

Big East Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Monday, March 9, 2026

Uncasville, Connecticut, USA

Mohegan Sun Arena

Villanova Wildcats

Denise Dillon

Jasmine Bascoe

Postgame Media Conference



UConn - 90, Villanova - 51

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from Coach and then take questions.

DENISE DILLON: Well, definitely a tough night for the Cats out there. Congratulations to UConn on the Big East championship, and here we are.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions.

Q. I know it was a rough start early tonight after a very good start yesterday, but at what point, or at any point, was the early start troubles in your guys' minds?

JASMINE BASCOE: I mean, I don't know, they're a good team and we were just reminding each other that we're doing this for each other, we're sticking together throughout whatever happens. So, yeah, maybe our start wasn't as good as we wanted, but there's no going back in time. We're just going to adjust, we're just going to keep playing, so that's what we tried to do today.

Q. When you played 'em at your place, you had 'em at the half playing really well. Obviously that woke them up that they were more prepared tonight, but what was the difference in the first half tonight versus that game a couple weeks ago?

DENISE DILLON: I think a lot of the difference was we didn't make shots. You make shots early, and we just mentioned how yesterday's game, we came out hitting early, you feel good, at least you take that first punch. Today it was the complete opposite. We didn't make shots, got called for a couple fouls early. It just takes you out of a flow and they just set the tone from that point moving forward.

Q. Jasmine, how tough was it driving inside tonight against UConn's size and the physicality of their defense?

JASMINE BASCOE: Yeah, it's tough. I would just say, I'm undersized to begin with, so it's always tough. And they're a good defensive team and, you know, it's a chippy game, it's chippier than normal, and we don't always agree with some of the calls and stuff like that, but we just got to play through it.

So, yeah, they work really well on defense, and we were going to keep going no matter what, get as many paint touches as we could.

Q. If each of you could answer this one. The belief is from all the projections that the NCAA tournament is next for you guys. It's been, obviously, a couple years, Denise, but to know that that is on the horizon, how does that feel, even if -- I know in this moment, it probably stings a little bit, but how does that feel?

DENISE DILLON: Yeah, for sure, it does. Today, you want to feel this. We said that to the team. You got to recognize what it takes to be on the other side, to win this championship. At the same time, our group did a tremendous job this year. Their season started off tough, you know, a tough non-conference schedule. We put ourselves in a great position to be ready for Big East play by beating -- you know, we just found out, JMU won their tournament today, beat them at their place, beat West Virginia, won last night the Big-12. So we did what we needed to do to build that resumé, thought we took care of business in the Big East as well. You look at our record with, what are we, 25-7. Three of those losses coming to the No. 1 team in the nation.

So I'm really proud of this group and their growth and willingness to just get better and continue to battle. So we're excited for next Sunday to see where we're being sent, and we're going to get better this week to be prepared for that.

JASMINE BASCOE: Yeah, basketball's a game of wins



and losses, and so today hurts. We played the Big East this whole year. We obviously wanted a better outcome than this, but we're also happy knowing that we have a good chance of playing in the post-season and we're ready. We don't want our season to end, and we're ready no matter where we go, who we play, we're sticking together, we're playing as hard as we can. So we're going to use this game to instill some grit in us because we don't want our season to end any sooner than it has to.

Q. Jasmine, I know tonight hurts, but knowing how tough the Big East is, and you won 16 games in it to make a run to the finals, three games in three days. I don't think people appreciate just how difficult it is to kind of do that. When you think back to kind of in the summer the work and the sacrifice and the grind that y'all put in this year, how special does it feel to kind of be out there on the big moments today? Even though the scoreboard is what it is, y'all fought for 40 and gave UConn every bit that you had. How special does it feel that you're inspiring fans kind of through your play?

JASMINE BASCOE: It feels amazing. What more could you ask for? We're in the final game of the Big East. Like, that's great. So we have -- Denise said it, we've improved so much this whole year, starting from the summer and -- (feed cut out).

Q. (Feed cut out) -- that's a lot of time that you get some days off. What are you going to do?

DENISE DILLON: We're going to do some shooting drills. We're going to do lot of shooting this week.

No, we're off -- what day is it? It's Monday. So we'll be off tomorrow, Wednesday, regroup Thursday. We'll have a regular practice Thursday, Friday. Off again Saturday, then Sunday see who we're playing. So regular practices, a lot of skill work, shooting, yeah, the recovery piece, but just preparing for a lot of what you saw today, pressure situations and going to keep saying it, shooting.

Q. You've kind of been flying under the radar this season. I think you started picking up AP votes in the last week or two. Do you use that as motivation or are you of the drown out the outside noise philosophy?

DENISE DILLON: Oh, yeah, we haven't even talked to the team about that. I think it's just about us taking care of business, doing what we have control over, what we're capable of. So each game we were going into, they understood it was controlling their own destiny of putting together a good resumé for post-season play, and we kept it just to that. We did not talk at all about top 25 or where

we might be going.

JASMINE BASCOE: Yeah, she said it. We limit all of our distractions, and so we'll let those people say what they got to say, we appreciate it, obviously, but we're just going to play every game as if it's another game.

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