

Big East Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 13, 2025

New York, New York, USA

Madison Square Garden

Butler Bulldogs

Coach Thad Matta

Jahmyl Telfort

Postgame Media Conference



THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Jahmyl. Questions for Coach Matta.

Q. Your team had 40 paint points yesterday and just 18 today. Can you talk about what the St. John's interior defense was doing for you guys in this one?

THAD MATTA: Yeah, I would say start on the perimeter. You know what I mean? Those guys, they were guarding us, and the tone was set early. I mean, we knew they weren't going to call hand-checks, they weren't going to call the grabbing, then we were going to have a hard time running offense. Him picking up two quick fouls really, really hurt us in kind of starting the game.

We got down big early with him on the bench, and finally just said, the heck with it, let's go with it. When you get into the paint, their length and their athleticism makes it so difficult. I thought the interior defense started with the perimeter defense today. They were on us. We were having a hard time getting the ball into the paint.

Q. Coach, in terms of the 1-3-1 zone, we saw that a lot today, more than we have all season. How would you evaluate your players' performance in that zone, and how much have you practiced that this season?

THAD MATTA: We put it in a couple of weeks ago. We've used it. It was just something today -- St. John's is such a rhythm team. I mean, they're going to do what they do, and if they don't get what they want, then they just have some unbelievable one-on-one players. We thought the zone could slow them down a little bit.

We really struggled to rebound out of the zone. I mean, I think that was one of the hardest things in the first half that we just couldn't get that done. They were overloading us. 24 was anchored down there in the paint. We just couldn't rotate back to get the rebounds. That was what hurt us the most there.

Q. This is your second 14-win season, the first three years back here at Butler. Where do you see the program right now and in the next years? I know you

St. John's 78, Butler 57

THE MODERATOR: For Butler we have Coach Thad Matta and student-athlete Jahmyl Telfort. Questions for Jahmyl.

Q. First couple of games against St. John's, both pretty close, competitive games. Obviously today a bit more of a blow-out. As a player, what did you see them do? Did they change something up, or what was it that caused such a discretion between the couple of games?

JAHMYL TELFORT: I think that they made a lot of tough plays. We knew that's a team that is going to come and offensive rebound, and they got nine today -- or, no, 14 today. That's already something we can't give them because there's a lot of second-chance points right there.

The first two games we were able to score a little bit. We didn't score a lot today. So, you know, we just came up short, yeah.

Q. Just a follow-up on the offensive rebounding, it was an issue yesterday against Providence, as well, but you were able to kind of keep that at bay in terms of giving them points off of those rebounds. What was St. John's able to do to capitalize on those opportunities?

JAHMYL TELFORT: They got RJ Luis and Zubby, who are always in the paint. Providence was a little different because they shot so many threes. Those were more so long rebounds, but St. John's is doing all their damage in the paint, so it's a lot harder to handle those guys once they have it in there because they're really good in there. Yeah.



have a nice recruiting class coming in, but where do you see yourself taking this program as of right now?

THAD MATTA: We've obviously got work to do. That's from every phase of our program. We're losing four seniors that are a lot of our production. There's no question.

With the four guys we have coming in, they're going to be freshmen. We're going to have to get them as ready as we can. The guys that come back, we're going to have to get them better, and we're going to have to add a few pieces to the puzzle.

Q. I just wanted to ask you about the opportunity to coach Pat McCaffrey. Obviously he had a unique journey and kind of went through a lot of things throughout his career. What did it mean to you about being able to coach him this season? He seemed to play pretty well today.

THAD MATTA: When I took him out today, I said, I wanted you to end your career on a slam dunk. I said you can tell your kids someday your last shot in college basketball was a slam dunk.

What Patrick has meant to this program has been tremendous. He's one of my all-time favorite players I've ever coached. He's got a tremendous sense of humor. You know, for him at age 24 to come into a locker room with a lot of younger guys and embrace everybody. He could have chose to just sort of do his own thing and come into practice, but he's been a phenomenal teammate.

His high IQ for basketball probably is most important. As you say, the young man has been through a lot in his life. It has been an honor and a pleasure to coach him.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports