

# WNBA Finals: Las Vegas vs. Phoenix

Sunday, October 5, 2025

Las Vegas Aces

Becky Hammon

Game 2: Postgame



Aces - 91, Mercury - 78

**Q. You've talked a lot about your bench lately, but your stars were definitely the story today. If your bench is the best ever since you've coached here, then how would you describe your core, like your big three, A'ja, Jackie, and Chelsea?**

BECKY HAMMON: How do I describe them? They're studs. That's why the expectation is so high, because of those three, Jewell coming in, Dana coming in. It's what makes us a tough team.

Last game Jack had no legs, no lift. Apparently she went and found some legs because she was cooking today.

When you win -- and I would say Jack and A kind of had average or below-average games -- and you still win, that's what makes us tough because it can be anybody on any given night. Dana can come in and hit you for 15 to 20. Jewell can come in and hit you for 15 to 20. That's a lot of firepower. Plus having to guard A'ja and Chelsea, Jackie.

So good group. I like them.

**Q. I know this is going to seem a little bit random, but the players were asked who they thought your favorite was on the team entering these Finals, and the players said that Jackie was probably your favorite. I'm just wondering in light of today's performance, she set a WNBA record, WNBA Finals record, franchise record for Finals game but most in a quarter. What do you say in response to your players' thinking?**

BECKY HAMMON: They all said she's my favorite?

**Q. That was the thinking in general.**

BECKY HAMMON: They're like my kids. They're all my favorites.

Jackie's just -- she's hard to be mad at because she's so

sweet, and she gives you that big smile, and it's like, all right, I'm not mad anymore. But I still got to coach her up, and I coach her hard honestly.

I always tell them, be worried when I'm not yelling at you.

**Q. We talked a lot during this postseason about how you think your team is handling success. How do you feel like you guys managed to do it so well today?**

BECKY HAMMON: We worked our way into it. I thought the second quarter defensively kind of clicked for us. That was, to me, once we were able to flip that switch defensively, we become a different team. We're just a different team when we execute defensively. We did not execute defensively in the first quarter.

Why we use one quarter to warm up, I don't know. I'm still trying to figure that out. But I've been having to call them timeouts in the first quarter a little too often.

**Q. How important is having a veteran team that had the success going -- you don't have to worry about taking the foot off the pedal?**

BECKY HAMMON: Say what?

**Q. Sorry, having a veteran team that's won, how important is that now that you're up 2-0, they're not going to let up?**

BECKY HAMMON: That's the goal, to not let up. You just don't want to have a satisfied locker room because we're not there yet. All we did is do what we're supposed to do. We're supposed to take care of our home court. I liked how our team battled tonight, competed. I liked our man-to-man a lot better after that first quarter.

The Seattle series, tough. Indiana, super tough. That stuff helps you be battle tested. We know Chelsea, Jackie, and A'ja have been in a lot of wars together, but now Jewell's been in those wars because of how those series played out. It's really -- even our whole year, the process is always equipping you for what's coming next. I think they really embrace that, journeying together, being resilient



together, going through adversity together. It takes a special group to embrace hard, and they really have all year.

There's moments in the game where it's hard, and in those moments that's when they dig down and trust each other, they trust the character, they trust their experiences, they trust the work that they've put in not only on the court, but with each other on and off the court. I think you really start to see that.

I know, as a coach, when I see those moments of them pulling in together, it's like a proud moment for me to see them work together like that.

**Q. Jackie really got going in the third quarter.**

BECKY HAMMON: A little bit, huh?

**Q. Yep. Did you guys identify something at halftime that you wanted to go to, or was that her just getting --**

BECKY HAMMON: I think Jackie identified something she wanted to go to. I didn't call anything. She was just going. We have a couple play calls for her, but it was just really her being aggressive and being in attack mode. For me, I'm always spurring her on to be in attack mode.

She still gets her spot. There's times when she can turn the corner and she's beat, and I'm like you're just playing with your food now. You have a bead on them in the first action and you wait for them to catch up, and then she still scores.

With her three ball, when she gets a couple of them to go down, it really becomes difficult for her to be defended well because she's fast, big, strong, she can get to the hole, she can go through contact, and she can shoot, and she can pass. She just really does it all on the offensive end.

**Q. You've seen it so often. Does it ever surprise you? Does she still surprise you, or are you just used to it by now?**

BECKY HAMMON: She doesn't really surprise me anymore. She's a bad, bad girl. Last year I think she had a game in Phoenix, she had a similar quarter there. I think she scored 20. One of y'all will have to look that up, but something like that. She's done it before.

**Q. First thing, defensively I'm just curious what you believe worked when it came to defending Alyssa Thomas in particular?**

BECKY HAMMON: We weren't letting the deep

penetration with the ball into the paint, so she wasn't getting those spray-out 3s. She wasn't -- we just did a better job of being more sturdy up front in our defense.

The other thing was our guard-to-guard actions were a lot more solid today. It wasn't perfect, but it was way better than it was the other day.

Any time we can hold somebody in the teens in the quarter, that's really -- that's our goal, and I've seen them do it too many times for me to not like demand that from them because I know, when they're locked in, that's what they're capable of.

**Q. You just talked about embracing hard and how that's been something that the group and you have done all season. I'm just curious who and what you've leaned on throughout the process to right this ship when it came from earlier in the season --**

BECKY HAMMON: When I leaned on or who they leaned on?

**Q. No, you. You.**

BECKY HAMMON: Jesus.

**Q. We talked about before the game just winning those margins and how important it was to be able to do that. What were the things that you thought the team mastered today?**

BECKY HAMMON: The margins were the guard-to-guard actions. Our guards were up, physical. You didn't see a lot of slips that you saw in the first game where they were slipping to get some layups. Our post defense was much better, much better. So the things that I really asked them to hone in on, I thought they did, did a better job on the glass.

All those little things add up. I think they had five offensive rebounds in the first quarter and ended the game with three. So that was something we had talked about coming in.

So at the first quarter, I'm about to lose my mind because this is all the stuff we talked about, and then I just told them at some point you have to do it. We could talk about it until we're blue in the face. We know the problems. We know the issues that we had in Game 1. Like let's fix it now, not wait till after the game or halftime, and they really buckled in on that end.

**Q. You said that the pregame video last time from Katie was the players in high school. What did you go**



**with for the pregame video today?**

BECKY HAMMON: Clips of the Phoenix Mercury. That's it.

**Q. When did you tell the team like we need to fix it now? Was it after the first quarter or --**

BECKY HAMMON: It was one of the -- I think I took a timeout there in the first quarter, but also just kind of reiterated going into the second quarter.

They know exactly what I'm talking about. They know what I'm going to say. They know it. We've been together too long. They know when they're not up to standard in certain areas.

Like I said, most of the time I'm just reminding them, encouraging them to get to the level that we need to defensively in order to win a game.

**Q. How would you describe the impact that Chelsea had tonight?**

BECKY HAMMON: She does so many little things, like the little inbounds play that they did with A'ja flashing up and then Jackie ripping off -- Chelsea gets no credit for that play, but she did all that. That was just her, something on the fly she saw. She said, I know you called such and such, and I was like, do you. Feel free to make those calls and adjustments however you want to do it.

My thing is I always want them to have an aggressive nature about themselves, and when she sees something like that -- you saw it in the Indiana one, when she got Jackie over the top at halftime. So these possessions where it's like they're running routes over the top of the -- like that's the kind of pace I want all the time. So when they do it without me saying it, I love it.

But I thought she impacted the game as usual a lot on the defensive end. She's just -- she's really an anchor kind of just talking constantly, obviously as well as setting us up on the offensive end. I mean, her passing, as you know, is elite, but it's all the other little things, the communication that she's doing, that really help us win the basketball game.

**Q. Becky, five wins in six meetings against Phoenix so far this year. What is it about this matchup that has allowed your group to still be successful even through some of the things you're pointing at right now?**

BECKY HAMMON: You said we're 0-0 against Mercury, I like that.

Look, we've got to focus in. None of the work ever carries over. We can build off some success. We kind of know what we like, the sets, the actions that we like offensively.

Defensively I thought, I don't know, you'll have to ask the players, but I feel like we have a firm idea of what we should be doing and how it should look and how it should feel. It's not super complicated. We just want to be really solid in some really fundamental areas for us defensively, but we're not counting records yet.

**Q. You spoke very long about Jackie and just needing to get her legs back from Game 1. What kind of conversations did you guys have with each other, just what she needed to reset herself for this game?**

BECKY HAMMON: I mean, I didn't have to say much. She told me during the game who -- this is a player that never wants to come out of the game. So when she tells me she don't have any legs and she pulls herself out basically, I know she's hurting. She doesn't have anything in the tank.

Speak of the devil.

JACKIE YOUNG: You said I have nothing left in the tank, huh?

BECKY HAMMON: No, she said, what do I say to you and I said nothing much because I said you pulled yourself out in Game 1.

Yesterday I asked her how she felt, and she said, "Good. I'll have my legs tomorrow." That was pretty much it. I believe her.

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