



# LSU First Round Quotes

## LSU Press Conference

March 19, 2010 • Cameron Indoor Stadium • Durham, N.C.



### LSU Head Coach Van Chancellor

#### ***Opening Statement:***

"We're excited about being in the NCAA Tournament again. It is always a fun time to be in the tournament, and we're facing a well-coached team in Hartford tomorrow, a team that reminds me so much of Vand[erbilt] in our league. Might be a little more athletic than Vandy. They play hard-nosed, play tough. They've got a really nice inside-outside game. Our team is playing – I thought the last six games of the season, we played extremely well, extremely well. We certainly beat Vandy, but in the SEC Tournament, we didn't play quite as well against Vandy."

#### ***On the abilities of Hartford's young players:***

"I had a great idea that they were a really good team, because they've been ranked so long – they've been ranked for six weeks. When I began to watch tape, I just realized how many good shooters they have, what a tough inside low-block player they have. The more I watched them on tape, the more impressed I became with them. And I've been keeping up with Hartford all year because [head coach] Jennifer [Rizzotti] played for me at one time. So I pretty well check their scores out all year long. You don't get ranked in the top 25 unless you have – especially in the coaches' poll – unless you have a really nice team."

#### ***On Hartford Head Coach Jennifer Rizzotti:***

"It's a great relationship ... I knew Jennifer when she played for me in the WNBA. I told Kevin Cook one day, one of my assistant coaches, I thought she'd make a great coach. She just understood the game. She just had a great awareness of where to go, what to do, what plays to run. She was a real coach on the floor. I knew she'd be a heck of a coach."

### Senior Guard Allison Hightower

#### ***On playing in Cameron Indoor Stadium:***

"Actually, I like the arena. It just brings everybody together a little bit closer, but I like the place. It brings you more energy. It's a nice little court. I got to see – probably my high school years when I played AAU, I got to see it one time, but this will be my second time seeing it. I think it's pretty cool. I haven't played there – we just toured it. Luckily, it's a privilege to play here."

#### ***On her mindset going into the NCAA Tournament:***

"I think it is a fresh start for us. Just coming from SEC play and preseason, it gives us the opportunity to come out here and show everybody that we play. But we have to come out and be prepared. Just right now, preparation, practice and preparing for tomorrow because it's only one and done – you don't have any more chances. So it just gives us an opportunity to come out here and play as hard as we can and seize the moment, try to take this opportunity that we have and make the best of it."

### Sophomore Forward LaSondra Barrett

#### ***On playing in Cameron Indoor Stadium:***

"I love the arena. The feeling kind of reminds me of a high school gym – just playing in there with the fans so close to the court. Really hands-on. I'm excited to play here, one of the best arenas in college basketball."

#### ***On her mindset going into the NCAA Tournament:***

"We know now that the record's 0-0 for everyone. As you saw in the men's tournament yesterday, anybody can lose. All teams going in have one mindset, and that's just to win. It's all about who plays the hardest and the toughest, and it's not about talent or any kind of seeds. So we know that now, and we pretty much put the past behind us at the beginning of the season and just learn from all the games we didn't close out or the games we really regret and we want back. And we're just using that to focus our energy on Hartford and the upcoming game."

## **Sophomore Guard Destini Hughes**

### ***On how the team prepared for the NCAA Tournament:***

"I know we're ready; I can tell we're all focused on the scouting report. It's like a new season. It's a whole new season, like starting over. I think we're all more concentrated because once you lose, you're done. We're just going to go hard. We made up this slogan, it's called "Keep Pressing," whenever we see someone is discouraged, we tell them to just keep pressing. When we hit those inconsistent times, we're just going to keep pressing."

### ***On Hartford:***

"[Hartford] has tremendous shooters and they also have a strong post player. Their offense is a lot like Vanderbilt's. They try to drive and take it all the way, and the forwards are running the floor. We just have to get back on transition, stop penetration and dominate on the inside game."

## **Junior Guard Katherine Graham**

### ***On moving past the Vanderbilt loss:***

"We haven't put it behind us; we're just looking to build on our mistakes."

### ***On the meaning of 'Keep Pressing':***

"It means a lot of different things. It's a phrase we use to focus our thinking and fight through tough times, fight through adversity and stay together. It's the saying we use to come together as a team."

### ***On playing in Cameron Indoor Stadium:***

"I've seen it on TV, but it's different when you actually come here. We were talking earlier about how it is, the fans, the crowd. I've never been here, so I was amazed just walking on the floor."

### ***On Hartford:***

"They're very disciplined. They have a solid post game. They have plenty of shooters that can shoot the ball well. They're just an overall good team; they rebound well, they shoot the three well, they feed the post well, they're just an all-around disciplined team."



# Hartford First Round Quotes

## Hartford Press Conference

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### Hartford Head Coach Jennifer Rizzotti

#### ***Opening Statement:***

"We're obviously very happy to be here, and couldn't think of a better setting. It's beautiful weather, beautiful campus and I don't think any of our kids have ever been down here before, so we're looking forward to the experience. And anytime you get a chance to play in the NCAA Tournament and it's held at a first-class university like Duke, it just adds to the overall experience for our players. We're looking forward to getting practice underway today and actually getting the basketball started. But so far, we've had a great 24 hours down here in Durham."

#### ***On LSU Head Coach Van Chancellor:***

"I had a chance to play for Coach Chancellor for two summers with the Houston Comets, and what a great experience. I was on two of the teams that won world championships, and got to play with some of the best players in the world. I know Coach Chancellor has always done a good job of being a players' coach. I said this earlier in the week to somebody who asked, but he really gives his kids the freedom to be good at what they do, and he has a knack for that. He's obviously coached the highest level, winning Olympic gold and winning world championships, and has done a phenomenal job at LSU, so certainly someone I've followed. And it's nice to have a chance to play against him. We were down in Baton Rouge [La.] two years ago at their regional. We didn't play them, but had a chance to see one of their Final Four teams in action, and so there's a lot of history with LSU in the NCAA Tournament, and I couldn't think of a better first round opponent."

#### ***On the interest in women's basketball UConn has generated in Connecticut:***

"The state of Connecticut itself is a great place to play women's basketball. The fans there are very educated, they're very loyal and there's room for more than one team in that state. So, we have a great opportunity to be seen by a lot of people, to have kids growing up in the area wanting to play for their home state. We've been able to corral some of the local talent, like Diana [Delva's] come in to play for us. A lot of people think that we get overshadowed all the time, but being a player that played at the University of Connecticut, you understand the hard work that goes into raising a program to that level. So that attention that they get is deserved, and we don't certainly feel like second fiddle in the state. We've got great fans of our own, we get the attention that we deserve, and certainly we've played to a national level this year and gotten the attention of the nation, and not just in our state. But it is a great basketball state and it is a great place to play. Without having professional sports in Connecticut, they've really rallied around college athletics. So we're real fortunate to be at a place that cares a lot about women's basketball."

#### ***On LSU's Allison Hightower:***

"She's a pretty dynamic player who can score in every way. It's definitely a tough check. She's added the three-point shot to her game this year and hit it on a pretty consistent level. So on top of being able to drive either way and score with a jump shot or a floating runner or get an offensive rebound put-back, she's just a really dynamic player. And the thing that I like most about her is she plays just as hard on the defensive end of the floor, and can be just as much of a nuisance on defense as she is on offense. I had a chance to actually see her four years ago at the Under-18 USA Basketball trials when I was the assistant coach with [DePaul head coach] Doug Bruno, and she didn't make the team, but she was certainly a player that was talked about and a player that stood out. So even at a young age, she was already getting a lot of attention, so it's no surprise to me, with the work ethic that she has, that she has given herself quite a name in the country, being an All-American candidate and a Player of the Year candidate. She's had a great senior season, and she's a big reason for the success of the team this year."

## **Junior Guard Jackie Smith**

### ***Opening Statement:***

"We're just all very excited. We got here yesterday, and the weather's great. We finally get the chance to see the campus today – it's absolutely gorgeous. We got to walk through the gym, which was something I've always dreamt of doing. It's an honor to be here, and we're just excited to get going."

### ***On LSU's Allison Hightower:***

"What I've seen of her, she's a great player. She's going to attract a lot of attention, I'm sure. We're going to have to make sure we stick her. Offensively for us, she's a defender that can cause a lot of problems, so we're going to have to pay attention and protect the ball against her. She's a great defender. I'm excited to play against one of the best players in the country."

## **Senior Forward/Center Diana Delva**

### ***Opening Statement:***

"We're just really excited to be here. It's all players' dreams to go to the NCAA Tournament and be successful, and that's what we came here to do ... Duke, Carolina, there's a lot of history here and we're all really excited to be here."

### ***On the interest in women's basketball UConn has generated in Connecticut:***

"UConn is definitely a great program, and they're always going to be there and be part of our state. But I feel like we have a lot of great fans at Hartford that support us too."