

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: First Round - UNC Wilmington vs Texas Tech

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Wichita, Kansas, USA

Intrust Bank Arena

## Texas Tech Red Raiders

## JT Toppin

## Elijah Hawkins

## Darrion Williams

### Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Texas Tech University Red Raiders are with us. On the dais we have Elijah Hawkins, Darrion Williams, JT Toppin. Questions, please.

**Q. Darrion, just give us an update on how you are feeling and expect you to play tomorrow?**

DARRION WILLIAMS: Yeah, I'm feeling good. I'll be out there tomorrow.

**Q. Just a question for the guys. Your thoughts on North Carolina Wilmington coming in here and getting to play you guys in this tournament?**

ELIJAH HAWKINS: I feel like after watching a couple of their games and film, I feel like they're a team that plays really hard. We just have to try to match their intensity and come out on top.

DARRION WILLIAMS: Yeah, they play really physical, really tough for 40 minutes. It's not going to be an easy game.

JT TOPPIN: Yeah, going off what they said, we just have to match their intensity because of how hard they play, and we just have to play harder. That's really our game plan towards this game.

**Q. They are now top 15 in rebound margin. Coach McCasland has been preaching to you guys all year about winning the rebound battle. How crucial would that be here in game one?**

JT TOPPIN: That's really crucial. Especially for me being



a rebounder. Yeah, we're going to have to win that battle for sure, and we've been working on it, so yeah, got to have to be physical in that aspect.

DARRION WILLIAMS: Yeah, like he said, we have been working on that a lot in practice, and they're big and long. So we have to hit first and be more physical than them.

ELIJAH HAWKINS: Yeah, just pick off what they said. You know, we definitely heard about their rebounding and their offensive rebounding. You know, we just got to box out. We played a lot of teams that have good offensive rebounders. The teams have been good offensive rebounding teams, so we just have to rebound, and we're going to do a good job of that, so yeah.

**Q. You guys have played in the Tournament before. What's it going to take to win and advance in the Tournament, something that you guys have not been able to do so far?**

ELIJAH HAWKINS: Just play for each other. That's what we've been doing all year. You know, just playing for each other and just giving it our all at every possession and just taking it game after game. I think it will help us achieve our goals.

DARRION WILLIAMS: Yeah, like he said, just playing together and coming out from the jump ready to play. Last year we came out pretty flat against NC State and it didn't work out, so just coming out ready to play from the beginning.

JT TOPPIN: Yeah, going off what they said, really just playing for each other, playing unselfish, and just playing good on defense because defense wins games, so our defense is going to have to be up to par.

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