

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: Women's Final Four

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San Antonio, Texas, USA

**Stanford Cardinal**

**Haley Jones**

Postgame Media Conference



Stanford 66, South Carolina 65

HALEY JONES: All we had to do is get back. Brea got the steal and she was going. We just had to get back. We should have boxed out on Aliyah more. We know she's a great rebounder, great player. Luckily she missed the tip-in. It was very hectic, but we just knew we had to get back and do everything we could. We left it out there and luckily it paid off.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. I wondered if you could talk about this was an incredible game. I don't know if you felt that during the game, if you were more stressed than everyone else. Tons of people watching. What is a game like this going to do to getting more eyeballs to women's basketball?**

HALEY JONES: Yeah, I mean, South Carolina is an amazing team. They have great players. I've played with all of them, I've played with Zia, played against Brea a lot. We respect them. They respect us. We knew it was going to be a great, gritty game. A lot of talents on both ends. Seeing a game like this, back and forth, next-win mentality, no one is getting up, so competitive, it was physical out there, just a great game.

I think it just shows that we can be gritty. We can be tough. We're athletic. We push the ball. We do everything. I just think that our game is so special and it does need more recognition.

But I just think it brings more eyes to seeing, you can feel the passion we have, everybody on both ends. You saw the passion we all had. Just pushing to the end. I think it can only do good things.

**Q. You guys seemed very poised in the heat of the**

**battle. Looking on social media, as the game is going on, people were losing their minds. You were just focused on the task at hand. This is a theme that we've been talking about all season. Do you think your ability to stay calm and poised as chaos was looming all around you has something to do with the journey that the team has taken to get to this point?**

HALEY JONES: Yeah, I mean, every team this season has had a difficult journey, going through this, living through COVID and all the different precautions taken with that. Us as well, being on the road for two months. Being on the road I think has brought us closer together. Along with that comes poise, I guess.

But I think just us being together, having confidence in each other. If someone turns it over, I'm not going to not pass the ball next time. I have confidence and trust in them. I think that togetherness really bonds us.

Before our Elite 8 game last week, we talked to one of our beloved seniors from last year, Nadia Fingall, she told us to be poised and patient. Throughout the game there's going to be runs. South Carolina is a great team. Louisville is a great team. They have runs. We have runs back. You just have to be poised, keep your composure, not get too caught up in the moment, just be patient. Your shots are going to fall, if not in the first half, they will in the second half.

Just knowing your role. We're not trying to play outside ourselves. We just had great chemistry out there and I think it really shows in crunch time.

**Q. How does it feel to be headed to the national championship game?**

HALEY JONES: Yeah, I mean, it's surreal. I don't think it's really hit me yet. I mean, everybody growing up, you wish to go to the national championship, play on the biggest stage in front of the biggest crowd against the best team. We know whoever comes out with a dub tonight is going to be great competition for us on Sunday. We're just kind of moving on. We're excited. It's surreal.



I'm so blessed to be able to be here with this team. I love each and every player. I have such a great connection with each of them and the coaching staff. I think this is such a special year, we've been through so much together. Now putting ourselves on this stage, it just means so much to us. We're not going to take a second for granted. Tomorrow at practice, film, we watch a lot of film, so we're going to take everything because Tara always says this is the last time you're going to be in this space with this group of people. We only have two days left of our season.

So we're just trying to take every moment, not take anything for granted, just kind of be here, sit in it, love it, and give what we have.

**Q. It's the first time Stanford has been in this title game since 2010. To help get this program and Tara back to this point, how much does that mean?**

HALEY JONES: It means so much. Stanford is a historically great program. We plan to be in the years to come. I mean, so many greats and legends in my opinion have come from Stanford. We see them in the walls of our locker room every day. To be able to bring us back to this national championship stage is just an honor to be able to do that, for Tara, for the team, for the program. We still got one more game, so we're excited to do what we can with that, hopefully come out with a dub. Yeah, just kind of leave our mark and the legacy.

**Q. Let's talk about that three-point shot for a minute. It was not something that you used and had a lot during the regular season, but you've been shooting and hitting threes. Talk about the work you've done on it, how on this stage you became a three-point shooter.**

HALEY JONES: Yeah, I wasn't really shooting them at the beginning of the season, not a lot last year before I got injured. I know it was something that I did a lot in high school. I think I just kind of stopped working on my craft with it. That's on me for doing that. But I think a lot of it comes from confidence. So we haven't been able to get a lot of shots up when we were on the road. I really tried to take advantage any extra time I could shoot. When I was rehabbing, I was really working on my shot with my trainer back home. Tara and I worked with Britney every day at practice.

So I think just reps really paid into my confidence. And my teammates see me shoot at practice, I feel confident. They just kind of instill their confidence in me when I don't have it in myself. I just kind of build off them. It started falling this tournament. So now I'm just running with it.

**Q. You mentioned legends a few minutes ago. Tara**

**VanDerveer compared you to a different legend yesterday: She mentioned you were similar to Magic Johnson. He's of my generation. I'm sure you know who Magic Johnson is. Do you pattern some of your game off of him?**

HALEY JONES: That's a great compliment. She's never told me that (smiling).

**Q. She told some other people.**

HALEY JONES: Love to hear it. Magic Johnson is a legend. I love watching him play. The way that he is so long, lanky, agile, athletic, he's kind of like a point forward like myself, I guess. He can really do everything. I love his passing ability and the court vision that he has.

I think another thing that I really admire about him is his leadership. He always seemed so poised out there, he paid with such passion, energy. He's the one diving on the ground. That's the highest compliment I've ever heard, so...

Thanks, shout-out to T Dog.

**Q. You've talked a lot about this, it has been such a long road. Are you feeling that at all, the culmination with the game-winning shot like this? Can you feel that after everything you've gone through?**

HALEY JONES: I think just having this long season, it's taken a toll on everyone in a different way. I've mentioned before just how close-knit we are. So to be able to shoot that shot and have it go in for the team, it just means so much because we've been through such extraordinary circumstances this year. We were on the road for two months. We came back to school. We couldn't really leave our dorm rooms, couldn't go to Target to get hair supply or anything like that. We were just on campus.

It's been a really difficult year. I think that could have broken a lot of different teams. We have so much love and respect and trust in one another, this just means so much more than any past shot, any past season, any game win that I've ever been a part of. This just kind of means more.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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