

# Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Friday March 10, 2017

## Andy Kennedy Sebastian Saiz Deandre Burnett Ole Miss Rebels

Ole Miss - 86, Missouri - 74

THE MODERATOR: We'll ask Coach Kennedy for some general thoughts on the game, and then we'll take your questions for the two student-athletes before they return to the locker room. Then we'll finish up with Coach Kennedy. Coach, would you begin.

COACH KENNEDY: Well, it was a thing of beauty, wasn't it? Anybody want a copy of that? We'll get you a copy after the game so you can view it tonight. At this time of year, it's all about having the opportunity to stay and play again. That's what we did. I thought we had some really good moments. It's really kind of a capsule of our season. We had moments where we look like we're a good basketball team and make some mental errors.

I want to credit Kim Anderson and his team. He's a great Missouri Tiger. That goes without saying. He's a very good coach and is a better person, I know that personally. I can speak to that firsthand.

His kids, when you look he's got a group that says here 8-24 and 2-16, it's hard to keep guys to keep playing hard. His group to the bitter end battled and battled. It's just a reflection of their leader. I want to acknowledge that.

I'm proud of my guys. Good to have Dre back. We'll live to fight another day.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. Dre, you were questionable coming into the game. Come off the bench. Every time you made a shot, it looked like you were feeling it in your knees. How are you feeling and how was it to get into a rhythm for you? How was the game overall?**

DEANDRE BURNETT: Anytime you make your first



shot, it feel good. All the pain go out of the way. I'm trying to battle through, play hard for my team. That was pretty much my mindset coming into the game.

**Q. Dre, you scored 28 in the last game against Mizzou. What is it about this matchup that makes you so successful?**

DEANDRE BURNETT: Them guys play hard and guard me the same way any other team guard. Just was a good night for me shooting the ball. I felt good and my teammates did a good job of getting me the ball in transition.

**Q. I guess for both players, what do you guys remember about the first Arkansas game this year and how much are you looking forward to getting another shot at them tomorrow night?**

SEBASTIAN SAIZ: I think the guys are better in a position and we're prepared for the whole game. We're going to be working on it for tomorrow and be ready.

DEANDRE BURNETT: Just getting back and every time they made a shot or we -- every time we made a shot or we missed a shot, they were just in transition and we do a good job of getting back. We got to do a good job of getting back in transition.

THE MODERATOR: Hands up. Any questions for either? Anybody?

COACH KENNEDY: No comment on Dre's tape job? Aerodynamic. I thought he looked faster.

DEANDRE BURNETT: I felt faster.

THE MODERATOR: We'll excuse you. You can return to the locker room. We'll continue on with questions for Coach Kennedy.

**Q. Andy, really for you anyway, what do you think about Dre's availability for tomorrow, his health, what do you think that will look like?**

COACH KENNEDY: I think he'll be okay. You know, he obviously couldn't play in the last outing. Medical staff did a good job of doing everything they could. This is going to be a situation that's going to have to be evaluated when the season is over. Thankfully, it's not tonight. Dre plays hard. He moves at a snail's pace anyway, so it really doesn't matter. We threw up a

couple strands of tape up there. I bet you're taped like that under those jeans.

What do they call that, kinesiology tape? I don't think that's the right term. I thought that was a good look for him. We're going to tape him up and roll him back out there tomorrow, God willing.

**Q. Was conditioning a concern with Dre at all?**

COACH KENNEDY: Little bit. I think second half it showed. He was really good early. Wow. Just as he said, he made his first two, three shots. I thought he was really good, had good rhythm, good ball movement, got him open and knocked them down. Second half he was not nearly as explosive.

We struggled at the free throw line. I wanted Dre in the game to finish it for him. 7-11 is an awful night. We still want the ball in his hands. He set the tone for us by being able to make shots. And we got the separation in the second half because we actually strung together some stops. They ended up shooting 45 percent in the half, but a lot of those were late.

**Q. Andy, winning four games in four days is a tough thing to do. In terms of belief in the locker room, what are you getting from them?**

COACH KENNEDY: We're trying to win two games in two days right now, and the rest will take care of itself. The first one is always the most difficult. I really do believe that the team that played the night before, Missouri in this case, and it will be our advantage tomorrow night having played and gotten a W and seen the ball go in the basket in this facility.

This is a big moment for these guys and even though it was a little less than capacity crowd. I saw a couple of empty seats from my vantage point, I don't know for sure.

It is a big building, it's a big stage. It has a different feel. So, I think Arkansas will deal with some of that, and then the fatigue factor does kick in. I think Missouri was tired at the end. Lot of that had to do with us putting pressure on them. We're going to have to come out and play with great energy. Again, we'll tape him up and roll him out there, and hopefully we'll play better than we did in the first outing in Fayetteville.

**Q. Kind of piggybacking on that, what did happen in the game that got away in the second half from you guys? They're a really good second half team. What do you have to do differently to have a better chance?**

COACH KENNEDY: I remember Daryl was really shooting the ball well. They extended us and killed us on the glass. Very inefficient offensively. You have to

score. We've won 8 of our last 11. Over those 11, we've been averaging in the mid 80s.

We're not the greatest defensive team that I've ever coached, even though efficiency-wise we've gotten better. Got to rebound the ball. I thought a huge stat was we only had 7 turnovers which allow us to have a subpar night at the free throw line. I believe we were second in the league maybe behind Georgia just under 76 percent on the year. Tonight we shoot 66 percent. We have guys uncharacteristically not making free throws. You only turn it over 7 times, out rebound your opponent, gives you extra possessions.

**Q. Coach, Missouri hit 10 3s in both regular season meetings. Tonight the team hit 12. What was different from tonight versus the two previous meetings where they were able to stay in the game?**

COACH KENNEDY: I think the fact we got to 86, the fact we were putting a lot of pressure on them. They got a little fatigued, went to the zone, and at the end of the zone, they were going man-to-man and confused us a little bit early. T.D. made a couple huge plays.

When the -- if you remember, I believe we were up 13 with about 8 to play in our last outing against them in Oxford. Next thing you know, it's a 3-point game. They've got shooters. They've got guys that have really shot the ball well at the last part of the season. They made 16 last night against Auburn. We just wanted to continue to keep separation, continue to put our foot on the gas offensively. Again, you get to 86, you're going to give yourself a chance.

THE MODERATOR: Raise your hand if you have other questions for Coach Kennedy.

COACH KENNEDY: Blue haze going on out here. You're much better in the blue haze. I won't mention names.

**Q. Coach, Moses Kingsley, how does he impact the way you try to attack the interior?**

COACH KENNEDY: Rim protector. Very athletic. Monster on the glass. He dominated us. I don't remember specifically, but I know he had like 15 and 15 or something like that in our first outing. He dominated us in the block. We're going to have to do a good job early, because if you don't do the work on him early, he's bigger and more athletic than anybody we have in the rim. Then defensively he's going to make sure he protects the basket. He's a good player. They've got a good team, a team that's going to go to the NCAA Tournament. We're going to have to be on top of our game tomorrow night.

THE MODERATOR: Couple more. Anyone? Raise your hand. All right. Thank you.

COACH KENNEDY: Thanks guys.