

Atlantic Coast Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Duluth, Georgia, USA

Gas South Arena

Miami Hurricanes

Coach Tricia Cullop

Ahnay Adams

Ra Shaya Kyle

Postgame Press Conference



Notre Dame 69, Miami 54

TRICIA CULLOP: Well, first off, hats off to Notre Dame. Hannah Hidalgo is one of the best players in the country, and I thought she showed that today. She was on fire. She's a tremendous defensive player, as well.

I was disappointed with our effort and execution in the second quarter. Not so much what they were doing to us but what we did to ourselves. I thought we could have executed a lot better. There's no excuse for scoring four points in the second quarter.

They are a good defensive team, but I didn't think we were collectively working together well. We've worked a lot better together than we did that quarter.

Now, we bounced back. I thought we had a much better effort in the second half. But when you play against a team of Notre Dame's caliber, the margin of error is very small. And unfortunately we couldn't make up that deficit.

Q. What made Hannah Hidalgo so hard to defend today?

TRICIA CULLOP: Well, she can score at all three levels. I think when we went under ball screens, she stepped behind it and hit her three. She's so quick in the gap. There were several times that she got and-1s. She's very quick, very heady, understands the game. Her IQ is incredible.

I thought we did our best effort of trying to stop her, but again, she's very quick. Even in the break when she gets

loose, it's hard to catch her.

Q. Just overall positives that you can get from today's game?

TRICIA CULLOP: I think the positives are despite the deficit, I thought we came out and played hard the second half. You can't really look at the score in those moments if you want to stay alive. You've got to keep playing hard.

I thought the defense looked good and got some stops the second half. We were able to hit some shots. Wish we could have hit a few more. Wish we could have made our free throws.

But I do think that our defense stepped up in the second half and got the stops I wish we could have gotten in the second quarter.

But again, I love the fact this team doesn't quit. They play hard. We played them to a very close deficit up at their place, and I was hoping we could keep it close today.

I think the other positive is I hope this isn't our last game. I would hope that -- at a minimum I would hope the WBIT. I hope we have a chance there. I would love this -- group especially for Shay who it's her last year playing, but also for our younger players to have something to build on. It's good that we got here this year and it's good we weren't satisfied with one game. We made it to the second day.

But our goals in the future are much higher than that. I'm very proud that this group turned it around and did that, and I hope that we'll get a chance to be in postseason so we can play a little longer.

Q. Coach, if you don't get into the tournament, what would you take from this season, getting to the second day? What would you take from this season to help build into next season?

TRICIA CULLOP: Well, I mean, we played a much more difficult non-conference schedule than we played a year ago. And we played some -- like Iowa to three, Oklahoma



State to three. I wish we could have snuck in some of those W's so that we wouldn't be not in the NCAA Tournament.

I think that we had some opportunities in front of us, and just some of them slipped away from us. But the level of basketball we played to keep those close was very encouraging, as opposed to maybe what we did a year ago.

I think we're building something pretty special, and hats off to these players for making that happen. Really, really proud of their effort and just how hard they worked for us all season long. Like I said, I hope it's not over.

Q. Shay, what has this season meant to you so far? And, Coach, how do you approach this next week knowing you don't know where you're going to be playing afterwards, and would you play in the WNIT if that is offered to you?

TRICIA CULLOP: WNIT, no. WBIT, yes. I think the WBIT is an honor. I think the WNIT is awesome. When I was at Toledo we won the WNIT. But at that time the WBIT didn't exist. I think when you look at what's next in the ring -- or rings of importance -- we would love to be a part of the WBIT if invited. For years I was a part of the board for the WBCA and we fought for the opportunities that we have now.

Schools are now -- the NCAA is now, they own that tournament. They're paying for that. For years we played in the WNIT and schools had to pay for women's teams to play. Now that we have that and we've got a level board with the men, we won't pass that up. We fought years for that, and so we would be very honored for that opportunity.

WNIT you've still got to pay to be in, and to be honest, if we don't get that honor -- but I think we will give them a couple days off, get their legs back, and regroup and practice in case. And once the selection shows are done, then we'll see what we've got.

But Shay, I'll let you answer because I know he asked you, too.

RA SHAYA KYLE: What it's meant to me? It's meant everything to me. I have got to make some relationships with a lot of different people that I have for a very long time. I have enjoyed playing for Coach CC. She's been a part of my career and journey for a little minute now. It's sad that we had to lose like that tonight -- well, today. But I've enjoyed this season with this team a lot.

Q. Ahnay, just wanted to ask you about being a point

guard and playing against some of the best point guards in the nation, your lessons learned.

AHNAY ADAMS: Take care of the ball. I mean, you've got to have urgency, especially when you're going up against Hannah. She's coming -- especially if she gets hot like that back to back and-1s and stuff like that, you know she's going to come hard for the ball. So just having urgency and putting your teammates in the right position just to be successful.

But also allowing and understanding that CC trusts me and that's why I'm in that position. So to just keep going and not getting flustered and leading my team.

Q. Ra Shaya, I noticed you had a boot on your left foot. Are you okay? And two, I know you had gotten banged up over the last couple days, so what's that been like with the physical play?

RA SHAYA KYLE: I'm good. I just wear the boot for preventative maintenance. Nothing crazy. I'm good, though. Thank you.

TRICIA CULLOP: Just want to say thank you to everybody who put this tournament together. I know this is the first time in Duluth. We are so grateful for the ACC and for everyone that did everything possible for us all to enjoy this tournament. Thank you to everyone. I know a lot of hands made this possible. We are very, very happy to be here, and we learned a lot, and we hope to see you guys back next year.

Q. I was going to ask about the second quarter. You mentioned the four points and that being unacceptable. What was Notre Dame doing to make it so difficult for you guys in that frame?

TRICIA CULLOP: Again, their zone is pretty long and quick. But I didn't think we were on the same page. I thought we weren't communicating well and weren't getting organized with what we wanted to do against man or zone.

I thought we let some possessions get away from us. That was really disappointing. We talked about that at halftime. I thought we fixed it. We were so much better the second half.

But we tried to talk about that in time-outs in the second quarter, but we didn't remedy it until halftime. It took too long to fix it, and I think that's what was really frustrating.

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