

American Athletic Conference Women's Basketball Championship

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Dickies Arena

North Texas Mean Green
Jason Burton

Tommisha Lampkin
Postgame Press Conference



USF - 58, North Texas - 48

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: I'm certainly proud of our fight in the second half. I thought we came out in the second half and played with aggression, played with a purpose. We probably should have started the game out that way as far as how we guard the point guard and that's on me. We should have came out aggressive and set the tone.

But I thought our players in the second half did a phenomenal job of adjusting and forcing turnovers and kind of dictating what South Florida was going to do in the third quarter, and that's when we made our run, we had a huge run in the third quarter, held 'em to 15 percent from the field and surged for us, you know, got that defense turning to offense for us and took a huge deficit and cut it down to one point.

So that type of scrap and battle and toughness from our team has been the story of our team all year. So a couple of shots down the stretch didn't go our way, but that one-point deficit could have turned to us taking the lead. So hate that it didn't go our way today, but obviously, we're playing a really, really good South Florida program that's been representing the American conference in the NCAA tournament for a long time.

Jose Fernandez has just done a phenomenal job out there in Tampa and had his team ready to play and hat's off to South Florida.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach. Questions,

please.

Q. It seemed like the difference in that game was just the way things went for you guys offensively, 11-24 from the line, 1-10 from three, and you've been such a good offensive team this year. What was the issue today, do you think, just offensively?

JASON BURTON: Didn't finish plays. Obviously, you see that we had the opportunity to shoot more free throws than they did, and we shot below 50 percent, and that's been pretty consistent in our losses this year. Looking at the last time we played South Florida in Tampa, look at the UTSA game, look at the Tulane game, and you look at tonight, the free-throw line has been a challenge for us, even in some of our wins. You look at the last time we played -- the game before Rice, 12-26 from the free-throw line.

So that was an area that we needed to clean up and just didn't. But despite the free throws, still had great looks, had quality looks that didn't go down, and sometimes it's like that in the tournament.

Q. Tommisha had 10 points. 14 boards today. Can you talk about her contributions not only today, but throughout the entire season.

JASON BURTON: She's a beast. She's a beast. Another double double, 17 on the year. I needed to do a better job of getting her quality looks today and didn't do that, so that's on me to put her in position to get some more touches and good shots around the basket. She's been so special for us all year and she was ready to play. Her motor today was outstanding, hunting down rebounds. Before the game, I thought she was locked in. But she's been that way all year, and she's somebody that is going to play a lot more basketball in her lifetime and a special talent that I had the privilege to coach the last two years and love this young lady right here, do anything for her. And I know that we're going to play some more post-season basketball and she's going to have a phenomenal post-season.

Q. How were they able to take her out of the game

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

there? She only really had got a handful of shots there, didn't score there in the third quarter. What did they do so effectively to maybe keep her from getting opportunities today?

JASON BURTON: That's a good ball club, man. Obviously early on in the first half, some of the times we tried to pass the ball in to her we turned the ball over. I thought there was some physicality early, just across the board that we didn't adjust to well enough in that first half that in the second half, we did a much better job of just handling the physicality.

I should have done some different things as far as how and where we got her the touches. I thought she was very effective in the second half of getting the ball on the elbow spot. Our movement, though, around her was better in the second half and that was part of it. We were stagnant because of our movement in the first half. It just wasn't game speed. It wasn't the speed in which we needed to get moving to create easier shots for us.

But second we half found a way to do it and that's kind of been our MO. We make really, really good adjustments. I thought we adjusted well in the second half. When you cut it to one, it's anybody's game, and so we got to find a way to win that game.

Q. Heck of a comeback there in the second half. What did you guys do so well in that stretch to get yourselves back in that game?

TOMMISHA LAMPKIN: That's all our team know how to do. We've been down before, so we just fought.

Q. How proud are you of this team for just the resilience that they showed during the second half and to make it a one-point game, like you said?

JASON BURTON: Man, not just this game, but the entire season. We're looking at another season in which we broke the program record for wins. The team that we lost to tonight is, they're historic in this league. And what we've done in our two years in the American Conference, it's tremendous. To go 15-3 in conference play this year and improve on a record in which we won the conference last year, I'm extremely proud of this team. And not just that, we entered the year playing our best basketball. To win eight straight right there, hat's off to these young women and how they have turned this program around and built this program into a contender every year. So, the game didn't go the way we wanted it to go tonight, but our young ladies have been tremendous all year.

Q. You mentioned it earlier, do you have an idea if you

guys will be playing more basketball this season whether it's in the WBIT or WNIT?

JASON BURTON: We'll be playing basketball somewhere.

Q. Wanted to know, obviously Tommisha mentioned all this team knows how to do is fight. What was your message to the team going into halftime and having to really dig back into this one?

JASON BURTON: What she said. Fight. Obviously we made some adjustments. We came out in the second half, we went with four guards. And that was one of the things that we tried to do to get her some more space is just put more shooters on the floor and spread them out. That's part of what sparked it is that they couldn't just congest and play inside and play off of people. We put people on the floor that we felt like could stretch the floor out and they did that. I thought our speed in the second half around her as well created some things. But our message was we got to do it on both ends and I thought that we started to do that with our pressure too in the third quarter.

Q. What will you remember most about not only this season but your time throughout these five years at North Texas?

TOMMISHA LAMPKIN: How much confidence everybody has in each other. The way we believed in the program and ourselves. I feel like that's what makes us so special is nobody on our team knows how to give up because we all believe that we can win any game, we can beat anybody.

THE MODERATOR: All right, thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports