

# 2025 DII NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship

Sunday, May 25, 2025

Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Gillette Stadium

## Tampa Bay Spartans

## J.B. Clarke

## Matt Basso

## Connor Theriault

### Media Conference



CONNOR THERIAULT: So four years, I loved it, and I had an extra year and there's no other place in the world I'd rather be than Tampa. It's the people, the coaches, the culture, the winning, everything. It was the ride of a lifetime. Ending my career at home in Massachusetts in Gillette Stadium, obviously, I would have wanted to win, but it was probably one of the coolest things I've ever done in my life.

The goalie battle, Dylan Renner, I saw him a bit in his career and have a lot of respect for him, and getting to play against him -- talking to him briefly, he was nice and I was impressed with his performance, as well as the entire Adelphi team.

**Q. It seemed like both teams knew they were playing against very good goalies and the ball had to move to certain places, the shots had to come a little closer than maybe either a goalie would see normally. Can you talk about what you saw out there in the net and what you saw as the offensive game plan, if you can?**

CONNOR THERIAULT: Yeah, both teams' goalies were great, but also the offenses were great, as well. They did their best to get as high-quality shots as possible. The biggest thing is, you're trying not to let a goalie get hot, and the way to do that is get the highest possible shots, as well as the -- in the crease area, in the paint, we call it. We saw shots from everywhere. It was a ton of fun, and it was a really cool battle.

**Q. The goal in the time-out, can you talk about, as a captain, how you keep your team engaged and keep them in the moment with that little bit of time that was back on the clock and still having to go back out there?**

MATT BASSO: Just to set one thing straight, I'm not a captain. AJ, he's done a great job this year.

Beyond that, though, it's just a game. The sideline was energetic. All we could do is get up for our team when those two seconds got added on. We celebrated and we got up for our teammates and that's what kept pushing us through this game.

Adelphi 9, Tampa 8

J.B. CLARKE: Just want to express my gratitude to Harvard University, Gillette Stadium and everyone else who put this on for us this weekend. It's a remarkable experience for our athletes. A coach told me years ago that one of our biggest jobs as coaches is to give these guys a good experience. So y'all did a phenomenal job and we're grateful.

Our senior class, I think the number is 73 and 7 over four years, brought us to two National Championship games. I couldn't be more proud of our senior class and all they did for the university and our lacrosse program. Very grateful to have worked with those guys. Connor Theriault and Matt Basso, the guys who are sitting here with me, played every second of every game pretty much, and one who didn't, but was a phenomenal leader for us in Matt Basso, and that's I have Matt here with me.

Great team. Back-to-back championships is hard to do, and Coach Purdie and his staff did a phenomenal job getting that team ready. They made one more play than we did today, and at the end of the day, and in a National Championship, that's what it's supposed to come down to. I'm very proud of our team. I'm very proud of the people at our institution, Larry Marfise, our athletic director retiring this year, has put together an athletic department that's just remarkable.

**Q. Just speaking broadly, how would you describe your experience playing Division I the past few years, what you've experienced and the ride you've experienced this year and culminating in a goalie battle today this how has that been for you?**



**Q. Could you describe the game-winning goal from your perspective?**

CONNOR THERIAULT: Yeah, it was -- if I recall correctly it, was No. 6, and he's an excellent midfielder. I'm pretty sure wing midfielder of the year. Got his shot and hands free and stuck it. A very good shot but a very good player, and nothing but respect for that goal.

**Q. It seemed like the game was of two halves, the first half, you guys leaning on isolation stuff and getting those first two goals especially coming down the pipe, and it was a lot of over-the-top ball movement, and then defensively, you're kind of shuffling down the line especially towards the end. Is that how it was drawn up or did you adjust that as the game went on?**

J.B. CLARKE: That was based on what they are giving you, right, because they are so good defensively.

They take up a lot of space. They are very long defensively. When they step into -- we call it into the gap, between a dodger and the adjacent guy. When they step into that gap, they take up a lot of space. We had to try to create more space by getting that guy out of the gap, and I think that's why you saw some more iso stuff out of us. It was trying to take advantage of what they were giving us more than anything. Really, it's how we've played most of the year. We didn't change much from an iso standpoint, really, no.

We just tried to press out on good players. You don't want him catching it running at you. You want him to have to run with you. It wasn't really a shot. It was just a press-out.

**Q. What has Connor added to the team? What level of, obviously experience but against high-level Ivy League type of players, what did he bring that maybe was missing or a separate element all together?**

J.B. CLARKE: He works so hard. He works as hard as anybody I've had. Off the field, he came in, he really changed his body. I don't know if anybody saw him in January, you'd know that he literally changed his body.

So we told him that he wouldn't be able to play in Florida in May in the shape that he was in when he got to us.

So to answer your question, it's the off-field stuff, really, as much as anything. He's a vocal kid, vocal man, but his off-field stuff, his mentoring of the younger guys, and not just the goalies, the younger guys, taking them with him when he goes to work out or ride the bike extra, it's things

like that.

His ability to help us with the younger goalies, because I work with the goalies, it really freed me up to work with other people. Having him out there was like having a coach for the goalies. It freed me up to do more. I'm not sure if that was a good thing, but it freed me up to do more.

**Q. Can you just walk me through the final sequence from you guys, scoring a goal into the overtime where they kind of get the ball in that open faceoff and Kyle Lewis finishes it off?**

J.B. CLARKE: Yeah, I never get that time-out. You know, the ball is flying around the crease and you want to make sure they don't get it, but if you do, you want to make sure you get a chance.

That's why I was calling for the time-out; the one time I get it, it costs us.

But the sequence going in after that time-out, the way they played, it's tough to run something and get a really quality shot in ten seconds. They don't break down that quickly. Good defenses don't break down that quickly as you know.

Going into the overtime, I didn't want to take a time-out if we won the faceoff. He took it. Really, quite frankly, the best middy in the country got his right hand for the first time all day and he made a play, and they made one more play than he did.

I'm so proud of the way our guys played. You look at the All-Americans, it's just all Adelphi. And we went out there with our guys, no-name players, a lot of young players and really fought our tails off to get it to overtime. I won't sleep from that; you know that. That's going to haunt me forever, calling that time-out.

**Q. Can you describe the way David Lindsay grew into the game as production carried on?**

J.B. CLARKE: Davis is such a competitor that early in the game, we felt like he was trying to do too much on his own and wasn't allowing the game to come to himself. And then I think it was late in the second quarter, I think he had an iso dodge, but it was very late in the possession. It wasn't early in the possession. It wasn't just picking the ball off the end line and dodging, which is the worst time to do it.

His adjustment there I think really helped us be more dangerous from below the goal line, which opened up more stuff up top obviously, because now they had to help down on Davis a little bit.

He was coached by Mark Van Arsdale for three or four years, so he's a really, really intelligent lacrosse player. All you have to do is mention those things to him and he changes what he's doing. I thought that had a lot to do with what success we did have in the second half in the half-field offense.

**Q. Regardless of the result, you built a perennial program. Where does it go from here?**

J.B. CLARKE: Back to the drawing board. When you have a senior class that wins that many games, it's hard to figure out where you go from here. Back to the drawing board. You know, the transfer portal is the transfer portal. It's not my favorite thing in the world, but it is, and we use it, and we have a phenomenal institution that has some great graduate programs, some 18-month graduate programs that are very attractive to guys, so there's some of that.

A lot of our best players are very young, so -- especially offensively. We're really excited about the young guys. But we'll get back to it. The south is getting harder and harder. We're getting back with good teams, and those guys in the Midwest are gaining on us year after year. So we'd better get our head up and get back to work. It's an attractive school. I'm very lucky. We'll be okay.

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