

# NCAA Women's Basketball Championship: First Four - Washington vs Columbia

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Chapel Hill, Maryland, USA

Carmichael Arena

## Washington Huskies

### Tina Langley

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead with Washington Head Coach Tina Langley. We'll start in the room.

**Q. Earlier, Columbia players and coaches talked about being here felt familiar. Obviously they were in this game last year, and they feel very comfortable. You're guiding a team that hasn't been here. I don't think any of your players have been in this tournament. Just how do you get them comfortable for what's happening just with all of this, things like this and the extra stuff that comes with this game?**

TINA LANGLEY: First, I would just say I'm really grateful for who our players are. These young women are really special, and their families, and our staff and their families, so the group we have in the room, it takes a village right now in college athletics, and we have a great village.

I think it's a very level-headed group of people that we're grateful for moments. So you can see new opportunities as something that could be scary or different or you could see them as something exciting. It will bring out the best in you. We always want to provide an environment that would allow the best in our young people, and they do that for each other as well.

**Q. On Sunday you sort of touched on how your travel schedule may have prepared you for this. If you could sort of touch on that a bit, just about leaving the Pacific Northwest and just kind of making these trips and these quick turnarounds and how that will help you for Thursday night.**

TINA LANGLEY: Absolutely. The Big Ten obviously was a new experience for us as well. It was our first time to do some of these long trips. When we saw Raleigh as an area that we would come to, it didn't feel like it might have felt in past years because we'd come across the country a



few times to play.

So just immediately kicks in, okay, these are the things we need to do to get ready to travel. I think it just gives you a sense that you're prepared.

**Q. Just in these two days here, what have you learned about Columbia, things that they do? It seems like defensively they kind of match up well with you guys. It would seem that the physicality is going to be a big part of this game tomorrow.**

TINA LANGLEY: It's the NCAA Tournament, so it's great teams playing against each other, and Columbia is a great team. It's a championship team, incredibly well coached, very disciplined, really a lot of respect for this team.

Fun to watch them on film, a lot to learn from them, a lot of things we can take away, but things that we need to prepare for.

They're doing a great job. They're playing really, really well, play at a high level, compete with everyone. So it should be a great game.

**Q. They talked about wanting to maybe speed you guys up. How do you counter that?**

TINA LANGLEY: We love transition, so it's an area that we feel like we excel in. It's a part of the game we love. I think we both enjoy playing fast at times. I also think we both play disciplined at times. We both play IQ basketball, which you want to do. So I think it should be a good balance on both ends.

**Q. Just the last thing that you'll tell your team before the game on Thursday?**

TINA LANGLEY: I don't know exactly what the last thing would be that I'd say, but I think the game is always fun. We started playing this game of basketball when we were young because it's so much fun to play at. It's fun to compete. We know what competition looks like, and we know what it feels like, and we know what it should feel like.



We just want it to feel like it should feel, not bigger. It's a great game, and we're excited to compete.

**Q. I know we haven't had a chance to talk to you since Selection Sunday and you know you probably had an opportunity to be in the tournament but not where. Could you just tell us a bit about what it felt like when you heard that the program was returning to the tournament and what it says about this program and how you've really built it over the years since you went to Washington?**

TINA LANGLEY: It's good to get your question. Thank you. I think the first thing a lot of us had when we had a moment to reflect from the time we arrived until now, there's just so many amazing people associated with that from the start and through the years. Obviously so grateful to Washington and our administration for all the support that they've given us.

Then the young people, the staff, the families, everyone that has been involved. So I love to take a moment and just reflect on that. I think our student-athletes are very grateful as well because, as Percy asked earlier, we've learned from one another along the journey and really invested in one another.

That night was really special because we had an opportunity to reflect, but we also got to think about the journey we've been on together. And the young women mentioned it earlier in their press conference about how it started really immediately after their season ended. I don't feel like they took a break. We really tried to get them to, but immediately they were back in the gym and working hard.

You just immediately think of the unseen. Everyone has this what they see on game day, but it's the unseen is the reason that they're here today or that we're here. So grateful for all the unseen hours that went into team building, the travel, the preparation of the staff, the players' commitment to how they sleep, how they eat, from everything that they did in the unseen hours.

I think all of that kind of runs through your mind at that time if you take a moment to reflect.

**Q. Something that was sort of a thread throughout the season was in some of the losses, not quite having a full 40-minute performance, right? Quarters that were off. What do you think will be the key to having that full 40-minute performance on Thursday, and are you more confident at this point of the season and having been on that win streak and finding your form towards**

**the end of the season than you would be earlier in the season?**

TINA LANGLEY: It's so interesting, our theme for this season was competitive stamina. We said that from the moment we came to our first team meeting, what a difference that would make. So we said that's just being stronger a little longer each time we take the floor, whether it's a practice, an individual workout, or a game.

We saw obviously in some games that our competitive stamina needed to grow, and I thought each game you would see growth. I think that is really what led to the way we finished the season is that we were learning how to be stronger for a little longer each time.

We're still learning. We're a team that it's really fun to watch these young women and our staff work, and we're learning a lot together. We're getting better each day. That's what we want to continue to be able to do.

**Q. This is your first year in the Big Ten, and that is now a conference that we know has the most number of teams in this tournament, including two No. 1 seeds, the accolades go on and on. All season we've been hearing coaches from other teams praise the squad that you've put together. But now on the national stage when you're not positioned as a No. 1 seed, there might be some teams coming into this that don't know much about what Washington basketball is and they don't know how you've competed so closely in some of these really high level games. What would you kind of want people that don't know much about your team to know? And what threat do you bring to this tournament?**

TINA LANGLEY: I think we're a great team, and I think that's what makes good teams is that there's so many players on our team that can have a night, and multiple players having a night is really a lot of fun. So I think we have more and more nights like that.

We've also learned the importance of being better at both ends. We are a pretty effective offensive team. We've learned to be a very disciplined defensive team.

I think, again, we're just still growing. I'm so excited for the postseason because we say becoming is the theme of our program, it's our mission statement about helping and supporting and loving one another on our journey of becoming individually and collectively. So this team is still becoming, and it's fun to watch who we can be by the end of the season.

**Q. Columbia's head coach mentioned that you all have**

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

**coached against each other before, I believe in different roles. Just knowing your experience -- I think Percy mentioned obviously no one on your roster has had this kind of kind of experience in a national tournament, but what are you bringing why your past experiences just coaching, knowing other coaches, knowing other teams that you can kind of pass on to your players even though they haven't necessarily had that experience?**

TINA LANGLEY: Experience or no experience, I think leadership is about understanding that you have to keep your mind focused on the process. It's our habits that really show in critical moments, like what do you do daily?

I love that Sayvia kept talking about we just want to be who we are and kind of keep our mind focused on the moment because that's the process. It's what do we do to get ready for our basketball game? What do we do in warmups?

If we can keep our mind focused on that process one game, we have one game, and that's all we have to prepare for. I think, if we can continue to stay in that mindset, we'll be playing our best.

**Q. Just wanted to ask you I know a little bit of this happened in the Big Ten Tournament when you guys played, but what do you hope the nation sees with your group? I know you talked about being a good team, you've talked about the character of this group to us often back in Seattle. But what do you hope the nation is going to see Thursday when you guys play out of your group?**

TINA LANGLEY: I want them to know our young women more. I want them to know -- obviously we've talked a lot about who they are, but these are incredible basketball players. They've really committed to knowing and learning the game.

You got an opportunity to be introduced to three of them today sitting at the table. They're really talented young women, and they've really learned how to play the game at a high level and help the people around them be better.

I'm just excited for everyone to see them play.

**Q. Coach, I know you talked about this group making it, you were asked about that, but maybe on a personal level just because of what she's meant to this program, how nice is it to see Dalayah getting some experience like this? When we were with you on Senior Day, I know when Percy asked her about being a senior, she nearly cried. What does it mean for Dalayah Daniels to get the experience for how important she's been to this**

**program and what you're building?**

TINA LANGLEY: I sat with her on the plane last night and thanked her. She came back home and came to Washington as we were building, and her commitment level to her team, to the young women on her team, to this university and to the city is really special.

She's worked incredibly hard. She's grown so much. She's become a tremendous leader, example for young women. I love Dalayah. I'm so proud of her, and I'm beyond grateful for what she's done for the university, for the program, and I'm excited for her to have this opportunity. She's earned it.

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