

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Sunday, March 9, 2025

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

Villanova Wildcats

Coach Denise Dillon

Maddie Webber

Postgame Media Conference



Q. In a game like this, which is essentially a home game for UConn, how was that playing against the crowd, as well as playing against a really tough UConn team?

MADDIE WEBBER: I mean, we're used to it by now. This is my second year, so, like, I'm also used to it. For the new people, we had to tell them it's like a home game. It's just we have to shut out the noise and just do what we do, stay together. We have our own fans here, so just rely on them.

THE MODERATOR: Maddie, thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. You had faced them twice in January, pretty big margin of defeat. You really did throw a lot at them today and kept it close and kept it a fun game to watch throughout that first half. What goes into the approach when you have seen a team recently and haven't had the results you wanted? Just what goes into...

DENISE DILLON: Well, obviously it's just the continued growth of your team and the progression throughout a season and trying to flush away the two games prior. Learn from them. You know, we talked about it after those games. We watched the film. And learn and grow at practice.

I think this team has done that. You know, there are so many areas, so many holes that you want to plug, but wanting them to consistently stick together, especially on the defensive end.

And I laugh -- today, you come out in that first half, and, yeah, it wasn't a defensive battle by any stretch. The offense was flowing for both teams going back and forth, so you knew those adjustments were going to be made at halftime. Unfortunately, they turned it up another level, and we didn't. We didn't match it. Things didn't go our way offensively.

I was pleased with the recognition of new season once the conference tournament comes into play and not getting caught up on those two previous games.

UConn 82, Villanova 54

THE MODERATOR: Joining us from Villanova, Head Coach Denise Dillon and student-athlete Maddie Webber. We'll begin with an opening statement from coach.

DENISE DILLON: Obviously a disappointing finish. You never want to go out. You want to keep going and get to that championship game. But obviously coming across a great UConn team, those things are quite the challenge.

So congrats to them and wishing them the best in the championship tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Maddie.

Q. Maddie, 37 points against them in a half is pretty good. Did they do anything defensively different in the second half, make any adjustments, more intensity? I don't know how you want to describe it. What do you think maybe they did better defensively, or did you just not make the shots that you were making?

MADDIE WEBBER: I think we were getting good looks. We just weren't hitting a lot of our shots. And they also were collapsing a bit more, which we realized. So I think next time or next team we play, we just have to find open shooters and knock down our shots.

Q. What was going well in the first half when you guys were hitting shots? What was working for you guys on the offensive end?

MADDIE WEBBER: I think in the first half we were just the more aggressive team, and we were driving, getting to our spots, hitting our shots as well. Then we were also offensive rebounding a lot and just doing our thing. I think we just stopped a little bit in the second half, but yeah.



Q. Is their defense a little underrated, as crazy as it is to say? They held you guys out for 16 minutes without a basket and St. John's yesterday, 10. Everyone thinks about the offense, but how good are they defensively when they're locked in like they were?

DENISE DILLON: I think they're a great defensive team. Who is underestimating their defense? Are they on the national scale? I don't know about that.

Yeah, I think they always did a great job of shrinking the court. They keep you on one side of the floor. They're disruptive. They get in the passing lane. You feel it. You know it's out there. They have a lot of players coming into the game.

Whoever is stating that hasn't played against them or hasn't been watching enough basketball.

Q. Sarah Strong had 16 rebounds in this game. What makes her so good on the boards, and could you speak a little bit about her impact defensively?

DENISE DILLON: Yeah. Well, definitely defensively you've seen her growth this season. You know, just the importance of getting out there and guarding the perimeter and post, I think she found herself in a great position.

They know the shots are going to go up. The recognition of where they're going. Then Sarah did a good job of getting that inside position using her body to come up with some. Yeah, she was killing it on the boards for sure.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports