

American Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Birmingham, Alabama, USA

Legacy Arena At The BJCC

Florida Atlantic Owls Coach JoAnn Freeland

Vivian Onugha

Postgame Press Conference

FAU 57, North Texas 80

LEANN FREELAND: Obviously North Texas just commanded the game today. They're such a great team. They have size and strength on us, which really poses a problem for us, especially in the first half.

You could tell the fatigue kind of set in early for us as we played a big game yesterday, and with only nine players, that kind of wore us down.

But I'm so impressed and so proud of the team and everything that we went through to get to this point. Vivian can speak to that, but again, a lot of toughness and resilience our team showed all season long.

Q. You've seen them a couple times. Did they do anything that you weren't expecting today?

LEANN FREELAND: No, they didn't have to. They just do their stuff. Coach Jason is a phenomenal coach and he's got a very talented team. It was kind of the exact thing they did to us the first two times. They pressure us, it forces turnovers, and then they were able to capitalize in transition.

I thought Proctor was phenomenal. I thought she had an amazing game. But all their players showed up and played very well.

Coach Burton is a great coach and he has a very talented team, and wish him the best moving forward.

Q. Coming off that emotional victory, do you think that had anything to do with being kind of short? Did you have to do anything different or you kept with the



same game plan after that big victory?

LEANN FREELAND: We tried to tweak it obviously and tried to rest them as much as possible, but it's such a quick turnaround. I actually love the way the conference has the tournament, if you're a 1 through 4 or 1 through 6 it's fantastic, and I think those teams deserve those opportunities.

We were going to have to fight to stick around. I thought we fought hard today, but we just didn't have enough gas in the tank.

Proud of the team.

Q. Let me ask Vivian to talk a little bit about how you feel about what you guys have had to go through this season to get this far.

VIVIAN ONUGHA: It's also easy with the team because we have so many players with injuries. Me too, I have injuries which are hard for me to go through. Even though like sometimes my jump, I can't, but any time I like -- today I was like, I don't care about it, I just have to.

Even though when I tried I feel the pain and stuff, but I was just like let me just being in it because I feel like I'm giving -- like this is the final, so I have to. I have to play through it and stuff like that.

With my teammates going through those pains, that's the same way I feel, too, so it's hard for us.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

