

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Regional 2 Semifinal - Duke vs LSU

Friday, March 27, 2026

Sacramento, California, USA

Golden 1 Center

**LSU Tigers**

**Coach Kim Mulkey**

**Mikaylah Williams**

**MiLaysia Fulwiley**

Sweet 16 Postgame Media Conference

Duke - 87, LSU - 85

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by LSU head coach Kim Mulkey and student-athletes MiLaysia Fulwiley and Mikaylah Williams. Questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. MiLaysia, you came off the bench today. You scored a career high 28 points. I know it comes in a loss and you'd rather have the win. But just kind of what took you to kind of help the team going after the lull in the start and kind of to get to anywhere you want on the basket, on the floor, especially getting to the cup?**

MILAYSIA FULWILEY: Yeah, definitely, I think my main focus is just coming in just trying to do anything to help my team win or stay in the game. I think I was finding the right spots, and it kind of helped me.

**Q. Mikaylah, just the emotions of that game, to fight back. I think you guys closed on a 12-1 run. Looked like you're going to lock it up there and then you see that ball going around the rim as often as it did, just take me through that final minute of play there in your mind?**

MIKAYLAH WILLIAMS: The final minute of the play, you're talking about like the buzzer-beater? Oh, yeah.

I mean, at that point in time we couldn't afford to go back and forth with them. We couldn't get a stop at that point in time. We didn't get those key rebounds that we needed, and that kind of put us in the situation that we were in the first place. So I guess we've got to go back to the



drawing board and figure some things out.

**Q. Just immediately after the game ended, the shot went down, what was kind of your -- silly question -- but emotions at that moment?**

MIKAYLAH WILLIAMS: Frustration. As a competitor, obviously nobody wants to lose, especially like that. And then knowing that it was a lot of things that had us in that position. And then frustration for myself, knowing that I'm back here again in my junior year not making it to the Final Four.

**Q. Just mentioned (indiscernible) Mikaylah on not getting the key rebounds. The Duke Blue Devils did pull down 21 offensive rebounds. What was going on with that and how were they able to focus on that end?**

MIKAYLAH WILLIAMS: They just grabbed it at the important times. We couldn't get it when it mattered.

**Q. What were you two ladies seeing with -- it seemed like there was an ease of getting into the paint and getting almost anything you wanted at the rim tonight. What was bringing that success and what were you two ladies seeing that was making it successful for you to get the basket tonight?**

MIKAYLAH WILLIAMS: For me, just seeing open lanes.

MILAYSIA FULWILEY: Yeah, same.

**Q. Mikaylah, how will you remember this year? And obviously both of you guys will be back next season. What do you want to take from this pushing you into the next season?**

MIKAYLAH WILLIAMS: The same thing I've said for two years: Remember this feeling; get better and hopefully make it back here next year and get over this hump.

MILAYSIA FULWILEY: Probably just how hard we fought, not only in the games, like in practice every day. I feel like everyone showed up and that wasn't easy. And I think next year will be different. And I'm excited to see what next



year brings.

**Q. What have you said to Flau'Jae? Obviously this is going to be the end of her LSU season. And what has it been like playing with her?**

MILAYSIA FULWILEY: I haven't got to talk to her yet, but it was amazing playing with her. She's a great player. She's a great person. And she had an amazing four years here. So to see it end like this, it's not the way, I'm pretty sure, she wanted it to go. But she should be proud of what she accomplished.

MIKAYLAH WILLIAMS: Yeah, to piggyback off what Lay said, obviously that's not how she wants to end her senior year and her career here at LSU. But the conversation we had was for her to remember this feeling and carry it over to the next level, go to the next level and be that same person, that same hard worker that she is and hoop.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

**Q. To follow up on that, I'm wondering what you think Flau'Jae has meant to this program over the last four years and just what it feels like to know that this is the last time you'll be coaching her?**

KIM MULKEY: I think I've expressed it numerous times what Flau'Jae has meant to our program, so I would be repeating all the things I've said before.

She was the first McDonald's we signed at LSU before we ever won a championship. She got a championship her freshman year. She was Freshman of the Year in the SEC. She has two careers that she's doing every day of her life. Wakes up at 5:00. She spent four years at the same institution. The list goes on.

So, much appreciation to her for being who she is. She has a joyous spirit about her. And she helped us win many ball games. And she also won a championship.

**Q. MiLaysia Fulwiley had 18 in the first half and finished with 28. What did you see from her tonight?**

KIM MULKEY: What she does. She has spectacular moves and quickness. And she did the same thing against Duke last time. She's just hard to guard.

She gave us a spark when we just started real lethargic for whatever reason. We didn't play with a sense of urgency or energy until it was about five minutes to go in the game and we were down eight, and then we turned it up.

So I asked myself as a coach, why did we not start like

that? And so you just kind of think as a coach, what made us like that?

I would say certain things the defense and the opponent does, but your energy and your just excitement, is not something that the other team keeps you from doing. We got back in the game doing what we normally do.

**Q. What went through your head, what were you feeling when that shot dropped through the net right at the end there?**

KIM MULKEY: I've been doing this a long time. I lost a national championship with 7/10ths of a second to go. So I've been in those situations before. And I feel the same. It's heartbreaking for your team. It's heartbreaking for your players and fans.

But I've been around a long time. I've seen endings like that. I've been a part of those endings. It takes a while to get over it, but you go in the locker room and you hug their necks and you tell them what a wonderful year we had. And you put yourself in a position to win the game. You put yourself in a position to win the game and a crazy shot like that beats you.

But rebounding and second-chance points really beat you. I think 19 points they got off second-chance. We couldn't grab a rebound. And you look at the stats, and we had the same number of rebounds, but that's misleading.

We just couldn't get three stops in a row. We couldn't rebound the ball so that we could take off in transition. It was kind of like we were moving in mud.

But we did fight to the bitter end and put ourselves still in a position to win.

**Q. On that last timeout, are you expecting them to shoot that 3? What was going through your mind defensively? What was the plan?**

KIM MULKEY: No, I thought they were going to get it to the big girl in the lob or something. But no, I have to go back and look at it. I think Flau'Jae overran it and took one little -- I think the girl, Jackson, may or may not have given her a fake. I don't know. And she just got a good look at it.

And you can't do that. You've got to make sure they make a shot over your extended hands right there.

I wouldn't say it was like some spectacular play drawn up where we got burned. We just, I think, overran it.

But again I'd have to look at it again. But it seems like

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

that's what I remember. And Flau'Jae came back. I don't know if she gave her a little jab or something and just got a look at it.

**Q. I know you said it was misleading with the rebounds, even though they were tied. Total turnovers were tied. Points off turnovers were tied. Shooting percentages were or shots made were very similar. Outside of, as you said, the second-chance points and the rebounds, where do you see some of the slight differences in the game that led to the result?**

KIM MULKEY: I thought it was the way we started the game. And we couldn't just grab -- we couldn't get three defensive stops in a row. We call that kill. We had one kill all night.

And they were able to get some second-chance points, even to the end. There was that long rebound. We get that, we're going to win the ball game. And we couldn't get that one.

Just little things like that that we just couldn't get two possessions ahead. We were always catching up.

**Q. Just yesterday you said this team was a pleasure to coach. You've got an incredible freshman class and a couple of leaders sitting up there with you tonight. I guess what are you looking at in this team next season?**

KIM MULKEY: Well, you're looking at a team that is very talented, a team that -- freshmen got lots of minutes this year. And you add a few to the mix and hope that we're back in this position again. That's what I hope.

**Q. Please forgive me for having to ask you this. I know you don't pay a lot of attention to social media during this game. Somebody online claiming to be an LSU insider said you were retiring when this season was ending. Do you have any comment on that?**

KIM MULKEY: You're now explaining to me why my phone was blowing up with that same question. And I said to this person, I'm not retiring. Do I look that bad?

I don't know where that came from. I'm only 63. And I'm healthy, with a few stints in my heart. Doctor says I'm good to go.

I have no clue where that stuff comes from, guys. I've never ever told anybody that.

There are moments where you feel like, why am I doing this? But I don't get how people can just write crap on

social media. That has to make you all feel really bad as journalists.

Did some of you all write that crap on there? Huh? That has to make you feel terrible. And you get away with it. And people believe it.

My mother called: How's Kramer doing? My son. I said, what are you talking about? Well, he had his leg cut off in an accident today. See, older people, especially, believe that stuff.

I'm not retiring. I plan to hire two coaches quickly. I plan to get in the portal and get two or three more players and take a little time off, go see my grandchildren, who actually flew in and got in late and didn't even see the game. But I'll get to visit with them tonight in the hotel.

But there is no retiring. I think that's used a lot in recruiting.

I think as we get older, as coaches, they want to say how much longer is she going to be in the game? I'm going to be in this game unless LSU fires me, okay, until I can't put a product on that floor that's competitive or my health fails me.

So I would appreciate all of you in here, whoever put that out, if you know who they are, you need to stop it when you see it, because it's just a flat-out lie.

Did I answer that in detail for you? Do I need to say it again?

**Q. I hope you're around for a few more years because you've added so much to the game of women's basketball. On top of that, as far as you know journalism, we have social media influencers and then we have journalists.**

KIM MULKEY: How many of you are social media influencers in here? Probably half of the people in here, huh? To be honest.

I read an article today on me. It was a very good article that someone sent me. I've never interviewed with this person ever. But this person obviously took a lot of articles through my years of coaching, and she wrote something positive. It was amazing. It was a very good article. But anyway, your question being what?

**Q. Well, Kara Lawson. Of course you all came from different paths and things like that. She's really dear to this community, Sacramento, because she spent some time here, professionally playing and working as a broadcaster. Just wanted to get your thoughts about**

## **her and how she has built this Duke program?**

KIM MULKEY: Actually, I said this to Kara before the game started: Kara, you may not remember this, but I watched you in AAU and I wrote you a personal note when I was an assistant at Louisiana Tech.

She said, I absolutely remember it. I was playing at Centenary College in Shreveport, Louisiana. And I said, yes, you were.

So I've watched Kara for a long time as a player. And then she went to Tennessee. Then she played in the Olympics and now she's going to be the Olympic coach.

So I have nothing but respect for what she has done. I didn't like her, honestly, as a TV analyst, but I like her as a coach. Fair enough?

## **Q. You've won games like this. You've lost games like this. What's your message to the team? How do they move forward? What do they take with them in the offseason from a loss like this?**

KIM MULKEY: You thank them. You start with your seniors and you thank them for an unbelievable career, an unbelievable year. When you invest in things, it's harder to accept.

Seniors -- I have Flau'Jae with four years, Izzy with four years, and Amiya Joyner with one year -- you thank them because they've invested in this program. And they've won a lot of games.

You remind them that nothing I say is going to make them feel better in the moment and that the sun will come up tomorrow and you're going to have wonderful memories from your time at LSU.

And then you go and you hug each one of them and you let them cry.

I think that's -- I don't find that a bad thing. If you don't cry, you're not really invested and you don't care. And it's okay to cry. It's okay to hurt. And then each day it gets better.

Put it out there -- not retiring.

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