

**2025 Southern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament**  
**Game 1 – Western Carolina vs. UNCG**

**UNCG**

**Head coach Trina Patterson** – The way we played today is who we are. We always tell our team that defense travels. We were able to force Western into shooting 27 percent. ... I've been involved in a lot of tournaments in my career, and defense and rebounding can keep you moving. We had enough offense to do well, but the defense is what I'm really proud of. And we played with grit. We played with toughness. It was a physical game and that's always the case when we play Western. ... The first game always gets antsy and it's just the way the tournament plays itself out. But the leadership of these two captains prevailed. I heard them speaking in the huddle when we really needed to pull together. I think the bulk and physicality (of Western) and the constant drive, drive, drive is what makes it close. (AC) Carter is a great player. Hats off to her and Jonathan (Tsipis). He's done a great job this year.

**Student-athlete Khalis Cain** – When we were in the huddles, we talked about resilience. We've got to make sure that we're mentally strong out there, even though when we make a mistake, we're cheering each other on to the next play. So you just need to put your head down and work out there. Grind it out because we knew we were the better team today.

**Student-athlete Jaila Lee** – We have really good grit. We fight all the way to the end. We stay together, and especially with situations like that (in the second half), when it's really, really close and it feels like nothing's going our way, instead of going apart, we become closer together.

**Western Carolina**

**Head coach Jonathan Tsipis** – For the city and the area of Asheville – for all the people involved – to get this tournament to stay here and continue that tradition, our hats go off to you. People often ask us how we were affected in Cullowhee and it's nothing close to what has happened here in Asheville. We hope that the tournament and the play brings some sense of normalcy to the community ... and I just want to say thank you. For today's game, I'll say we played three down to the wire games against UNCG (this season), and I want to congratulate Coach Patterson and her team for advancing to the semifinals. That being said, I think this year for us at Western Carolina will be a year that we look back and we've built this unbelievable platform to move the program forward. I'm just really proud of our group.”

**Student-athlete AC Carter** – We definitely made a lot of progress (this year) ... I think that leaving here players will trust the coaches now, because they're such a good coaching staff when it comes to installing that belief and confidence in us. Like Coach Sip said, we had a whole bunch of games where we were down a few points and we just have that fight in us. I think that that's the type of legacy we want to leave here. Don't give up on plays and keep playing.”

**Student-athlete Jada Burton** – I was just happy to you contribute (at the end of the third quarter). We needed it, and I was just there saying give it to me and letting it go. All of us together, we were getting hot in that moment, like Chelsea (Wooten) hitting that three after I hit the two, and we had momentum going. Unfortunately, we couldn't pull it off.