

2016 NCAA® DIVISION I WOMEN'S SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP

First Round · #1 South Carolina vs. Alabama State

Stone Stadium · Columbia, S.C.

Friday, November 11, 2016

POSTGAME QUOTES

SOUTH CAROLINA HEAD COACH SHELLEY SMITH

Opening Statement

"Coming off the season we had and our performance at the SEC Tournament, I felt good about coming back home. We've had great success here this season, and I know our team was excited about playing in the postseason, so we felt good coming into the match. We had time to rest and recover from the SEC Tournament, so we were ready and prepared, and showed that throughout the game, and we put the ball in the net."

One reaching 200th win at South Carolina

"It's exciting. I'm thrilled to be here and be able to win games with this staff and team. I'm glad we're not done for right now. I don't keep track of the wins, but it's pretty neat when those milestones come along. We had some alumni here, and some of our players even said, "I was here for your 150th win." So it's neat, but it's not something I record or keep track of. But I'm thrilled to be able to represent the University of South Carolina and put ourselves in the position to win games and to win championships."

On the offensive output from Savannah McCaskill and Chelsea Drennan

"It's what they've done all year. They come out and put a lot of pressure on teams, and they combine well. We knew coming out tonight that we were going to have to move the ball quickly, and I thought they combined well up top. Chelsea, every game she's in she runs the entire match, and I'm glad we could get her some rest. Savannah, the same thing, she showed how dangerous she is and she'll find the back of the net. You can't give her much room. So both of them have been great leaders for us all season, and I'm looking forward to see what they can do as we make a run here."

SOPHIE GROFF, SENIOR

On starting the match strong

"It's always key, no matter who we play, whether it's a No. 1 seed, a No. 3 seed or not seeded, it's always important to come out strong. We talk about that our entire year. No matter who we play, we always say it in the huddle, score early and often."

On Coach Smith's 200th win

"Shelley is awesome. She's kind of the same as our team is, where she is focused on one game at a time. Yes, it was her 200th, but we were kind of focused more on one win at a time and moving forward. As a player it was amazing to be a part of her 200th win, and we love Shelley, and we're really happy for her and her success."

PAIGE BENDELL, SENIOR

On scoring early

"Especially with what happened last year, we didn't want to take any team lightly. So I think it was really great that we were able to come out strong and put some goals away early and secure the win."

ALABAMA STATE COACH JODIE SMITH

Opening Statement

"South Carolina was what we thought they would be – very dynamic going forward, hard in the back. Great experience for us, but they played exactly the way we thought they would play. They're a great team, and I expect to see them on down the line for sure."

On playing in Alabama State's first NCAA Tournament game

"It's a great experience for us to finally not only win the conference for the first time after being in the final for a couple years in a row. But great crowd, great experience – how can you not enjoy that? Despite the loss, I'm proud of the things that we did and accomplished, and we look forward to next year, but what a great experience for our team and our players."

On what this will do for the program moving forward:

“Well I’m hoping we can build on this and not make it a one-off thing. Certainly it opens up other doors. Good players want to come to successful programs, and I think that’s going to open up some doors on down the line for recruiting for us and just show the things that we’re looking to build within our program.”

KAYLA EDWARDS, SENIOR

On playing in Alabama State’s first NCAA Tournament game

“For me as a senior, this is my first time here, so I was really excited to be a part of history, win our conference and come here. It was just a really great experience. “

LEXI KRIEGER, JUNIOR

On playing in Alabama State’s first NCAA Tournament game

“It’s definitely a great experience to get here for the first time with our team, but I think we’re definitely looking forward to next year and getting back here again.”