

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 7, 2025

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

Butler Bulldogs

Coach Austin Parkinson

Postgame Media Conference



St. John's 66, Butler 50

THE MODERATOR: Joined by Butler Coach Austin Parkinson. We'll have an opening statement from coach and then questions.

AUSTIN PARKINSON: Frustrating game in the sense that I thought we prepped really well. I thought the kids came out with the right mindset. Really fired up to play. Had a great first half. Second half has been our Achilles heel as far as points off turnovers. 24-10.

St. John's creates a lot of those problems because they're extremely athletic and quick. We had a tough time guarding the ball one-on-one.

Proud of how our kids were prepped and ready to go. Disappointed for them that they weren't able to -- we weren't able as a group to have a better second half.

Also, proud of the kids that -- we've had a lot of injuries this year. They've maintained a positive attitude and positive work ethic. That's all I can ask for.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. You talked with us today about being proud of your kids the way the season went when you lose a couple of your biggest contributors. Your kids didn't quit on the season and came up with a couple of big moments. What can you say about the leadership on the team and the fact that they did stay the course and fight?

AUSTIN PARKINSON: I just thought this week even showed it. I told my wife yesterday, this group is ready to go. They're excited. They came ready to play. Our practices have been good.

But, you know, the seniors, they just played hard. They fought. And the reality is you could see it tonight, right?

We're missing a go-to scorer and we had some shot clock violations and we were looking around to see who can score. With their athleticism, it's hard for us to beat people off the dribble. That's the tough part.

But seeing them fight. And like I said, we had a lot of close games this year and there's a lot of learning that was involved as well.

Q. Austin, kind of going on that notion of seniors and senior leadership. One senior who really had an outstanding game today, Sydney Jaynes. Can you speak to what she brought and how she left everything out on the floor tonight?

AUSTIN PARKINSON: I'd back it up to -- even before the UConn game, she rolled her ankle against Xavier and worked her tail off to do all the treatment to get herself back. She was playing in a lot of pain today. She was in a boot before, but she wanted to be out there and give her best. She did. She had a really quality game. We needed her to have a good game for us to compete.

She was one of the players -- the original players, four-year player here at Butler. Once a Bulldog, always a Bulldog. We're really proud of her.

Q. When you think of this season with the highs and the lows, everything that you guys had to go through, how does a season like this really continue to build off of the foundation of getting better and growing and to go through so much turmoil, everybody was able to stay together and play?

AUSTIN PARKINSON: I think each year you try to take another step in the right direction. Obviously our nonconference showed we were on a path to do that. You know, during the year with so many injuries, we lacked a lot of depth, but it also got a lot of experience for the young kids.

I thought Lily Zeinstra was outstanding tonight. I thought she could have been on the All-Freshman team, to be honest. She's a very solid player, very trustworthy player. I thought today she wasn't afraid of the moment and did



some really positive things for us.

Q. Coach, you also had 3 for 3 shooting performance and some contribution off the bench from Cristen Carter in this game. She gave you eight points, four rebounds. When you think about her growth as a player, what you want to see from her next, what could it be for Cristen Carter?

AUSTIN PARKINSON: I thought she's had a really good last three or four games. She's had a great approach in practice, and I liked how aggressive she was. She was down there trying to steal. She was diving on the floor. A lot of encouraging things as we go forward.

Like I said, I thought the last probably three weeks for her has been a real positive. Like I said, she played really, really hard today.

Q. You talked about your nonconference and that you had a lot of really strong moments in how you started the season. Obviously injuries play a major role, but you've been through the gauntlet of this league. And now you've gotten to know it over the last couple of years. What can you say about the quality of competition in this conference and what it's like coaching in this league?

AUSTIN PARKINSON: I think the coaching is some of the best coaching in the country. I think the versatility -- you have the athleticism of St. John's, Seton Hall. You've got Creighton and Villanova running motion. Marquette's physicality. Obviously UConn's talent.

There's just a lot of versatility to the league, and there's no off nights. Every game is a battle. So it's an honor to be part of it. We've got some things to continue to grow and work on, and I think we've got to get a little bit more athletic to take the next step. That's something we're going to do in the offseason.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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