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An interview with:

COACH SHERRI COALE

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by Coach Sherri Coale from Oklahoma. Coach, your opening comments?

COACH COALE: Excited to be back in Kansas City, ready to kick off the 2010-11 season. I really like my young guys, been on the floor with them just a little bit. Six new faces, which is a lot. But I like them. I have enjoyed teaching them. I love our leadership. Great seniors and seasoned veterans to go with those new guys, so the teaching should move along at a good pace and just enjoying where we are right now.

Q. Talk about the prospect of three Final Fours in a row. We were talking with the girls about it. Been kind of two different teams, two different years you were a number one seed. Last year you were a Cinderella. What would a third Final Four mean?

COACH COALE: That would be rare air, that's for sure. It is one of those things that when you are in the midst of it, I'm not sure you realize the significance of it. You step back and you look at how hard it was between 2002 and 2009 to do that again. Boy, it takes on a whole new level.

You know, for our young guys, Whitney Hand and Jasmine Hartman, they think that's all you do, you go to college and you go to the Final Four. This is fun, this is great. For guys like Danielle and Carlee, they understand it is a little bit more difficult than that.

I think our guys have a great appreciation for what we have done. I have a great amount of gratitude for their teammates and the way things have gone the last two years, from two completely different circumstances to be able to end up there.

I think the greatest thing that comes from that is their sense of confidence, that anything is possible, it doesn't have to go this way or it doesn't

have to go that way. We can make something really good happen. And I think they're still really hungry, but that's the thing about it. If you go to two in a row, it is great, it is awesome, you appreciate it. You understand what a special thing it is, and then you are also irritated because you got to go and you didn't get to win. And it is not very much fun.

I can say the first time in 2002 it was really fun to go and we were very sad that we didn't win. But it was just the coolest thing I had ever been through. And then in 2009 we go and we lose, it is just awful and you don't want to stay for any of it, you don't want to hear about it and you want to try to get started to get back there and you want to win. That's how we feel right now. Let's get back there and let's win there.

Q. Talk about your post play specifically. With Abi rerouting and Amanda Thompson. Who steps in to fill those roles this season?

COACH COALE: We were fortunate in the fact that Joanna McFarland developed and grew right before our very eyes over the course of her freshman season. I thought you could watch her late in the year game by game getting better and getting more comfortable and more confident.

Jo is a warrior. She is a kid that will fight you. She will find a way to be successful. She won't be the biggest kid, won't be the fastest kid, but she will win. She comes from a household that is accustomed to competing and we know that's what we get from Jo.

I speak about her mainly there because you mentioned the post presence of Abi and what Amanda brought. And Jo is somewhere in between those two kids. She doesn't have the size of Abi. Doesn't quite have the athleticism of Amanda and, yet, she does many of the things that both of those kids did for us last year.

When you move past Jo, Lyndsey Cloman is developing as a sophomore. We have a freshman, Nicole Griffin to 6' 6". I don't know if she is the tallest player we ever had, but she is the

longest one. And Jelena Cerina who is 6' 5". So we have a lot of different-looking post players who will do different things and our team will move around differently based on whichever one is in the game at a given time.

Q. Last year's time, you had the opportunity to play a variety of different ways. You could go small and quick. You could go big. You could go half court. What defines this team this year?

COACH COALE: Too early to know yet, truthfully. I know what will define this team is great point guard play. Danielle Robinson is going to break people down off the dribble and late in a shot clock or late in a game, and everybody will run to the sides of the floor and Danielle will try to make a play. We did that a number of times last year. It was my best coaching move. Get out of her way and let her score.

We know we have that. I think there are question marks in terms of our three-point shooting. We have got kids that can do it. They have to do it when the lights are on and everybody is looking. They have to perform. I think in terms of comparison, I had several questions at the back about the way we played in 2002, the way we played in '09, the way we played in '10, the different types of teams that went to the Final Four.

I think this particular team will be more like the 2002 team in terms of style of play. Our most talented kids are our guards right now. We have a lot of different guards who can do different things and a crew of post players who can rotate through and give us different looks. I do think we will be versatile. We can put a really fast lineup on the floor, which is not something we have been able to do year in and year out. We can go with some size if we need to have 6' 5" Jelena and 6' 6" Nicole on the floor. We can do that and Carlee has a great size as a wing. We can do some different things.

Style-wise, you know what I hope is that we are quintessential Oklahoma basketball, compete like crazy and share the ball and find ways to win games.

Q. What about the football game Saturday night?

COACH COALE: I love the Sooners and the football game on Saturday night. Are you kidding me? Bob Stoops for president.

Q. General big-picture question, the sense of this being the last two years, in the

end, yeah, UConn wins again, they have lost three starters from last year. They have the streak going. Baylor is going to face them early. Your thoughts over all? Do you think the streak will end any time soon?

COACH COALE: Well, I think Baylor versus Connecticut is a great way to kick off the college women's basketball season. I think it will be a game that draws great interest. I think Baylor has great pieces and parts to go against Connecticut.

I think that one thing that makes it a particularly interesting matchup is the fact where Connecticut may be a little bit vulnerable this year due to the graduation of Tina Charles. That's Baylor's area of strength with Brittney Griner. It will be an interesting matchup. I think it will be a great game for our sport.

As far as whether or not Connecticut loses then or loses in early December or loses sometime in February, eventually they will lose a game. I don't think anybody should run out and feel sorry for Geno because Tina Charles graduated. Lots of talented basketball players on that basketball team. Last time I checked Maya Moore was still on the team.

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