

October 19, 2011



Student-Athlete Round Table Discussion

**BRITTNEY GRINER
JALANA CHILDS
HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON
TIFFANY BIAS**

BRENDA VANLENGEN: Good morning, everyone. I'm Brenda VanLengen along with Debbie Antonelli with Fox Sports Net and coverage of the Big 12 Conference women's basketball.

And we're going to start this morning -- usually we do this later in the agenda, but we're going to start this morning with a student-athlete roundtable.

Just so you know, everybody that's up here, we'll get them started with introductions, but we're just going to ask a few questions of kind of off-the-court sort of stories, so when you have time with them later one-on-one, we might be able to develop some new story ideas and so forth.

So why don't we start with you all, each you saying your name, your year in school, your institution, and maybe three words that describe you. Jalana.

JALANA CHILDS: I'm Jalana Childs. I'm a senior at Kansas State University. Three words that describe me: fun, lively, spontaneous.

TIFFANY BIAS: I'm Tiffany Bias from Oklahoma State. I'm a sophomore. Three words that describe me: fashionable, funny, and loud.

BRITTNEY GRINER: Brittney Griner, Baylor University. Junior. Three words that describe me. I'd say spontaneous, goofy and very entertaining off the court.

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: Hallie Christofferson. I'm a sophomore from Iowa State, and I would say creative, organized and fun.

BRENDA VANLENGEN: Very nice. Well, yesterday was Brittney Griner's 21st birthday. So happy birthday from all of us.

Why don't you start us off with sharing what you did for your 21st birthday Brittany.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Keep it legal.

BRITTNEY GRINER: We had finger painting, a little milk and cookies (laughter). Actually, a couple of my teammates, we just cooked -- we had burgers, cake, watched some games, that's about it, really, football. Real easy. Simple. Real easy, simple.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Did you get a birthday present?

BRITTNEY GRINER: I have a long board. It's like a skateboard, but it's just longer. It's a cruiser.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Does it have to be custom made because you're so tall?

BRITTNEY GRINER: No. Had to get a long one, pretty big. My feet really don't fit on a skateboard. So the long board is a little bit wider, too. So I'm good.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Jalana, you spent some time this off season doing some volunteer work and community work inside a retirement home. You have a 93-year-old lady who has become a very good friend of yours. What are your conversations like? Do you talk social media. Does she tweet (laughter)? Have you taught her about the Internet or how to even use a computer?

JALANA CHILDS: No, actually, they do have computers at the retirement home. But we actually -- I asked her a lot about her life and what it was like growing up, like her husband and stuff like that.

But what she really liked to do was play cards. And when I got there people would tell me -- they're like, She beats everyone at cards. I'm like, That's a joke, whatever.

And we play -- she teaches me games like bridge and just like these old games that I had never heard of. And she whoops my butt like constantly, every day.

There was a time -- the first time I met with

her we had dinner. And after we played cards. We played about seven games, and I won one. And I'm just like: Is this real? Are you tricking me right now? But it was really fun to get to know her. She's a nice, nice lady.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: What kinds of lessons has she taught you?

JALANA CHILDS: Mostly just to appreciate life. She lost her husband. So just her -- what she valued was way different than what other people did. So, I mean, it was a great experience for me. It was very eye-opening to get to know her, because it made me appreciate life and what I had a little bit more.

BRENDA VANLENGEN: Tiffany, we understand that you consider Andrea Riley, a mentor of yours, the all-time leading scorer in Big 12 Conference history, a good mentor. Where did that start and what have you learned from her?

TIFFANY BIAS: It started from recruiting. I've always watched her when I came to Oklahoma State, sitting at games and watching how she played and how she developed over the years. And once she graduated, I mean, that's a hard role to try to fill coming in as a freshman, but I came in and she gave me guidance coming in, even when times were down.

She kept picking me up and telling me what I could do, what I was doing wrong, and tried to fix every little thing that I was doing wrong as a freshman. Just having my head up and telling me I could do it.

BRENDA VANLENGEN: You're still in touch with her. What's going on with her now?

TIFFANY BIAS: Right now she's overseas in Turkey and she's playing. It's hard to keep in touch because it's just over Twitter, doing that social media type of stuff. But she's doing well over there. And her family's over there with her, too.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Hailey, we also know -- best wishes back to Coach Fennelly who has already started undergoing radiation for his vocal cord issues. What's practice been like with him not being able to talk?

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: He still talks and he still yells but he uses a microphone and just gets everybody else going. Us as players have tried to pick up the talking level, and that helps also.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Do you think Coach Fennelly is more disappointed he couldn't be here today or be up in St. Louis with the Cardinals for

Game 1? Because I think he's the biggest Cardinals fan I've ever met.

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: Probably a lot of both. Yeah, he's very -- he's a very big fan.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: First word you used to describe yourself was creative. How?

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: My major is graphic design. And I'm just a very creative person. I love to draw and love to do things with my hand and make things and logos and anything like that.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Is there a future business proposition there that you have that kind of creativity you could one day start your own business?

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: Probably not at first, but I plan to maybe work under a design firm when I get older and hopefully something goes from there.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Have you created anything for Iowa State basketball?

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: I have not.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Like to create some sort of a logo for Brenda?

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: I could do that.

BRENDA VANLENGEN: We might start working on that. Excellent.

Jalana, we heard about your work in the nursing home, but I also understand that you've roomed with a couple of people with dogs, and that inspired you to go to an animal shelter yourself. What became of that trip?

JALANA CHILDS: Well, actually, I still live with the girls. I live with two girls who each have dogs. But it triggered me to want a dog. And I went to our humane society in Manhattan. I was with my teammate, and we wanted this cute dog named Day. She was really cute. We went to play with her and she was just too much, jumped on you, too much to handle. We're like no, we need something tamed.

So we go into another kennel and there's this dog, looks kind of similar to her. It's a boy. Didn't have a name. Looked kind of more like a mutt, and he lays down on the ground, sticks his paw under and we're like: We have to get it.

So there's some like rule thing where you have to -- the dog was new, you have to wait about a week until you can buy it or rescue it.

And so we had to wait until the next day. But we had recruits that weekend, so I said we'll

come back Sunday.

Sunday we go and I'm all excited, have my checkbook ready, my license and everything ready to show 'em, and I look for this dog. It was in kennel three, didn't have a name, and they're like go back and check.

We went back, checked, and that kennel was empty. And my teammate saw it first, Emma Ostermann saw it first, then I turned around the corner and I'm like -- busted out into tears. Instant tears. I had imagined myself with this dog at the park and all my dreams were gone right there, in an instant.

But I don't have a dog now. I just deal with the dogs that I have at home. I treat them like they're mine, but they're not. Hopefully --

BRENDA VANLENGEN: That's a sad story.

JALANA CHILDS: There's no happy ending to that.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: There will be a good ending to that, though, eventually. You'll find another dog I bet. Or you could find one of those exotic animals running around wild in the state of Ohio right now. How does that happen?

Brittney, you're fresh off your USA national team experience. Hopefully that will lead to an Olympic spot on the team. What have you learned from your experience with USA Basketball in this last trip?

BRITTNEY GRINER: This last trip was just amazing, first, because it's my first time overseas. And playing against the veterans. But like Swin Cash, she's a great teacher. Every time we were on the court, she was talking to me, directing me, helping me out.

From her I took always try to be in every play. Even if you're not doing something over here, you're over here setting the screen, set a good screen. Because that's going to help my teammate get up.

She's always on the ball. She's on the floor. She was everywhere. I just want to kind of mirror that. But from her I took from that just effort. She gives effort everywhere she goes. And she's just a great leader.

Coach really didn't have to go to us out there because she was directing everybody.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: So Swin took charge this last trip overseas, and you've never been overseas before. What was that like?

BRITTNEY GRINER: I was nervous because I'm a picky eater. I thought I wasn't going to be able to eat. But I was eating everything. I

had octopus. I had -- they just had me eating everything. It was awesome.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: What did you learn from Coach Auriemma?

BRITTNEY GRINER: Don't take a play off. He kept stressing to us -- because I was the only college player. He kept stressing to us, somebody might have a fastbreak and we're on defense, most people won't run and try to catch them, even if you don't catch them, it's just the effort.

And it's just giving everything you got. He stressed that.

BRENDA VANLENGEN: Hailey, your sister Britta, also an Iowa State athlete, competed in track and field as well, the two of you, the only two of you from your small hometown that were able to get Division I scholarships. What was it like to have your sister this past year? She's already graduated and what is she doing now and how do you continue to communicate with her?

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: Britta is attending Creighton now for PT school. And having my sister there my first year was something that I wish everybody could have, just because she showed me so many different things.

If I needed a pick up I would go over to Britta's place and have a sisterly bond again and it was nice to have someone so close to you.

BRENDA VANLENGEN: What are the most important things she shared with you that helped you?

HALLIE CHRISTOFFERSON: One of the things was how to manage time between being a student-athlete and a student. And she cooked me supper. She cooked me some home-cooked meals and helped me feel at home in Ames.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Tiffany, the first word you used to describe yourself is fashion. Does that mean you like to design or shop or both?

TIFFANY BIAS: I think both. I'm not really like design, I like to style and I like to put together outfits and do that kind of thing. I'm into watching fashion shows and that type of thing, because I'm majoring in fashion merchandising.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: What do you hope it might lead to?

TIFFANY BIAS: Right now I don't know. Something in the fashion world. I'd like to play still after college, of course, but just anything in the fashion world I would just like to dive in.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: What do you think about Coach Budke when he shows up with the

orange jacket on?

TIFFANY BIAS: I have an orange skirt on.
I like it. It's a changeup.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Do you assist him
with tie and a shirt combination when he does that,
or does he do well on his own?

TIFFANY BIAS: He does pretty well on his
own. He's good on that area.

BRENDA VANLENGEN: We're getting the
wrap-up signal. Thank you.

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