

March 5, 2015



Arkansas – 72
Ole Miss – 61

An interview with:

**COACH JIMMY DYKES
CALLI BERNA
JESSICA JACKSON**

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Arkansas head coach and student-athletes Calli Berna and Jessica Jackson.

Coach, if you can begin with an opening statement.

COACH DYKES: Well, it's a great win for Arkansas today because Ole Miss is a very good basketball team. They came in winning three out of four. Matt does a great job in his second year. That program is on the up rise.

We were the better team today. We did some really good things. It was as good of a team win as we had all seasons. Got them on the boards 33-29. We felt like we could drive the ball on them, so we kept a lot of the drive action going in the game. We made 28 free throws.

We weren't perfect. Had to battle through foul trouble. Melissa Wolff only played about five minutes, I think, in the first half. McKinley Bostad came in, knocked down shots for us.

We were good. We were a good team today. We're playing like an NCAA tournament team right now. I hope that happens for us 'cause that was our 17th win this year against a strength of schedule that's 10.

We've done everything that the Selection Committee asks you to do in terms of being aggressive with your schedule, playing on the road. Out of the Power 5 conferences, we're second in the nation in terms of the number of wins we had on the road or neutral floor. That has to hold up.

We'll prepare for South Carolina. But that was a huge win for us in terms of our résumé and where we'll be viewed for the NCAA tournament.

Couldn't be any prouder of my team. I told them afterwards, I couldn't love you any more than I do and I can't be prouder of you than I am today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Girls, Arkansas struggled in recent years and in this building. Was that something you thought about going into today or did any of that really matter?

CALLI BERNA: It's not something we talked about. We're kind of a team that we're going to look at the first game in front of us, and that's how we're going to do things.

I think we knew we had to come in here and fight hard and play our game. When we start to think about, We lost to Ole Miss last year, when you think about that, you don't play your game as much. For us, it was come in here, play as hard as you can, and today that worked for us.

Q. Pretty bad weather. What do you say to the Razorback fans that came out today?

COACH DYKES: They were phenomenal. They got pretty loud. I told people on the way over here, on the bus, maybe the schools being closed, that may help us. Let's go watch the Hogs while they're in town.

We got to do that today on a neutral floor with great crowd support. There's probably quite a few of them that's the first time they got to watch us play here this year. We played once against Oklahoma. I hope they appreciate how hard we fight and play the game of basketball. I think we do a good job of it.

Q. How about Jessica Jackson's play in the second half? Jessica, what kind of helped you get going into the second half? What was it like to play back near your hometown once again?

JESSICA JACKSON: It's always great to play near my hometown. My family and friends get to come and watch me play, support me and the team.



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Arkansas - 03.05.15

My teammates is the ones who keep me going. We all feed off each other. My teammates is what keeps me going.

Q. Jessica, I think you missed your first five. Any frustration there? How do you stick with it?

JESSICA JACKSON: I always get told by everyone, Let it go, Jess. If your first couple shots don't come to you, don't let that define your whole game. You can do other things like rebound to help your teammates out. Just got to keep playing and hopefully the shots will fall sooner or later.

Q. Coach, you mentioned McKinley early. She gave you a spark today. How important was her play there for you?

COACH DYKES: It was huge. The only other time we played Ole Miss was in Oxford. She fell and knocked her two front teeth out. 99% of kids would have been done for a couple of weeks. She sat out for five minutes, then said, Coach, I can go back in.

At that point I could see the nerves of her two front teeth were exposed. She went back in and played in Oxford.

That really set a tone for who this team is, sets a tone for who we are going to be going forward. You can knock our teeth out, break our nose, we're never going to quit.

She played 30 minutes in a big-time ballgame and held up well. I though her and Kelsey Brooks were outstanding in guarding Frizzell. Frizzell can really shoot that basketball. She had 11 points today, but they made her work for everything she got. Did a good job covering her.

Probably as good of a team defense as we've been in in a long time. Ole Miss can move and drive that ball on you. We're constantly in help, constantly on the drive lines. Our staff did a terrific job of getting this team prepared, then the kids did an excellent job of taking that preparation to the floor.

She was huge, though. Mac was huge.

Q. Jessica, you had four points in the first half, but finished with 25. Were you doing something different in the second half in order to get open and get those shots? And, coach, what adjustments did you make at the half?

JESSICA JACKSON: What got me going, again, my teammates got me going. Coach and them was saying, Flash to the open spot. Jess,

you got to work. That's basically what got me going.

COACH DYKES: To answer your question, as well, we stayed with pretty much the same offense in the second half as we did with the first. I think we were just a little bit more aggressive with it after we turned the corner on the ball screens. Then Jess and Jhas were really good at playing off that ball screen action we had going on. Moved the ball really well. Four or five plays in the second half it was Jess to Jhas or Jhas to Jess. Jess is a confident player. I want us to all be that.

Q. Coach, you were up one at half. In the first five minutes, there were six lead changes in the second half. What did you do to take over and pull away? Are those pretty good traits to have in the post-season tournament?

COACH DYKES: I thought we did, again, probably 75% of our timeouts we spent talking about defense, the importance of playing the gaps, playing low and wide, making sure we're covering the gaps up. We wanted to take away their vision, their eyes. We wanted the gaps to look closed even if they weren't.

Just reminded them about boxing off. We beat them on the boards 33-29. I thought we were really good boxing off. They got some over our back a few times. That's going to happen. They're an athletic team. We never wavered.

We had a thing today that they forgot to tell us that we're not supposed to play tomorrow. Now we're going to play tomorrow.

Q. Coach, tomorrow's game, what do you expect? South Carolina.

COACH DYKES: I expect South Carolina to be here at noon. I expect them to be the same as we saw them a few weeks ago. After they lost to UConn, came to our place. I said, I hope I get to see a UConn-South Carolina rematch on a Final Four on a neutral floor. They're good enough to win this thing. Don't think they're not. They have size, experience, a future Hall of Fame coach, Hall of Fame player. They're the real deal.

So we have our work cut out for us, we know that. But you know what, that's okay. It will be the 9-seed taking on the 1-seed.

Their size is overwhelming, looking ahead a little bit. Their size can overwhelm you some.

As well as we played today, we're going to have to play that well and probably even more tomorrow.

Q. Girls, coach touched on your NCAA tournament hopes. Is that what you're playing for this week, making sure that résumé is as good as it can be?

CALLI BERNA: Obviously the NCAA tournament is our goal. We are playing for that. But more importantly, we're here and we're focused on each game. We're taking it one game at a time. I feel like that's the way you get to the NCAA tournament.

We're going to take on South Carolina tomorrow the best we can and hopefully our résumé does hold up. I think it will.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, ladies, thank you.

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