

American Athletic Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Saturday, March 9, 2024

Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Dickies Arena

Florida Atlantic University

Jennifer Sullivan

Aniya Hubbard

Postgame Press Conference



JENNIFER SULLIVAN: Well, rebounds. Again, just back to the paint, the physicality against Wichita, I thought they came up with some key rebounds. I thought for the most part we were able to guard 'em, but just the second chance points and being able to finish in the paint, getting some easy buckets.

We relied on the three early on and tried to focus in on the paint, and I thought they did a really good job of capitalizing there. It was back and forth for awhile, I thought we had a few stretches there where we could have cut it a little bit closer, and just weren't able to capitalize there and at the free-throw line.

Q. Aniya, you still finished with a pretty solid game. What was working for you tonight, obviously before fouling out, but you still put a pretty good line across the board. What was going your way tonight?

ANIYA HUBBARD: I think just trusting the team, trusting the process, just getting everybody involved. Just making the extra pass. Just doing what I can to contribute to the team. I feel like that's all could I do, just leave it all on the court, honestly, no matter which game it was, just leave it all on the court, and hope for the best.

Q. You referenced you split with them during the year, is that emblematic of how the conference was this year, and your first go around through the American and how close maybe things were here, it was not a lot of separation really between the top teams and those at the bottom. Here's a team you split with during the year, it's a back and forth game throughout, what are the things that you might need to do going forward to kind of to move up in the standings and elevate the program in the conference?

JENNIFER SULLIVAN: Yeah, obviously, we didn't really have a lot of expectations coming to the American, we were just excited to be here. Now that we've gone through the year, I think the parity has been great. I thought it was a really competitive league. I thought the way the schedule laid out allowed a lot of teams opportunities to showcase what they could do. You see that right down the stretch with all these close games going into the last weekend.

Wichita State - 64, Florida Atlantic - 50

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started with an opening statement from Coach and then take questions for the student-athletes.

JENNIFER SULLIVAN: We're very disappointed. I didn't have a lot of words for the girls in the locker room. I think we're all still pretty in shock. We felt really excited going into this game. We split with Wichita going into this tournament, and, you know, one thing we tried to focus on is capitalizing in the paint. Credit to them, I thought they did a great job in the paint, outscoring us in the paint 34-20.

And then turnovers, that was a big key for us. The game we won against them we kept it to 12, under 15, which is our goal. Game 2 against them we had one too many turnovers. Coming off a Temple game, too many turnovers. That just hurts us a lot in the foot.

I thought we battled. I was really proud of our kids. They never gave up. We gave ourselves a chance throughout the game until late down the stretch in the fourth. Just couldn't come away with it. Just so proud of this group, what they have overcome, thankful for all the work they put into this program and the steps that we've been able to take moving forward.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. This was a back and forth game throughout. They closed with a 12-0 run down the end, and the offense kind of stopped there. What was the difference in the closing stretch for you today?



Going into next year, I think for us it's too early to think about long term. I think one thing throughout the year we said over and over is the physicality of this league, the size, the athleticism, which is an area we want to continue to improve on. But I think we got some really, really great pieces, some kids that are really bought into making FAU what we're trying to be. It's just adding some pieces that could be a little bit more physical inside the paint.

Q. With that, how much is that any easier to do now in this climate with college basketball with the portal and whatnot, to be able to add those pieces?

JENNIFER SULLIVAN: I don't know if easy is the right word. You obviously have opportunities, but I think the biggest thing is making sure that your current roster is bought into what you're doing and buying in and they help recruit for you. Then you try to find players, whether it be in the portal or high school wherever you find 'em, junior college, that buy into what you're trying to do. So, again, the recruiting piece is the recruiting piece, I think we've done really good job up to this point getting players, like Aniya here, that continue to produce and we'll continue to do that down the road.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you.

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