

Five minutes with ... Jodie Meeks

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By:

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How good is Kentucky's Jodie Meeks? Vanderbilt coach Kevin Stallings said his team "held" Meeks to 21 points in their first meeting. Meeks, who ranks fourth in NCAA Division I in scoring, is averaging 27.9 points in SEC games, prompting UK coach Billy Gillispie to say, "I haven't been part of anything like this." Meeks discussed his high school days, the Tennessee performance and why he brushes his teeth before every game.

Q. Gani Lawal (now at Georgia Tech) played at Norcross High and was Georgia's player of the year. Al-Farooq Aminu (now at Wake Forest) played at Norcross and won player of the year. You went to Norcross and didn't win that honor. You weren't even a McDonald's All-American. Did that drive you?

A. "Oh, yeah. It was definitely motivation. I watched the McDonald's selection show and didn't see my name. That drove me. I was disappointed when it first happened, but I never pouted or felt sorry for myself. I wanted to prove to everybody that was a mistake and I wouldn't be defined by that."

Q. Toughest guy to guard in the SEC?

A. "There's a lot of good players in this league, but so far I'd have to say Devan Downey at South Carolina. He's very quick. He plays the game at a different speed than everyone else."

Q. Most famous person to contact you after you scored 54 at Tennessee?

A. "Tayshaun Prince. He called me and told me to keep up the good work. I was amazed."

Q. I know you got more than 150 texts immediately after that game. How did you handle that?

A. "I actually texted everyone back. It took awhile, maybe five or six days. I texted everyone back and returned every voice mail."

Q. What made you do that?

A. "I think it's very important to do something like that. I've always been someone who wants to be humble and down to earth. I don't want the people I knew back in high school to think I'm cocky or blowing them off. I'm still the same person."

Q. Any pregame traditions?

A. "I'm actually a superstitious person. I brush my teeth once before every game. I do that because one time in high school, I brushed my teeth for some reason right before the game and then scored 35 points. I've done it ever since."

Q. Favorite movie?

A. "I saw 'Seven Pounds,' the Will Smith movie, pretty recently. I liked it."

Q. Worst movie?

A. "I'd say 'Nacho Libre.' I saw that a couple of years ago and didn't think it was funny at all."

Q. Coach Gillispie isn't exactly known as a lovable guy. How would you describe him?

A. "Blue-collar coach. No nonsense. He's there first thing in the morning, and he's the last one to leave. That kind of dedication rubs off on everybody in school, practice, everything. He's definitely a good guy. I look up to him and respect him, and the reputation he has is not how he really is."

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