

**ACC Women's Basketball Championship
Greensboro, NC
March 6th, 2005**

Semifinal Round Quotes

VIRGINIA CAVALIERS

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: I was really proud of my team today. I thought that we had a good game plan coming in and I think the players executed perfectly and it was difficult holding Carolina for the entire game but I thought we did a tremendous job. We controlled the game on almost every aspect and it's tough to control the boards against Carolina but we did. We out shot them. And for most of the game we out played them and it's a tremendous Carolina team. Probably the best team I have ever seen in maybe the history of their program.

But I was very proud of our effort today. It's a very difficult loss for us and it's especially disheartening since we had such a big lead.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Debbie, obviously with LaTonya Blue out of there today, the ball handling was a big issue down the stretch, is that where you lost it you think?

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: No, I would say that that was part of -- the turnovers were equal at half time, 10 and 10, and I think we ended up with 26. So that obviously played a part. Especially in the second half when fatigue kind of took over a little bit. But we had to really try to put a band-aid on, you know, being able to have a couple of ball handlers out there at the same time. That was a little bit of an issue and you could probably point to that as being one of the factors. But I thought that we didn't make as many shots down the stretch as we had been making. We got good looks. We just didn't make shots also. And they are a very good rebounding team, so you are not going get as many second chance points as you normally would with other teams.

Q. Coach, can you talk about Tiffany, a little bit she stepped up for the second straight day?

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: Right. I thought Tiffany played a tremendous game today. She gave us another 36 minutes today and just played with her heart and her sole and her body just donated everything to the team today. She really exemplifies the word sacrifice and commitment. She is a very committed player and I just thought she gave everything that she had today. I couldn't ask anymore of a player trying to step up and, you know, fill the shoes of LaTonya Blue. She was absolutely fabulous today.

THE MODERATOR: I was also told that was her career-high.

Q. Coach Ryan, the previous two games against North Carolina (inaudible) but today you were taken right to the brink, what was the difference between this game and those other two games?

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: Well, we played this game a little bit different. We did want to run in this game, we basically tried to turn it into a half court game. Because they are so good in transition and once they get going it's like a feeding frenzy. So they are quicker and faster than we are. We had to slow it down a little bit so we could put the game on our level. And that was kind of the point of it. And the only way they could speed it up is force us to turn the ball over and that's kind of how they approached it.

Q. Tiffany, could you just kind of talk about how this team got this far, especially after last season just to get this far and to play, to be real close to an ACC final?

TIFFANY SARDIN: It took a lot of hard work and dedication and we talked about it all season. This game showed a lot of heart, dedication and passion for the game. This was what we wanted to be in. We got to get ready for the next level.

Q. Debbie, what was your game plan coming in on Latta and she seemed to hurt you with a lot of different points in the game?

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: You know, we've tried to contain Latta in three different games and just haven't been able to do it. If LaTonya would have been healthy today, she would have had Latta. But she wasn't healthy, so I couldn't play her. I didn't really have a choice about that. It's a mismatch right now until Sharnee gets a little bit stronger. You know our game plan is just to play her. We had to play her straight up we just didn't have a choice.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions?

Q. Debbie, I can't help but ask, do you have any comments about the fouls, the possibility fouls that weren't called right before the technical?

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: Unfortunately I'm not allowed to -- in terms of the officiating we are not allowed to comment. So I'm not allowed to say how I feel about that.

I think the officials are working as hard as we are at this time of the year, and I think they are trying to do the best they can. I have to watch the tape to see exactly what I thought and how I felt. It was a very physical game all the way around. Carolina is physical. We tried to match that today, and I thought we did a good job. But I really can't comment on any one call or any set of calls based on the rules that we play under.

Q. Today you guys shot 22 of 24 from the line, that's not been the strong point of the season through the season, free throw shooting, how important was that today to help you guys get on track and get going?

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: Well, it was huge. We had Brandi step up and make several free throws in the first half. We got to the one-on-one early and I thought we did a good job of forcing the issue because we got to the line a lot in the first half. We got to the one-on-one early. It just seem like we couldn't buy a foul in the second half. We couldn't get to the line as much. But I was very proud of our team. We worked on it and you can see the players have really stepped up and gotten better at that part of the game. It's a huge part of the game at this time of the year this time of the year. I'm glad to see us shooting that way right now as we are heading into the NCAA tournament.

Q. You mentioned the NCAA tournament, if Blue can come back, do you think her being hurt for this tournament helps your team out, the fact that other players can step up and be part of the offense more?

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: Whenever you have one of your best players going out, it does allow for other players to sort of shine and step up and show what they can do. We are obviously a much stronger team. With Tiffany stepping in and playing the way she has. We gave two freshmen a great amount of minutes this weekend in NCAA type settings. I think it's tremendous for us to be able to develop some other players and we also got a little bit of a glimpse of next year. So, you know, it's really looking good for us right now. It will definitely make us stronger definitely, and she will be back.

Q. Debbie, before you said this may be the best Carolina team that you've seen. Most people think the '94 team was the best, what attributes does this team have?

COACH DEBBIE RYAN: I think this team is much better than the '94 team. I shouldn't say they are much better. The '94 team was probably a better skilled team in some positions. But this team is so athletic and so strong so quick. And Latta is one of the finest point guards that I've ever seen. I think she is amazing because she cannot only find other players on the team, but whenever a big shot needs to be taken, Latta steps up and hits it. But she empowers the players around her to play better. I don't think you can ask anymore of a point guard. And I see that in everything that she does. She is always out there encouraging her teammates and she gets on them when she needs to get on them. She's got an endless amount of energy. She drives you nuts because she is up and down the court so fast, and she just has so much energy up and down the court. I think that she makes this team -- elevates this team to maybe one of the best teams they have ever had. That's the way I feel. This team rebounds the ball extremely well also.

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