

# Never Forget Tribute Classic

Saturday, December 11, 2021

Newark, New Jersey, USA

## UCONN Huskies Men

Prudential Center

## Coach Dan Hurley

Postgame Press Conference



UConn 74, St. Bonaventure 64

### Q. (Inaudible.)

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, I think all the experiences, I think the time in the Bahamas, playing three really challenging games like that, to deal with some of the injury stuff, having to go to West Virginia, losing a game like that, it just strengthens your resolve. I think everything that we've kind of dealt with really since Thanksgiving I think has toughened up the team, and it's identified areas that we've got to get better.

Obviously the defense was there, and then the production on offense was there across the board. Everyone kind of gave us something. If we're going to get those types of contributions, especially with two high-level dudes out, along with our defense and how hard we play, we're hard to beat.

### Q. (Inaudible.)

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, I mean, with Akok, it's like a guy like that, these guys, Jalen, Tyler, you try to instill as much confidence in them as you can in terms of building up their psyche and telling them a lot of things about how talented they are, but in the end, you get later in your career, and you've got to step up. You've got to step up and produce.

A guy like Akok, at that stage of his career when you're on the court, you've got to step into a shot and you've got to knock it down, you've got to cut, run, get it done. You can't play extended minutes and not be productive, so I've been on his butt pretty good about this is a time in your career where you've got to -- you're going to play extended minutes but you've got to produce, and Jalen and Tyler, they stepped up big.

### Q. What about Jordan?

DAN HURLEY: I was just so happy for him because he's wearing it right now. He's such a great guy, and he's such

a super talent. You know, he wants to be there like right now, like the finished product, and this is the process, this is the journey. The progress is going to be up and down. The way he was able to put the first half and the bad first couple minutes of the second half where he was -- he made a couple defensive mistakes, so he overcame a back start to the second half which showed great confidence because those were huge shots he made.

### Q. (Inaudible.)

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, he's one of the best defenders in the country, one of the best rim protectors. He was able to play 26 minutes, and Isaiah was in worse foul trouble than him during the game. You know, he makes things hard. He's so mobile. He's so long. He's also a good offensive player, too. But he was able to play the whole second half, I think, without fouling. That's incredible, especially on that block.

### Q. (Inaudible.)

DAN HURLEY: I mean, I think Tyrese, as long as he doesn't have a step back, he should be there for the opener on the 18th. And Adama, we'll know more like middle of the week because he's ramped things up, but again, it's a delicate injury. But at most I think he may be a couple games away, if not in play around the opener.

### Q. (Inaudible.)

DAN HURLEY: Yeah, this was so good for -- what we're going through right now, like our long-term prospects as a team, I think we're a formidable team this year. We have a very strong team. I think going through the injuries and having to play this tough stretch of games here without key guys, playing Michigan State without Isaiah, playing the last two like pretty tough games versus really good teams, it's building our depth, it's putting guys in uncomfortable positions where they're growing right before our eyes, and when we're back fully loaded we'll have a very formidable team potentially.

### Q. (Inaudible.)

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DAN HURLEY: Yeah, last night we were talking, and we've been talking over the last week. It sucks when your players get hurt. Any player, but when your best players get hurt, that's bad, because that's -- like having the best players is great.

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