

# American Athletic Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Monday, March 10, 2025

Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Dickies Arena

**North Texas Mean Green**

**Jason Burton**

**Tommisha Lampkin**

**Jaelyn Talley**

Postgame Press Conference

North Texas - 69, East Carolina - 58

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

JASON BURTON: You got to come to the tournament and get that first one, get that monkey off your back, so to speak. I thought the first half we kind of played -- had those jitters. We hadn't played in a week. And then we do what North Texas traditionally does in the second half. We tighten things up and came out and played huge in the second half, and we got contributions across the board.

The back-to-back threes, it kind of went from a 4-point game to a 10-point game was huge, one from Jaauck and one from Desiree Wooten. These two right here to my left were big-time, especially when Mish got her fourth foul, Jaelyn had to step up and play big and she did that, for her to come in and to be plus 18 while she's on the floor. That's the biggest stat I look at is what is our team doing while you're on the floor, and her contributions defensively, offensively, both sides of the ball she played huge for us today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. The key point in that game was that eight-point run in the second half. What did you see in that run that really separated you guys?**

JASON BURTON: That play worked. Proud of our girls. We put that in probably two days ago, three days ago. It's something brand-new, and they executed it. It's tough to sometimes feel how it's going to look against an actual



defense. We did a lot of 5 on 0, but that was the first time we actually executed that in a game. For them to do it the way they did and score two different ways off of it. The first time we got the reversal all the way. Jaauck hit it the second time. Woo made the right read. She took the shot. She knocked it down. Those two threes were huge for us.

**Q. Especially that 8-point run there. You got the free throw to start and then the 3-point play and that really kind of seemed when it separated you. How big was that 3-point play to give you the 4-point there?**

JASON BURTON: It was huge. Who was that, Jaelyn?

**Q. Yeah.**

JASON BURTON: It was big. It was big. What was great to see was you saw her confidence grow. Every time she scored the ball and made big plays, she knew she was about to make another big play. She kept doing it. And this is the time of year that we need our team to step up and make big plays, and we need those contributions from everybody, and Jaelyn tallied to get her -- is that second Top Dog of the year -- today? It's big. It was big. We're going to continue to have big plays from her this year.

**Q. UTSA loses today, so you're the top seed left. Do you like the position you're in?**

JASON BURTON: Seeding doesn't matter at this time of the year. It's about matchups and it's about making sure we're ready to come play. So this whole time we didn't care who we played. We didn't care who our opponent was. It was just about we wanted to get the double bye, and then we wanted to get out here and just play.

We'll watch this game. We'll see who plays. But at this time of the year everybody's playing really good basketball. And Rice did this thing last year. Rice came out and won four games in a row. Rice is playing on fire again this year. Charlotte played two big-time games. The thing is we got to come ready to play, and I thought that our team did that today, especially on the defensive end, and that's what's making this team special for us this year, is that times that

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we don't score, we go on scoring droughts, our defense is keeping us in the game.

**Q. Tommisha, you posted your 17th double double of the year. Thoughts on the way you played.**

TOMMISHA LAMPKIN: I definitely could have played better, but I still was able to help my team, and so I'll work on getting better for tomorrow.

JASON BURTON: We're 9-14 from the free throw line. That's huge for us.

**Q. Jaelyn, you hit some big shots there. What was your mindset coming into this game today?**

JAELYN TALLEY: Honestly, my mindset was kind of how Misha was saying. Like, just be there for my teammates. I wasn't trying to force the game. I was just trying to let it come to me, play defense that I normally do, and see my opportunities when I have it on offense, and I took advantage of those. So that's my mindset going in.

**Q. Going into halftime down three, what adjustments did you feel like were needed and how did you think you guys played there in the second half?**

JASON BURTON: I thought the first half, we took great shots. We got the ball to the free-throw line and had wide-open looks. I thought we needed to finish plays.

But the shots that we were taking, for the most part, we really liked it. We wanted to cut down our turnovers a little bit, but for the most part, we were low turnovers. And for us to be nine turnovers today in this game, that's the type of playoff basketball we have to play. We talked about the possession game, making sure we win the rebounding battle, making sure we're taking care of the ball, force more turnovers.

And as far as that game plan, that's what kept us in the game. When we don't shoot a high percentage, you got to be able to get extra possessions, and our team did a really good job of getting extra possessions today.

**Q. You broke the North Texas record today with most wins in a season with 24. What does that mean to you, Coach?**

JASON BURTON: It doesn't mean anything if we don't win it all. Proud of our team, and our team knows that, but our goal wasn't to come and have the most wins in the program history. We did that last year, and then we lost in the first game. We'd rather not have that record and have the ability to go and play in the NCAA tournament. So

that's what we want to do.

**Q. There was no panic in the third quarter when y'all came out and behind. Coach, does that show the maturity not only of these players, but your senior leadership?**

JASON BURTON: The gift and the curse with this team is that we've been here before. We've played in a lot of games like this, and so we don't get rattled in these type of situations. I think that the term that was used in our locker room is unwavering belief. Dawn Staley says that thing all the time, but I really believe that we have that. It doesn't matter if we're down 10, we're up 10, like, we believe we can win the game, and we've shown that we can win the game.

So you look at this last eight-game stretch that we won eight in a row, you have seen us be down a lot, be down at halftime, and you've seen us play with a huge lead. Either way we -- our team has done an exceptional job of just being even-keeled and focusing on the next play.

**Q. I think something that stood out to me the most was in the first half, Kyla Deck's defensive energy, she wasn't really scoring the ball all that much, and as a team, I thought the defensive energy was off the charts in the first half. What can you say when the ball wasn't really going in, especially in the first quarter able to keep in the game on the defensive end, even just poking the ball away, things like that?**

JASON BURTON: We have the ability to guard at the highest level, that's what makes this team really special. I think we're the only team in the league that was top 5 in offense and defense this year, or at least for a huge stretch of the year. So we hang our hat on defense though, and Kyla Deck is one of the best on-ball defenders that I've seen, that I've had a chance to coach. And she was tremendous today. There's been a lot of games where she doesn't necessarily score the ball, but her defense makes other teams run their offense at half court. And it wasn't just her, we were able to cycle people in. It was her, it was Woo a lot of times, Shamaryah for a small spell. But we got contributions on the defensive end from everybody. I just looked and saw that Aniyah Johnson had six blocks in the first round of the -- the first round we played in the tournament. That's huge.

**Q. Another one those big contributors was Jaaucklyn Moore, really started sinking threes early in the fourth quarter to kind of get that breakaway going. Just what did you see from her tonight?**

JASON BURTON: Jaauck has been doing it

all-conference play. We were kind of disappointed to see that she didn't make the all-conference team this year because I thought -- non-conference wasn't her best basketball, but the minute she got into conference play she's been playing at an elite level. This is not the first game that she's played like this or shot like this. And she's doing it on both ends of the ball there hasn't been a game in recent memory that she hasn't got a pick two. She's knocking down the three, but she's playing defense, she's rebounding for us, she's been a big-time player for us. And the thing about Jaauck, Jaauck is just a winner. She's going to do what it takes to win, and she's been doing it all conference play.

**Q. Some of the plays she made down the stretch, but it wasn't just her, it seemed like across the board a lot of your veteran players really came through. Did you guys really remember what happened last year, and did that motivate you coming down the stretch here, Tommisha?**

TOMMISHA LAMPKIN: That's definitely on the forefront of our mind. We knew we needed to come down here and get our league back, like we wasn't losing it in our first game, nor are we losing in our second, so we just had a different mindset coming into this. And being down, like, we have been here before, so, like he said, so we just knew how to keep our composure and we knew what to do with that.

**Q. Were you really confident that you and the rest of those veteran players would come through in a tight situation in the second half after the experiences you gained over the years?**

TOMMISHA LAMPKIN: Yeah, I was really confident. We've been doing it all year.

**Q. Overall, just -- 18 blocks for either side. For anyone, just especially coming in that first half did you expect getting some of those shots to fall to be as hard as it did, did you expect kind of the physicality that East Carolina showed early into the game?**

JASON BURTON: Yeah, I don't know if you guys realize this or not, but the first two times we played East Carolina we played six overtimes. So we knew it was going to be a physical game. We know the length that they have, the shot-blocking ability that they have, they're a well-coached team, and they hang their hat on defense as well. So I thought we did a good job of getting good shots, but it was going to be a physical game, it was going to be a battle, and we're fortunate that we were able to get this one done in regulation.