

**October 19, 2011**



An Interview With:

## **TEXAS COACH GAIL GOESTENKORS**

THE MODERATOR: Coach Goestenkers has joined us from the University of Texas. Coach, your thoughts on the upcoming season.

COACH GOESTENKORS: Well, like everybody else, I'm sure this time of year, really, really excited. We've had some injuries, which I feel like I'm saying that every single year.

But if we can get healthy, I feel this should definitely be our best year. We have the most talent. We've got the most experience that we've had, and we've got the most depth that we've had.

So for a lot of reasons I just feel very good about the season and think we can do some great things.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

**Q. Could you just elaborate about the talent situation and depth and obviously you mentioned the injuries. Is there anybody who is not going to be available for a long stretch but kind of the situation you're in in terms of toughest conference but maybe being as well positioned as you have been since you've been at Texas to compete?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Definitely. It starts with the three seniors that we have that are here today, Ashley Gayle, Ashleigh Fontenette, and Yvonne Anderson. Those three have been with me through their careers and my career at Texas, so they know what I want, what I need, what the expectations are.

And I think we've all been wanting more, and they've really made a great commitment and become great leaders, I think. So it starts with those three. And then the addition of Cokie Reed back has been tremendous.

She's special. That's all I can tell you is she's special. I know many of you saw her as a

freshman making the Big 12 All-Freshman team, but she's so much better than she was two years ago. There's no comparison.

She's going to demand a double team. When we played overseas -- we had the luxury of playing over in Europe this summer, so it was good for us as a coaching staff to finally get to see her back on the court.

And the opposing teams called a timeout after about six minutes of every game, because she could not be stopped. So they would have to double team her, which now opens up things for Ashley Gayle and some of the our post players and for our guards to get some great looks as well. So she really changes the game for us.

So that's very exciting. And then we've got a strong sophomore class, Chassidy, obviously, being named to the preseason Big 12 First Team. She's improved her game. She's more fit than she was last year. And she was in good shape last year, but she wanted to get quicker. She's much quicker. She made a commitment to the defensive end of the floor which is what we needed.

She's also become a better passer. So we're excited about her progression as well. So we feel good about our sophomore class. They gained great experience last year.

And then you had the freshmen. Cassie Peoples, she's been injured, she goes to the doctor tomorrow. We're hoping she'll be released tomorrow. But she's not practiced with us.

But she brings -- she's a consummate point guard. She's the first true point guard I've had on the team really since Carla Cortijo my first year. And she has that knowledge, that point guard knowledge of the game, where does the ball need to be, when does it need to be there.

Great passer. And a really beautiful shot as well. So I've needed that true point guard to help back up Ashleigh Fontenette and Yvonne. She's going to be able to do that for us. We're excited about Cassie.

And Nneka Enemkalli is the best athlete I've had since I've been in Texas. She was also offered a volleyball scholarship to play at Texas.

That gives you an idea of her athleticism. She's a quick jumper, runs the floor well. We feel she'll give us depth at that power forward position.

So I'm excited. I think we had a tough loss with Kat Nash. She was just so consistent for us, great rebounder, great shooter, but I think we've got some other players that can really help alleviate that loss, and I feel like overall we definitely have the best depth that we've had and the most talent we've had. So we're excited.

**Q. If I remember right, you've had some success with point guards from Cy-Fair High School.**

COACH GOESTENKORS: That's right.

**Q. Cassie, you said she's young and injured. Would she bring defensively what you're looking for from your point guard? And then also how do you feel about Kayla Brewer, a transfer, and what she's going to bring to the program?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Kayla, we call her K.B. She's another great athlete. She's not going to be eligible until mid-December because of the transfer rules.

But we're excited about her. She's another rebounding, running athlete. So it's going to help. We've always wanted to press and run but because of our numbers, we've been a little bit limited. So we feel like we've got the depth to do some things we want to do.

Then Cassie Peoples. She's also a very good defensive player. She's probably only about -- she might say she's 5'6". I'd say she's about 5'5" or 5'4". But she's very, very strong and uses her body really well. So I think she'll help us on both ends of the floor.

**Q. Following Mizzou, obviously we're going to get to see an awful lot of this issue, but in talking with Cassie, it seems a little unusual to have a lot of play in that point guard position from a freshman. Is that a concern, or is it really not that big a deal to have a freshman out there playing the point?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Yeah, it doesn't concern me at all. She's had great experiences, both winning state championship and also playing AAU ball. She has such great -- playing USA Basketball. She's made the USA team as well. So she's had great experience both here and international.

But the good thing is she doesn't have to -- she's not my only point guard. We've got seniors that are going to be able to show her the way.

So just like any freshman, she's going to have some ups and downs. We're not going to rely on her, but we'll bring her along slowly. But I know she's going to have a major impact. So I think she's in a perfect position where she doesn't have to start as a freshman, but she's going to play major minutes.

**Q. Obviously everybody in the Big 12 competes against Baylor and A&M. Is it any different for you since they're right around the corner, you're in-state neighbors?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Absolutely not. It's probably just more intense, because we are competing with them for recruits, you know, for the state of Texas, the pride in Texas, and for national recognition as well.

So there are so many levels and because they're so close, proximity-wise I think it makes that rivalry that much more intense.

**Q. The other coaches this morning have been asked about the realignment, what is happening, what might happen. And there's been a lot of talk about Texas being the villain in this, Nebraska cited Texas for one reason why it wanted to leave. A&M has done that. Missouri has done that. The president of Oklahoma talked about Texas, about people being unhappy about Texas. They're not talking about you or your program. But is this an issue with your team, with your athletes, that your institution has been cast as a villain in all of this?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Not at all. You know, we really don't talk about it. We know we're going to stand strong and we know we're in the Big 12 and the Big 12 is going to always remain strong, and we feel good about it.

So we really don't discuss anything that anybody else might have to say. Everybody's going to try to find a villain. But that's their business. We don't feel like the villain. We know we're not the villain. So we're just going to play ball.

**Q. You're going to have 14 women's games on the Longhorn Network, and obviously they're still looking for cable**

systems to pick it up, but you still have some right now. What does that exposure mean having 15 women's games out there where you're going into households in Texas, having high school kids being able to watch almost half your games?

COACH GOESTENKORS: Right. Well, we're hoping it helps us in recruiting. You know, it can't help but help us in recruiting, I would think. With some of the parents, they can't come to all the games but having the ability to then at least see some of the games that they can't get to, see it on TV.

So that's what we're hoping for; that it's really going to have an impact with our recruiting.

**Q. I asked Kurt this. How do you think Brittney Griner has affected the way the other Big 12 teams have recruited post players, or even maybe how they've coached them? And you talked about the effect of having Cokie back, how that helps everyone. How does it also help you defensively maybe specifically against a player like Griner?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: I think we've all had to adjust the way that we approach games, that we approach recruiting. I think some coaches have gone out and tried to sign six, seven players. Even if they're not skilled, just to have that height and try to develop it.

I think some coaches have gotten some 6'1", 6'2" post players that are really big and physical to try to get physical with her and get her off the block. So it's changed the way we do approach the game and in some ways the way we recruit as well. Obviously having Cokie back would help us for a lot of reasons, but just to have the numbers.

And she's somebody who does have the height at 6'4", but also has that strength that you would like, and it doesn't put the sole responsibility of defending on Ashley Gayle, because a lot of times your post players end up getting into foul trouble trying to defend her.

So you need to have some depth in that post position.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

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