

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Round - UNC Greensboro vs USC

Friday, March 21, 2025

Los Angeles, California, USA

Galen Center

## UNC Greensboro Spartans

## Jade Gamble

## Nia Howard

### Media Conference

**Q. So USC is known for defense. They do a full court press, all that. What stands out in your prep on in that aspect, what they do well?**

JAYDE GAMBLE: Yeah, first and foremost I want to thank my Lord and Savior. To answer your question, yes, they're definitely known for they're defense, but we're then for our defense as well. We have prepped. We know what we can do.

We know obviously that they're going to come with the pressure. But we have prepped all week just to be able to beat their pressure and know what decisions we have to make once we get past that first line.

NIA HOWARD: At the end of the day our team knows how to play basketball. We have to remain poised, and ball security is really important this game.

**Q. You've had a historic season for your school really; first time 27 years at the NCAA and all that. What does that mean? Reflect back on your season.**

JAYDE GAMBLE: Yeah, it's nothing short of a blessing. Definitely great to be able to perform with UNCG on your chest. Going back to the history, you said it hasn't been done in 27 years.

I think I mentioned this earlier in the season, we've worked hard for this moment and we're built for this moment. It was all in timing for us to be able to come here and play honest it level. Definitely a blessing.

NIA HOWARD: It is definitely a blessing. We made a vision board before the season started about just all our goals. Two of those goals we accomplished -- all of them



really -- but the main two goals were getting a ring, regular season champs and also conference sense tournament champs, and we did all that.

Grateful to be a part of this team and have this amazing coaching staff and everything, so, yeah.

**Q. I believe you're top ranked in the country in terms of scoring defense. I think USC is one of the top 10 in the country in scoring offense. Push comes to shove, how do you see that?**

JAYDE GAMBLE: Basketball is a game of runs. They are going to go on their runs; we are going to go on our runs. Like you said, they're good on offense, but we're good at defense, so it's going to be a tit for tat battle. We're ready for it. We're prepared.

NIA HOWARD: Yeah, definitely going to be a good game. We're going to do what we know we can do, what we're good at. One of those main things is defense. We take a lot of pride in our defense no matter what team we're playing.

**Q. You've come a long way from North Carolina across the country. Have you had any time to look around LA?**

JAYDE GAMBLE: Oh, yeah, you can't miss LA. Once you're here, you're here. It's totally different from North Carolina. One is the weather. It's nice out here.

But, yeah, we did a team outing yesterday. We went to the pier, so that was nice. Yeah, just get away from basketball a little bit.

It's been nice out here. Can't complain.

NIA HOWARD: Really fun actually. Few of the teammates, we sang with someone in the middle of a sidewalk. Started dancing, did a whole musical number with them. It was so fun actually.

**Q. Two of the teams that you guys faced that are pretty big, SEC and ACC teams in North Carolina and**



**Georgia, what are some of the things that the team has learned from then and going through conference games and winning the regular season title and the tournament?**

JAYDE GAMBLE: Yeah, that's a great question. I think those two games -- actually three; we played Wake Forest as well -- these games definitely shaped our season; showed us that we can fight in any battle.

We were in all three of those games. Could have won two out of the three. So I think that shaped us to know that we're here and we can compete.

Now, once you can compete it's time to figure out what can we do to compete and win. That's what made us focus on the little details like boxing out, rebounds, little stuff that don't show up on the stat sheet, so we can outlast these bigger and stronger opponents.

NIA HOWARD: Yeah, I have to second that. Little details really matter in these types of games. Wake Forest and Georgia and UNC, they're all bigger of course, so it was all about boxing out, getting that last defensive stop, and then all the things that matter.

**Q. Coming in as a 16 seed playing a 1 seed, how does that weigh on your mind? Does that play into anything?**

JAYDE GAMBLE: Not me. No, not at all. I don't think it plays to any of us. You have a coach that trusted and believes in you and what your teammates can do. There is no pressure. I think if anything, it's harder to be the No. 1 seed to have to beat a 16 seed and go play.

Just ready to play. I'm ready to go for tomorrow. (Smiling.)

NIA HOWARD: Yeah, we're just ready to shock the world really. You know, we have this underdog mentality, as Jayde likes to say. So being the lower seed is actually pretty good motivation for us to be able to compete with these teams.

**Q. I just had a quick question. As seniors can you reflect on your time and what this means to you to make it to this level?**

NIA HOWARD: It actually -- I've been here for four years. You know, it means so much knowing that this has been a goal for a long time and actually getting it. That's why it was such an emotional game after winning against Chat. First thing we could do is drop to our knees and that God and start crying and everything.

Just means a lot.

JAYDE GAMBLE: This is my second year here. I transferred in so I haven't had the long journey at UNCG, but I would say we put in a lot of work going from last year to make it to the championship, not winning the championship; to this year going back to the championship, playing the team we played in the championship last year, winning it.

I think the one thing that stayed consistent is the hard work and effort the players and coaches have put in.

When I have to hang my jersey up, the one thing I can say is the people beside me were really ready every night and every day to compete and get better.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports