

2025 NCAA Women's Lacrosse Championship

Friday, May 23, 2025

Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Gillette Stadium

Northwestern Wildcats

Kelly Amonte Hiller

Sam Smith

Madison Taylor

Media Conference



when we're high, when we're low. So I just think we had a really good, hard reset in that moment, and we were able to go out there and keep fighting.

Q. You won the draw 6-1 in the fourth quarter. What were some of the adjustments and in-game changes you made to be so dominant in the draw circle today?

SAM SMITH: Yeah, Emerson Bohlig came out in the circle, and she's just all heart, speed, hustle. So she was a huge game changer for us in the circle, and I just think that we really knew we needed possession in those moments and we fought her for the ball.

Q. What did you see during the sequence with Madison?

SAM SMITH: Yeah, we knew that they were going to double Maddy because she's an unstoppable force. And so someone slid off the top girl and I kind of cut behind that, and just was open.

Q. Earlier in the game, the draw is in your team's favor, but goals are not necessarily coming out of those possessions. Is it frustrating and how do you make sure you stay steady?

SAM SMITH: I don't think it's really that frustrating. I know that my team. I know that they trust me to win more possessions, and I just think we just need to get in a rhythm on goal scoring, and I knew that was going to happen, and we did and it worked out.

Q. You mentioned not getting too high, not getting too low and resetting. Anything in particular you were doing in those moments or is this any one in particular that you are looking to to just reset and re-level set what you had?

MADISON TAYLOR: We usually come into the huddle and we usually take a deep breath and look at each other and know when we're getting too high, when we're getting too low. We sense it, and all come together and take a deep breath in and out at the same time.

Northwestern 12, Boston College 11

THE MODERATOR: Welcome home, and do you have an opening statement for us?

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: I'm going to take a lot of deep breaths right now. That was quite a game, and I'm sitting in the Patriots press conference room, and I'm from Hingham, this is pretty surreal, so pretty exciting. We didn't make it here the last time Foxborough hosted. And so, wow, it's just -- so grateful to be here in the first place, and then what just happened, you know, it's just a spectacle of belief and heart, and I'm just really proud of my team today.

Q. Have to ask about the hats.

MADISON TAYLOR: Well, coach gave them to us.

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: It was my present to us. Boston skully caps.

MADISON TAYLOR: We got it the night before our game and we've been wearing it ever since, so we thought it was right to wear it now.

Q. Talk about that third quarter.

MADISON TAYLOR: We talked about it all week, but we talked about loving the hard fight, and we knew this wasn't going to be an easy game, and we knew that going into it. When we went down going through the fourth, we were down by a lot and we said, this is right where we want to be, and we never stopped believing in each other and what this team could do. We just fought till the very end.

SAM SMITH: I think this team, we talk a lot about resetting



Q. Off mic?

MADISON TAYLOR: It's awesome. Never gets old. Especially with this group, I'm really excited. We have such a new group and it's so cool to be able to experience -- as you get a little bit older, you feel more grateful each year and then to share it with all the people who have never been there before, it's really cool.

SAM SMITH: I agree. It's so grateful to be here. We talked earlier this week about being one of four teams in the country and now we're one of two, and it's such an amazing thing to keep our season going, especially as a senior.

Q. Huge win today, but how do you regroup from this high and this fight to look on to having a National Championship trophy to compete for on Sunday?

MADISON TAYLOR: I think, like you said, staying level-headed and just keep having the same mentality that we had all week, which was just like believing in each other, even when it got hard and just like loving the battle. We know it's not going to be easy, and just like knowing that going into it and just loving every second of it, and just enjoying the moment because this is like the best week ever.

SAM SMITH: I think there's a lot of learning from this game, too. And we always look at past games, whether they go really well our way or not so well, and we always learning from everything that happens in the game. We'll take what we learned today and we'll put that into Sunday's game.

Q. Boston College being the ghost of Christmas past, lost the National Championship last year and the loss earlier in the regular season. What does it feel to topple BC to earn a spot in the National Championship game?

MADISON TAYLOR: I think BC is a great team all around. Great job by them. They gave us a great battle and tested us a lot. There's a lot to learn from that game, too. We still can get better in that game. I'm just super excited to be one of these two teams going into such day. Yeah, I just feel really grateful.

Q. With Rachel Clark's elimination from the tournament, you've officially clinched the national goal-scoring record. What's that record mean for you?

MADISON TAYLOR: I just feel really grateful to be in the position where I am today. I would have never seen myself being here where I am right now. I just feel super grateful.

It all my teammates, honestly. Like, they just still so much belief in me and make me a better player and person every day, and I'm just grateful for an extra two days with this team, honestly. That's honestly what it means to me.

Q. How would you characterize the team's never-say-die attitude?

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: They really do love each other a lot. It's ever-present in the locker room and, you know, at practices and, you know, I think that's really what carried them. We knew that it was going to be very hard coming in here to Gillette, being kind of the underdog, not the home team, and a lot of bright yellow.

So I think we had talked about that, prepared for that mentally and just really tried to utilize that to fuel us, rather than to get us down.

And I think that when we got down, I think it just lit a fire inside of them and, you know, they started making one play, and then you could kind of feel the momentum. You know, those last couple stops by the D were just incredible.

Q. What was the message?

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: I think the message was compete, compete with heart. You know, I think sometimes throughout a game, you can kind of get in your head and you have to get out of your head and into your heart. That is what they were able to do. When you're down by that many goals, you can't think, oh, it's a big mountain. You've just got to think one goal at a time and one play at a time, one draw at a time.

We are never out of a game because of Sam Smith and our draw team. And so, you know, they fight hard. Sam is the ultimate competitor. She probably doesn't get a lot of credit, but she has done a lot for us over her career, and it's just exciting to see her go all the way in this last -- last year to the last day.

Q. What can you say about North Carolina?

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: They are phenomenal. We have weapons on weapons on weapons. They are very explosive in the midfield. They have a great goal tender, great defensive play. So it's going to be a really hard test and we are excited for that test.

Q. No mic.

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: You know, I think I'm just going to take some time right now to enjoy this win to be honest, and you know, clear my head, and then we'll get to what



the game plan is. I know we'll have to play great team defense because the Humphrey sisters are absolute phenomes, but they have a lot of other good players, too. I think you saw that on display today. I am familiar with a lot of their players, and just know that they have a lot of weapons.

So we are going to have to play great team defense. Everyone is going to have to play well, and you know, we did play them before. So we have a little bit of experience, but I think they have gained a lot of momentum since that game. So we'll re-look at it and come up with a game plan tomorrow.

Q. How did it feel --

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: It feels unbelievable to have a long weekend at Gillette Stadium. Really grateful for the people who are hosting, Harvard University, and just all the people from the NCAA that are making this event special. I think it is a really unbelievable thing for the men and the women to be together at a stadium like this. I think it brings a lot of attention to our sport at a critical time in college athletics. I'm just really grateful to be a part of it in my hometown.

Q. Obviously, Shea is one of, if not the best, goaltender in the country. What was your plan for attack? And especially in terms of free position, how did you guys take advantage of her?

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: Yeah, I think we wanted to move the ball as much as we could and just move her. She's just a phenomenal goaltender. She's a phenomenal person.

I had the great privilege to coach her this summer on the USA team in Hong Kong, and you know, all those BC kids that I had on my team were just -- were just great kids, and I just have a ton of respect for them. Acacia is a good friend. She worked for me and under me, and what she's done with her program is just unreal. Respect for all of them, and we knew we were going to have to be at our best. We were able to pull it out tonight.

Q. Seems like it started off -- (no mic?)

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: I think it's just a will you're imposing on your opponent. I think especially with the rules and the rules changes in our game, you have to have incredible discipline on the ride if you're going to make a check in the midfield.

I think our girls did a great job staying disciplined tonight. We knew that BC's man-up was lethal, and so we wanted

to make sure we stayed very, very disciplined throughout, and you know, we were able, for the most part, to do that. You know, when we went down, we were able to make some stops.

So yeah, I think it's just a will; a will to get the ball back; a will to make a play, and especially towards the end there, I know Jane had a couple of unbelievable checks, and just kind of seeing the play, seeing what they were going to do. Our D was ready.

Q. What are some of the things you're telling your team to keep them disciplined in those moments? The team obviously goes down into a low point at the end of the third, but for you, what are your reminders to them in that huddle that helped them pull their way back up?

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: Yeah, I mean, like Jocko says, you need discipline to have freedom. If we want to have freedom in our goals, we have to stay disciplined. If your emotions are not in check, then you're going to fall and you're going to be in the penalty box, and that's never a good thing.

So you have to stay disciplined. That's my messaging. That's been my messaging all season long with our D, and they have done a really great job of buying into that, and that was definitely a key tonight.

Q. Can you do your best to describe what's going through your mind and how your team handled those last few chaotic back and forths, culminating with the big save at the end?

KELLY AMONTE-HILLER: Yeah, probably not our best moments handling it there at the end of the game, but I think the girls really had each other's backs, so when we made an error, somebody else made a play. That's been the mentality all season long. Someone steps up to make a play for them, have their back. I think that was the biggest thing, with 41 seconds left, they get it back, and then we cause another turnover, they run a play, we stop it, and we turn it over again.

So I'm just proud they, again, stayed disciplined and they just willed their way to a win.

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