

**ACC Women's Basketball Championship**  
**Greensboro, NC**  
**#3 Maryland 71, #11 Georgia Tech 66**  
**March 3, 2006**

## **GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS**

**MACHELLE JOSEPH:** First of all, I would like to give Maryland a lot of credit, obviously they showed today why they are one of the Top-5 teams in the country.

I think they are very well deserving of a No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament. I hope to see that we will have 3 ACC teams as No. 1 seeds.

Maryland is obviously one of the youngest teams in if league if not the youngest. I was really impressed the way their team persevered. A few people were struggling. I thought we caused them some problems on the defensive end with our switching defenses.

I thought they persevered, and they did a great job.

I'm proud of my team. I thought we battled. I thought Stephanie Higgs, in particular, had an outstanding game. She started out slow, was able to regroup and come back and make some very good big key plays and key baskets down the stretch.

Kasha Terry was also able to connect on the inside, and I thought she had some really nice blocks. I thought the game was really well played. I thought both teams were aggressive offensively and defensively.

**Q.** Machel, you guys played such a good defensive game and couldn't get two stops there at the end, how disappointing is that to force 21 turnovers and play as well as you did?

**MACHELLE JOSEPH:** Well, it's tough. I mean obviously, you know, we felt like we had a great defensive game plan. We felt like we took away the things we needed to takeaway from them. You are never going to completely take Crystal Langhorne out of the game. The only person that can stop Crystal Langhorne is Crystal Langhorne. That's why she is the top post player in the country. You saw her make the key basket there at the end which I thought was the explanation point where she grabbed the ball on that block and made that spin move. She is special. I thought that our kids battled. We had foul trouble. Both of our post players, Jessica Williams and Kasha Terry were in foul trouble. Daphne Mitchell came in, a sophomore, I thought she did she a great job.

But like you said getting those two key stops, that 3 was a dagger. It was a dagger in our hearts right there at the end. Again, I'm proud of our kid's effort.

I thought we executed to have a one day turn around for our defensive game plan and to be able to take away some of the things we did, I was just really proud of our execution.

Q. Coach, you're really able to hold (Kristi) Toliver and (Marissa) Coleman intact throughout the entire game, and then down the stretch they both hit key shots, is that just a tribute to those two, and Maryland that they have so many scoring options and willing to get through it?

MACHELLE JOSEPH: Once again, Maryland is very, very impressive. They can score at all five positions. They don't have a weakness on the floor.

But, you know, like I thought Jacqua Williams, my freshman, did a really good job on Toliver, I thought she made her play a little bit conservative which isn't Toliver's style at all. I thought her pressure bothered her at times. Like I said, she was struggling offensively but was able to step up at the end.

Q. Coach, do you think that this two days of the tournament are something your program can build on next year?

MACHELLE JOSEPH: I don't think there is any doubt. I think the biggest thing with our team, and our program at Georgia Tech, has been believing we can win. It's been trying to turn that corner. It's such a stigma. In the history of our program no one has ever finished over 500 in league play. It's just something that's a mentality. Winning is a mentality. Winning breeds winning. Once you win, it's easier to win. You look at a program like Florida State, they found out how to win. It took them seven years. They found out how to win. It's contagious. They win those close games. They find a way to step up and win key games. We have the players in place. We started three sophomores all year, a junior, and one senior, and our freshman have been key contributors. We returned seven of our eight leading scorers. We are excited about the future of our program. We are bringing in another Top -20 recruiting class, so we feel like we are on track. It's just taking longer because this is the top conference in the country. I mean you are talking about the No. 1 conference, RPI-wise. You are also talking about we added three new teams which were all NCAA tournament teams that are some of the top teams in women's basketball. Year in and year out, they are in the NCAA tournament. It has been a struggle, but these last two games, I think our players has gotten a taste of what success is and what it's going to take to get to the next level.

Q. Coach, it seemed like you did a really good job controlling the momentum for most of the game. Maryland likes to play very up tempo, and you use the shot clock, can you talk about how that momentum factored in especially with the big injury, talk about how that momentum factored in especially with the big injury with a minute left to go, that kind of hurt you in that last minute, and if you wish you had that one second back to move her out of the way?

MACHELLE JOSEPH: Exactly. I don't think anybody with a minute to go likes to lose their point guard especially when she is 6-for-15 and has 15 points, my second leading scorer.

But, you know, that's the nature of the beast. That's athletics. That's sports. That's why we play the game. It was tough to lose her, but I really thought for the most part Stephanie and Jill did a great job controlling tempo.

We talked about, before the game, we have two in a row we are going to push the ball aggressively at them. If we have two misses in a row, we are going to walk the ball up, take a good shot, make them play on defense. I thought we really -- if you go back and think about it, what we really did was make their post players play defense away from the basket and that wore them down, take their legs out from underneath them. That was the plan. You know we didn't let them stand on the blocks and just bang and bang and bang against them because they were bigger and stronger than us, and more physical. So what we had to do is we had to take them away from the basket and we had to make them play defense. You know 20 feet from the basket rather than two feet, and I thought we did a good job of that, and I thought that really helped us control tempo.