



2021 SEC Men's Basketball Tournament

Nashville, Tenn. – Bridgestone Arena

All-Tournament Team

Jahvon Quinerly, Alabama
Herbert Jones, Alabama
Cameron Thomas, LSU
Trendon Watford, LSU
Yves Pons, Tennessee

Most Valuable Player

Jahvon Quinerly, Alabama

Southeastern Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Sunday, March 14, 2021

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

LSU Tigers

Will Wade

Postgame Press Conference

Alabama 80, LSU 79

THE MODERATOR: Ready when you are, coach.

WILL WADE: Very, very proud of our guys. We played really well all three games this weekend. We played extremely hard. We obviously came up a play or two short today. But we played extremely hard all weekend. Give credit to Alabama, they're a great team.

I thought our guys gave it everything they had. We've got to get back and recover and get ready for the big show with the NCAA tournament. But very, very proud to coach these guys, be a part of this program. I thought we left it all out there on the court. Just a little bit short there at the end.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. What do you think allowed you to be more competitive today compared to the first two games? What do you think going forward you learned from this game you still need to work on for the NCAA tournament?

WILL WADE: I just think we played with more edge, more fight, we were tougher. We just made big play after big play, which is what you have to do.

Certainly, I've made no bones about it, the rebounding. We gave up, I think Juwan Gary had seven offensive rebounds himself. Seven or eight offensive rebounds. The extra chances they got from the glass just did us in. That's what's going to be very, very tough for us in the NCAA tournament, is we've got to rebound. We've got to be able to finish plays.

Q. What was the difference in this game? What was the difference in your team's play today? The final play, what were the options there?



WILL WADE: Well, we weren't trying to catch it that far out on the final play. We were trying to catch it on the elbow. We had a hammer action to Cam, a little pin-and-curl action for Smart with a pop for Days. It was really an Iso for Watford from there.

We kind of got off-pace by throwing it too far out. We couldn't end it up any better with the short three and two great looks.

Like I said, we were more solid defensively. We executed better on offense. This is the first time we've played them we've been able to move the ball and score a little bit against them. Their defense is elite. Everybody talks about their offense, but their defense is what's elite.

I thought we were able to execute better and make some shots against them.

Q. Talk about Trendon's play today and also Aundre.

WILL WADE: Dre was great for us. He got us going there in the second half, was driving, was aggressive. He played really, really well for us. I was very, very proud of him.

Wat was tremendous. We played through him a lot, played through him in the post. He did a great job on the mismatches, being able to finish down there.

Q. Javonte, 21 points, seven boards, five assists. Talk about how he kind of ran everything on offense and defense.

WILL WADE: He was tremendous. I mean, he played basically every minute yesterday, close to every minute today. He's just a warrior. The threes he hit off the bounce, some of the big shots he hit, were just incredible.

He's a tremendous, tremendous player. He stepped up in a big game for us. Proud of him. Proud he's our point guard.

Q. What was your understanding of what happened before the game with the scuffle with the players?

WILL WADE: I wasn't out there. I didn't see it. I think a couple of the coaches got into it, a couple of players got into it after that. I haven't seen anything of the video of it yet.

Coach Oats and I talked about it. We just wanted to make sure we got both our teams to the NCAA tournament and everybody gets there with no suspensions. We accomplished that goal throughout the game.

Q. What are your plans in terms of accommodations for the NCAA tournament? Are you going to stay in Nashville until Indianapolis?

WILL WADE: We're going to go watch the selection show tonight as a team, grab some dinner, get up early in the morning and drive to Indianapolis.

Q. Your players obviously were disappointed with the loss. Trendon said that you still made a big statement to everybody that you can be a force in the NCAA tournament. What is the biggest key in the next several days to replicate this kind of effort whenever you play?

WILL WADE: First off, we've got to rest and recover. A lot of it's based on matchup. There's a lot of different factors.

I thought our defensive effort and intensity was much better this weekend. We've got to clean up the rebounding. At the end of the day we've got to get the rebounding cleared up.

Q. What is the message as you move forward now that you're getting ready to take this next step? What do you think you accomplished with the three solid games you did play?

WILL WADE: I think this is the team, quite frankly, I expected to have most of the season. We haven't necessarily played that way all year. We've been hot and cold or hit or miss. We finally started playing closer to our potential as a team and as a group in this game, this weekend.

I guess better late than never, but we have to carry it over to the NCAA tournament.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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LSU Tigers

Trendon Watford

Postgame Press Conference



Alabama 80, LSU 79

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Trendon.

Q. Trendon, take us through the final play, if you can. What did you see in the follow-up? I know you crashed the boards, tried to get it in. Did you and Darius run into each other?

TRENDON WATFORD: Yeah. I mean, we was trying to run an inbound play, Javonte threw the ball to the halfcourt. I just tried to get one up. I knew it was short. I just went and tried to get the rebound. Yeah, I think me and Darius just sort of ran into each other. Yeah, that's what happened.

Q. You probably played the best game of your career. Did you feel in the second half nobody was going to stop you?

TRENDON WATFORD: Yeah, I just wanted to win. That was my biggest thing. I just wanted to do what I needed to do to win, whether it was scoring, rebounding, whatever it was.

I didn't do enough.

Q. Coach often talks about a heavyweight fight. This was a real championship game. What was it like playing in that kind of game?

TRENDON WATFORD: It was fun. I had fun. We had fun. Didn't come out with the result we wanted. I'm proud of every one of my guys, every guy on the bench, every coach, I'm proud of all of them.

Just to make it to this championship is a blessing. We made history with that. Although we didn't get the win, proud of my guys. I'm excited for the future going into March Madness.

Q. You got booed almost every time you touched the ball. Did that add a little bit of flavor to your game today, motivation?

TRENDON WATFORD: I'm used to it. Every time I play against them, I've gotten booed. I'm used to it. Yeah, I'm used to that. That's fine.

Q. You're obviously a veteran leader on this team. What is the message to your guys about keeping everybody up now that you're off to Indianapolis? What is your message as a veteran leader to your team?

TRENDON WATFORD: To keep our head up, me especially. I take this loss very serious. My guys can get me through it, my family will get me through it.

We played great. We played great in three days, three days straight. I think that's the best we've looked all season. We're just trying to keep this momentum rolling going into March Madness. I truly feel like we're a Final Four team. When everybody is clicking, everybody is clicking.

I'm excited for what the future holds. I'm just proud of all my guys, proud of the coaching staff. I love LSU.

Q. Early in the ball game what did you see or maybe even feel that made you go ahead and be as dominant as you were today?

TRENDON WATFORD: I was just patient. When I got in the lane, I didn't try to throw a crazy shot up or I didn't try to force. I just tried to take my time in there, get to whatever move I wanted to get to. My shots were falling.

I'm just proud of my guys. I'm just excited for what March Madness holds.

Q. How hard was it to keep that pace with Alabama? What kind of gave you all confidence once you started knocking down a couple of threes?

TRENDON WATFORD: We knew they're one of the



fastest teams in the SEC. This is the third time we played them. They're a great team. Hats off to them, they're a great team.

We just wanted to get back in transition. That was one of our keys. We knew that we didn't do a good job of that in the past two games. Yeah, I mean, that was it.

Q. What do you think the key is over the next several days to replicate this effort in the NCAA tournament?

TRENDON WATFORD: I think we need to recover. We need to recover, just learn from what we did, learn from the mistake we made this game. I know I made mistakes personally. Other guys did, too. I think we clean up some of that stuff, I think we can make a run in March Madness.

I'm excited. I'm ready for next week.

Q. You guys are hurting right now, but do you feel you made a statement considering how badly they beat you in the two games before this?

TRENDON WATFORD: Yeah, I think we put the world on notice, not just the SEC, I think we put the world on notice. Coming into this tournament, nobody even expected us to make it out of the first round. LSU has never made it out of the first round since Coach Wade has been here.

I think we woke the world up. We got more to prove. I got more to prove, all my guys got more to prove. Everybody come together, learn from this loss, just continue to improve.

Tonight we'll see who we play, start getting ready for whoever we got.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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LSU Tigers

Javonte Smart

Postgame Press Conference



Alabama 80, LSU 79

THE MODERATOR: We have Javonte with us.
Questions.

Q. This game, gave it everything you had. You fought them to the very end.

JAVONTE SMART: Say the last question again.

Q. Y'all lost to this team by an average of 24 points during the regular season. You have to feel like you fought this one to the very end, gave them everything.

JAVONTE SMART: Yeah, this is a hard one to take. Losing by one, that means opportunities to win the game. It's just pretty hard. We gave it all we got, all the guys. We really wanted this win, just get this win under our belt.

Felt like we owed it to them what they did to us the last couple times we played them. We just really wanted this win. It hurt that we lost, but we have to move on and get ready to play the big tournament.

Q. Aundre's shot, did you think it was in? Did you think, That's going in?

JAVONTE SMART: I thought it went in, but that's crazy, rimmed out.

I want to give it all to Alabama. They played hard. Dre had his chance to score. I guess he just couldn't get it to roll.

Q. Being a team a couple years ago that made a deep run in the NCAA tournament, do you feel like this team is ready to do the same even with the loss today?

JAVONTE SMART: Yeah, I think once we get situated to where we're headed this afternoon, I think the guys will lock into what we have coming up. After this loss, it's tough. A lot of guys down 'cause that's a tough loss to

take. I think we'll go pretty far in the big dance.

Q. Could you just kind of walk us through what that play design was supposed to be for those final 7 seconds there. Was it trying to get Trendon the ball? What were y'all trying to do there?

JAVONTE SMART: The play was supposed -- Trendon was supposed to go to the outside, from Days, and then he hit me. I kind of threw it too far. It went past his hands. That's the look we got, Trendon shooting a three again, the two shots at the end.

Q. Kind of hard to hear you up here, but it was almost like a heavyweight fight, especially during the second half. Can you put into words what it was like back and forth.

JAVONTE SMART: It was one of them games that you live for. Like I said, the last game versus Arkansas, the type of games you come to college for.

I love being in these type of moments. Sorry to my guys that we couldn't put it through. These type of moments, growing up as a kid, you live for. I'm just happy to be in this position. I know that we are going to push forward coming Thursday.

Q. What happened in the pregame scuffle with the two teams? What happened at mid-court?

JAVONTE SMART: I'm not sure what started it. Between us and 'Bama, it's always a heated environment whenever we play. We just wanted to come out and start with an edge, I guess. I don't know how it started. It just helped us going into the game, both teams was pumped up to play each other. The type of game you need in a championship, a game like this.

Q. In terms of keeping pace with Alabama, what was the biggest adjustment? How did you feel like you could keep pace with them knowing how well they could shoot from outside?

JAVONTE SMART: Just guard them individually,

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one-on-one, just guard them. We both can score the ball, they can score the ball, we also can score the ball. Came down to defense, guarding one-on-one, contesting all the shots.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

March 10-14, 2021 • Bridgestone Arena • Nashville, TN

First Round **Second Round** **Quarterfinals** **Semifinals** **Championship**
Wednesday, March 10 **Thursday, March 11** **Friday, March 12** **Saturday, March 13** **Sunday, March 14**

		9 Mississippi State 74 Game 2 11:00 a.m. CT 			
		8 Kentucky 73	9 Mississippi State 48 Game 6 11:00 a.m. CT 	1 Alabama 73	
13 Texas A&M 68 Game 1 6:00 p.m. CT 		12 Vanderbilt 63 Game 3 25 minutes after Game 2 	1 Alabama 85	Game 10 Noon CT 	
12 Vanderbilt 79		5 Florida 69 	5 Florida 66 Game 7 25 minutes after Game 6 	4 Tennessee 68	
			4 Tennessee 78		
				Game 12 Noon CT 	1 Alabama 80
		10 Georgia 70 Game 4 6:00 p.m. CT 	7 Missouri 64 Game 8 6:00 p.m. CT 		
		7 Missouri 73	2 Arkansas 70	2 Arkansas 71	
				Game 11 25 minutes after Game 10 	
		11 South Carolina 59 Game 5 25 minutes after Game 4 	6 Ole Miss 73 Game 9 25 minutes after Game 8 	3 LSU 78	3 LSU 79
		6 Ole Miss 76	3 LSU 76		



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Attendance

Session 1 (Game 1)	1,149
Session 2 (Games 2 & 3)	1,733
Session 3 (Games 4 & 5)	1,809
Session 4 (Games 6 & 7)	2,186
Session 5 (Games 8 & 9)	2,155
Session 6 (Game 10 & 11)	3,164
Session 7 (Game 12)	2,586
TOTAL:	25,829
AVG. PER SESSION:	3,690
AVG. PER GAME:	2,152

**Total attendance is computed by doubling the attendance figures from Session 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 then adding the attendance from Session 1 and 7 (Championship Game).*