

**2011 America East Men's and Women's Basketball Championship
presented by Newman's Own**

Sunday, March 6, 2011: Hartford, Conn. :: Women's Semifinals #2

Final Score: # 4 Hartford 66, #1 UMBC 48

Hartford Head Coach Jennifer Rizzotti

Opening Remarks:

"Well obviously I'm thrilled right now. Just really proud of my team. I think that this has been a really long season for us and I told them just now in the locker room that every single one of them individually went through their own crisis of confidence this year. We started this season with injuries, then Nikkia was hurt, then Alicia was sick, and Jackie forgot how to make three pointers for a while, and Alex didn't want to shoot for a while and I just feel like all of them worked really hard individually to push through any individual lack of confidence or slump. I am just really proud at this point today to watch them out on the floor and just see the intensity they played with on defense and confidence they played with on offense. It was like everything came together at the right time and that's exactly, as a coach, what you dream of; That you are playing at your best in March."

Hartford sophomore guard Alex Hall

On defensive effort:

"I definitely think this is pretty close to best we have played. We came out in the beginning and coach always talks about our defense and she thinks we have gotten better throughout the year."

Hartford sophomore forward Nikkia Smith

On defensive effort:

"I would just say that we are all really finally starting to get it. Coach asked the other day what was the defining point, or what defined us? I said when Daphne Elliott took her first charge. That was the first time she had ever taken a charge, and that was kind of when, defensively, we really started understanding the game."

Hartford senior guard Jackie Smith

On adjustments in the second half:

"There is not a whole lot you can do as far as fouls. You just try not to think about it and play smart. I had a dumb foul in the first half. You just realize that you can't make the same mistakes. You learn from it and you can't let it affect you."

UMBC Head Coach Phil Stern

Opening remarks:

“Hartford played great tonight. You know, as usual, Jenn had them ready and they did a good job of taking away some things that we like to do that a lot of teams don’t take away. As the one seed, we had a really tough road, starting Thursday night with a really tough Stony Brook team that is a bad match up for us and we got through that. Tonight, it was tough for us to be the one seed playing on the home court of the four seed. It’s tough and you got to give Hartford credit for taking advantage of that. As far as our team, it was an incredible year. Obviously it’s not over. We are going to the WNIT and playing another post season game. Our guys fought all year. We started out 1-5, then we won 20 of 25. We won 7 in a row. We won 11 of 12. I’m so proud of our team and what we brought to our university and I won’t let one night dampen that.”

UMBC junior guard Michelle Kurowski

On Hartford’s defense:

“Like coach said, they were prepared for us. They were taking away things that we usually get, but overall they were aggressive as well and they started hitting shots.”