

# 2025 NCAA Women's Volleyball Championship

Sunday, December 21, 2025

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

**Kentucky Wildcats**

**Coach Craig Skinner**

**Eva Hudson**

**Kassie O'Brien**

Championship Press Conference



Texas A&M - 3

Kentucky - 0

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Kentucky.

We'll start with an opening statement by coach.

CRAIG SKINNER: Yeah, tough, tough moment for us. Obviously disappointed with the outcome. Got to give a lot of credit for A&M. They were very, very good the last part of the first and the rest of the match. So it was really tough for us to get anything going offensively.

I'm surprised to see us have more kills than them. It was just a couple situations and opportunities we had the first set to change that, pull that out, which would probably make a difference. But after they got on a roll, it was really hard to find a way to break them. So credit to A&M.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

**Q. Eva, you transferred in, played a big role in what is one of the most successful seasons. What was it about this team that made it a personally special experience for you?**

EVA HUDSON: I would just say everything. I mean, after the last ball went down, I said, This is nothing to be not proud of. We had an amazing season. We had so many amazing wins. The last two sets don't define our season, so...

This group is just so special. It just makes it harder to leave, which I would say is a good thing, 'cause if you're happy to leave, then you're not doing something right.

**Q. Obviously today didn't go the way that you wanted it to. What was the biggest lesson that went through your mind after the last ball dropped?**

EVA HUDSON: For me, it was just gratitude. Not many student-athletes can even say that they've been in a national championship match. I think that's just something to hang our hats on. Just being surrounded by so many amazing people. We had such great support and BBN traveling all the way here. All gratitude for this program and for all the people supporting us.

KASSIE O'BRIEN: Yeah, kind of going along with that. It was just such a cool environment to play in. We're just so grateful to be able to be here and make it this far. Only two teams out of however many teams are in college volleyball made it this far. To be the last one standing here is just such a feeling of gratitude. We feel so special to be here.

Obviously it didn't go how we wanted. I think holding onto those memories and those moments that we had throughout the whole season will just be something that we'll, like, hold together for us forever.

**Q. Eva, you talked about that moment that you locked in. You looked like you were locked in from the very beginning. After the first two sets, did your approach change at all?**

EVA HUDSON: Honestly, no. I mean, we've proved in and out of this season that we can come back from anything. We were kind of waiting for something to flip within the team. We just kind of never got into that rhythm.

Credit to A&M. They played like there were nine seniors on the court, and it was really, really hard to stop. They deserve all the praise 'cause, I mean, that was some of the best volleyball I've played with them.

THE MODERATOR: Eva, Kassie, thanks for your time.

We'll continue with questions for coach.

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

**Q. I noticed you sitting on the bench for a good portion of the match today. What was going through your mind as you were watching your team battle out there?**

CRAIG SKINNER: Just trying to find what type of adjustments or conversations we could have that could change the mindset. Tried a lot of different things. It didn't quite come to fruition. We started clicking on all cylinders.

But I just continued to say how much I absolutely loved coaching this team and our staff, everybody, because this is the type of team that rejuvenates you to want to do the profession you've been doing for so long and love so much.

**Q. You mentioned your staff. What stands out to you, what are you really proud of, from your staff this season?**

CRAIG SKINNER: Just giving them their heart and soul to every athlete and every moment that we had together. Never had to question their work ethic or desire or passion to do the best they can in the essence of coaching to make people better and help them reach their dreams and goals, try to improve each and every day.

This staff committed every ounce of their soul to it.

**Q. Because you have the historical perspective and you've won and you know what it takes, can you quantify what A&M just did, not just today but over the course of this tournament?**

CRAIG SKINNER: Yeah, they had a heck of a run. I mean, their physicality is obvious. Their attacking options is obvious. When all of their attackers are options because they pass so well, then it's really impossible to stop them.

The middle attack they have, Waak giving them opportunities to swing. Their serve was impressive today. They had a few errors, but several aces. Every single person that went back to serve was putting pressure on us.

Combine all those things, there's not many teams that could beat them today.

**Q. Brooklyn got off to a little bit of a rocky start. Was there anything you were saying to her to get her back in it and make sure she knew she was here, and that she's one of the best pin hitters in the country?**

CRAIG SKINNER: I think it's just trying to get them to focus on something little, something fundamental, something to take their mind off the big picture. Something

about footwork or holding their platform in the right position.

I think if you're completely trying to change a mindset, you have to start with one little thing at a time. Brooklyn had a tough go, but so did a lot of other people.

**Q. The fact that A&M has Ifenna and depth in that middle has proven to be so effective throughout the season. What can you say about having that trait as being a key piece?**

CRAIG SKINNER: Well, the combination of them serving in a way that pulls us off the net and we have to set one or two options, the physicality of the block makes it really challenging to find a piece of the court or a piece of hand to kill it.

They become an extremely good defensive team if you pass the ball 10 or 12 feet off the net. It changes the game.

**Q. We learned this weekend that Brooklyn has been playing on a torn meniscus for months. What can you say about how that speaks to the player she is, willing to put her body on the line for the team and the goal?**

CRAIG SKINNER: Just super proud of her to work through a challenging situation. She's one hell of an athlete, one hell of a competitor. Someone that is not about Brooklyn, she's about all the people she's around. She gives her heart and soul to her teammates and the program. Couldn't be more proud of her as a person and athlete.

**Q. You've come so far since you and A&M played earlier this year and you beat them. What did you see from them today that you didn't see earlier?**

CRAIG SKINNER: They handled our serve really well early. Our serving pressure didn't allow them to get in sync when we were down at College Station. Today they were in sync. Credit their first contact with their passers of Underwood, Applegate, Hellmuth, and Stowers of really doing a good job of providing walk opportunities to set their whole offense. It was a difficult thing to try and score points on defense.

**Q. You talked the other day about having coached a lot of big wins, tough losses. How do you support this group? What do you say to them after a tough one like this?**

CRAIG SKINNER: They did everything, everything to prepare themselves for this match. They were ready. They were locked in. They did all the things they normally

do. They didn't seem nervous, anxious prior to the match.

But unfortunately, this is life. You do everything right, you do all the right actions, you do everything possible to give yourself the best chance for success, and sometimes it doesn't go your way.

If you let that stop you, then you've lost. This team will not stop, they will not stop working, going for whatever they're trying to achieve in athletics and in life.

I couldn't be more proud of this team because they did that every single day since last January.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your time.

CRAIG SKINNER: Thank you. Appreciate you guys being here.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports