

# Maui Invitational presented by Novavax

Monday, November 25, 2024

Lahaina, Hawaii, USA

Lahaina Civic Center

## UConn Huskies Coach Dan Hurley Alex Karaban Postgame Press Conference

Memphis 99, UConn 97 (OT)

**Q. It got a little chippy there. How difficult was it to navigate and stay in the game as guys were flying all over the place, whistles nonstop?**

ALEX KARABAN: We knew it was going to be a physical game. That was the game plan. We knew they wanted to make it physical. It wasn't surprising us that it was physical, we just had to match their toughness, and for most of the game we didn't. That's just on us.

**Q. Alex, as the leader of this team, how do you communicate your message coming from Dan, as well, about the guys that are experiencing this and now you play your first real opponent? How much do you take on your shoulders and turn around and try and get a W obviously in the next 24 hours?**

ALEX KARABAN: It's on my shoulders completely, 100 percent my shoulders, how the team responds, how the team acts, how we watch film, how we do everything in general. It's all on me, and I've got to do that. I've got to continue to do a better job of that. It's something I'm going to address the team after, too, in the players' meeting just to make sure that we've got to wake up.

**Q. Coach, early on Memphis was very disruptive in terms of making it difficult for you to get in your stuff on offense. What were they doing to make it difficult to get where you wanted to go?**

DAN HURLEY: Just really, their style of defense is probably the toughest for us to play against, the switching, and really physical. They make your catches hard. They get into the dribbler with their hands. They're just super, super disruptive, and I thought we -- it disrupted our



offense.

But if you said to me I'd play an overtime game with these guys today and have 10 turnovers for the game, I would have taken that, especially with the extra four minutes.

Most of our problems were in just one-on-one defense, and then the amount of times we put them or that they were put on the foul line.

**Q. Dan, what did you see on the foul call against Liam? It was 92-92 all when you got the technical.**

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, that was a joke. I mean, I just watched it. Listen, the game started for us, for me, with how physical Memphis is and how much -- so they're physical at the defensive end, and then at the offensive end they initiate a lot of contact and they were getting whistles early on in the game.

It got off to a bad start when my medical trainer, who must have said something under his breath in a huddle, gets T'd up in the huddle in the first couple minutes or whatever that was in the game. A trainer who's just the nicest guy, very quiet guy. Might have muttered something under his breath in a normal situation.

An official comes over to you and says, hey, Coach, tell that guy to shut up because I know they don't want to hear it from me.

But that's commonly how that should have been handled, but I had a lot of issues with what went on out there in the game.

That over-the-back call at that point of the game, there was no attempt to block out. There was a player on Memphis that made a half-assed effort to rebound that basketball, and Liam McNeeley high-pointed that rebound.

For that call to be made at that point of the game was a complete joke, all right? And then for me, I don't know what happened. I might have lost my balance by the absurdity of the call or maybe I tripped. But if I made that call at that moment I would have ignored the fact that I was on my back, if I made that call. I would have ignored that. I would have ignored that.



That was a major -- obviously a major -- how you could call that while that game was going on, the way that game was going on is just beyond me. But I know -- I've never seen the one ref before. I didn't even know he was a college ref. I'm familiar with the other two, so I'm not surprised.

**Q. With Samson's foul, his fifth foul, the technical there, was that one that he just has to be smart in that situation?**

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, he's got to be smarter, but at that point, we were kind of dead in the water. We were down 12 or 13, and we looked lifeless. I started with riling the team up and creating some energy and some intensity and some fire, and the team followed suit.

Samson was getting shoved. His jersey was ripped. He didn't get a foul called for him the entire game. He ended the game with his jersey ripped down the center, but they get him on every call.

He's frustrated. That was crazy, man. Crazy.

**Q. You guys have two games in the next two days. How do you put this past you and move forward?**

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, I think coming into it, I think when we realized we had such a low seed and obviously that's a heck of a first-round opponent, I think we're going to obviously have to bounce back and mentally regroup. We're not used to losing.

But I think we are programmed with a lot of character, and we'll respond. This hurts. This sucks. We came here to win the championship. But Memphis is an excellent team, and we've got to respond the way UConn responds, no matter what time the game is.

I played at 9:30 today. I don't know what time we play tomorrow. 7:00? I don't know what time we're getting up, once you go into the losers' bracket in the first game.

**Q. Obviously Terris and Jaylin really carried you guys in the first half there. That had to be good to see. Jaylin didn't play a whole lot in the second half. Was that defense oriented or --**

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, he just looked a little skittish. He was great in that first half. I think like his first run he kind of looked like he was a little bit of out of rhythm, a little bit on his heels. We were down. He made a couple defensive mistakes. A couple of guys like -- with the way they approached offensively, they were just going at those match-ups.

Some of it was -- it looked like he had lost a bit of a rhythm and skittish, and then some other guys just played a little better on the wing based on where we were in the game. But it was encouraging to see those two guys there.

Thank you.

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