



Today's Scholar-Athletes ~ Tomorrow's Leaders

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2006 Patriot League Women's Basketball Tournament
Post-Game Quotes: Semifinal Round
No. 1 Army vs. No. 5 Colgate
Sat., March 4, 2006 (West Point, N.Y.)

COLGATE HEAD COACH KRISTIN HUGHES

(re: opening statement)

"I would like to congratulate Army. They put two great games together. They are certainly deserving of their first-place finish and we wish them lots of luck in the championship game."

"We needed a few more things to go our way today. Obviously, we knew Cara Enright was going to be the key. Army did a great job of getting her some shots."

"We got into a little foul trouble, which changed up our (substitution) rotation. When those types of things happen, especially on the road, it is tough to win the game."

(re: on the play of Army's Cara Enright)

"Cara Enright is a great player. She extends (your defense) because she can hit the three, and she can take you off the dribble. All season long, we have asked Megan Ballard to stop everyone's top scorer.

"I thought (Ballard) did a good job, but Army has some good balance to their offense. When the other players start hitting, it's more difficult to stop Enright. Army was able to find (Enright) in the right places at the right time."

(re: Army's quick start and Colgate's response)

"Back in Hamilton, N.Y., we don't play in front of that many troops. I think everyone's hearts were beating a little faster than normal.

"With such a young group on the floor playing in their first Patriot League Tournament, we just needed them to settle in. That allowed Army to get going. I don't care if it's a six-point haul or a 20-point haul, I don't think you can afford to do that at this point in the season – especially on the road.

"We did settle down. But for us to win this game, we needed to come out of the gates chompin' (at the bit). We just didn't do that. Army came out with a lot of intensity, defensively."

(re: growth of young team in the semifinals)

"It is a growing process for your team and an aging process for the coaching staff. We are a very young team with only two seniors, who had seen limited minutes coming into the season. Ballard was the only player coming back with significant playing experience.

“I’m really proud to be sitting here when four other teams are already home. Like Melanie (Cargle) indicated, I don’t think anyone expected us to be in this position. There is definitely a lot on which to build.

“I told (Gretchen) Polinski when she came out of the game to remember this. Remember how bad it feels and make sure you get back here next year. The great thing about this group is that they are in the locker room right now thinking that they should be going to practice on Monday.”

(re: looking ahead to Army-Holy Cross championship game)

“Anytime you can get Holy Cross out of their own gym, it works in your favor. Army matches up very well against them. Army has obviously had a lot of success on their own home court.

“Back in October, I thought Army was going to win it all, and I’m sticking with that.”

COLGATE FORWARD CAITLIN GILLARD

(re: Colgate’s foul trouble all afternoon)

“We try not to focus on that. It’s hard. We just didn’t get some shots to fall and didn’t grab some rebounds, but we played hard. I give my teammates a lot of credit for that.”

(re: being outrebounded 41-37)

“It would have helped had we been able to get some more offensive rebounds. That is what breaks a team’s back, when you can get those easy put-backs. For us to win, we need to be on top in that category.

COLGATE GUARD MELANIE CARGLE

(re: frustration of the loss and end of the season)

“It is certainly frustrating. You play hard for your teammates and your coaches and all the fans. To have it end in 40 minutes of play, is something that is very hard to swallow. But I am proud of my teammates. People expected us to finish seventh, and we showed that we are a better team.”

ARMY HEAD COACH MAGGIE DIXON

(re: opening statement)

“This is a great team win for us all. Colgate is a very talented team. Even though the score indicates an 18-point game, it was much closer than that.

“I give so much credit to our players, who came on strong defensively. We did a great job stopping (Colgate’s) dribble penetration and inside game.”

(re: strong start to the game)

“I told the coaching staff before the game that we have never had a lead on this team. Both times we played (Colgate), they came out and pressured us. We turned the ball over and couldn’t find that rhythm, offensively.

“It’s important for us to come out and get some baskets early – especially this time of the year. We want to attack and take good shots, not force things.

(re: level of play at this point in the season)

“We are playing very good basketball. But, there is always room to improve. You are only in this spot, if you are playing your best right now.

(re: play of Cara Enright)

“During the (Patriot League) conference call, everyone talked about Cara making big shots. It’s been tough on her the past two games because teams have applied so much pressure on her. She found her opportunities today. When she is open, she shoots it.

“I’m not the type of coach to let somebody have free reign, but we have tried to teach (Enright) when to take good shots and when not. She was feeling it tonight, and she was able to get her teammates involved.”

(re: feeling of being in the championship game in first year)

“It’s overwhelming. This team came to me with a goal and I have just tried to help them and put them in the best position possible.

“I felt like this team had a chance to make some noise and do some things. I didn’t know where we would go, but I felt like we had some great leadership and some good young talent.

(re: being one win away from the NCAA Tournament)

“The players have done a great job of not thinking about that and just focusing on one game at a time. We have talked about the postseason and our chances at going to the WNIT. They said, ‘Coach we don’t want to talk about the NIT. We want to talk about the NCAAs.’”

(re: thoughts on Holy Cross and the championship game)

“Holy Cross is a team that has won this game in the past. Their experience is going to be huge in this game. But, our team has never backed down from challenges.

“Beating (Holy Cross) on the road was great. It was a tough game. We got on top early and then let them get back into it. It was a game of runs. I expect (Wednesday’s game) will go back and forth the whole time.”

ARMY GUARD CARA ENRIGHT

(re: reaching Patriot League Championship Game)

“Obviously, we are all very excited about it. It is a huge opportunity for us.”

(re: keeping Colgate at bay)

“Coach (Dixon) always tells us that teams will make their runs. We just needed to keep up our intensity on defense and attack aggressively, offensively.”

(re: keys to winning the game)

“We knew we had to stop their dribble penetration. We knew we had to contain them.”

(re: scoring 27 points today)

“We were just running our offense and looking to attack. When we are aggressive and attacking is when we are at our best. (Shots) were falling today.”

(re: looking ahead to Holy Cross)

“They are a tough team. We beat them twice this year, but they haven’t been easy wins.”

ARMY GUARD ALEX McGUIRE

(re: reaching Patriot League Championship Game)

“This was our goal from day one. Now we have to carry through with it and come out and play hard.

(re: difference today as opposed to loss at Colgate earlier in the year)

“We came out with more intensity in the first five minutes. We took it right to them. We handled the ball a lot better today than we did earlier this year.

“Cara (Enright) made some shots and we were able to get that high off of the crowd.

(re: crowd support)

“The cadets bring a lot of excitement, and we feed off of that excitement.”

(re: increased playing time throughout the season)

“At the beginning of the year, I was just working hard wondering if I would get any playing time. I knew I had to step up and contribute when I was put into the starting lineup. I’ve been able to get my teammates involved.

(re: looking ahead to Holy Cross)

“It will be another tough game. Holy Cross is a very good team and both games were close this year. We just have to come out with the same intensity with which we did today.

“We have played in a lot of close games this year, and we are good at controlling our nerves. Once the jump-ball goes up, we will be able to control ourselves just fine.”