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A Group Interview With:

TAYLOR McINTOSH - Kansas
TOCCARA ROSS - Iowa State
COURTNEY PARIS - Oklahoma
ERNEISHA BAILEY - Texas
ALYSSA HOLLINS - Missouri
JHASMINE PLAYER - Baylor

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Courtney, you and I just went through this in New York, when you were in the National Team. We did something similar. Your experiences playing with the National Team and what you gained from that that will help you this season?

COURTNEY PARIS: I gained a lot. I got an opportunity to be around some great people who have played at the highest level. So that was great. And to go up against them. So I was challenged every day. I felt like I got better. I played with some great coaches. It was just a real experience for me, something I never thought I'd get to do.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: What was Russia like and Chile like?

COURTNEY PARIS: I don't know what Chile was like, because we had five games in a row. So we stayed in our hotel a lot, hung out there talking with people. But Russia, it was a little different. It was a little cloudier, but I had a good time there. There were great kids with me and it was fun.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Taylor, you have played in every game but two in your career at Kansas. Talk about how important it is to be durable, to balance all the things for a student athlete and player, and taking care of your body.

TAYLOR MCINTOSH: First of all, I guess, I didn't start the first game in the career. The freshman year you want to do whatever you can do to get on the court. But I think we do so much in the season, so you have to stay hydrated and eat

right and all the things your coaches already are telling you about.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Toccara, could you take a little bit from what Taylor said and follow-up with how important it is to make sure that you maintain the balance that it takes to be a student athlete at this level?

TOCCARA ROSS: It's definitely big steps, especially coming from junior college. It's a little bit different. Just overall the balance of staying together, knowing what commitment you have to take at this level. It's an everyday step. And without your teammates it's important. So overall the balance, you learn to adjust.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: With that adjustment, Jhasmine, comes a lot of attention and a lot of notoriety. And of course Baylor is -- the program has grown leaps and bounds since Kim took over. How do you manage all the publicity and attention that you receive as a student athlete, because you're really under the microscope all the time.

JHASMINE PLAYER: Our coaches are responsible. And we kind of mirror that image. The coach teaches us things on the floor as well as off the floor, because Waco is a small community. We're going to see someone we know, so we watch things we do. It's a blessing to have that many people support the basketball team there.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: You mentor every week at a juvenile detention center. Why do you do that and what do you gain from that?

ERNEISHA BAILEY: I like giving back to our community. Austin is a very large city and there are kids that are going under the radar, and I want to take some time in my busy schedule to let them know that there are people that care about them. And I'm going to give them an hour of my time to just show them and I'll shoot baskets, I'll talk to you, do whatever you want to do to have fun and let you know that this life you're living, you need some positiveness in your life, and I can be that light.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Is there any particular relationship that you've been able to

develop with a youngster that you look forward to seeing every Friday or you know they're looking forward to seeing you?

ERNEISHA BAILEY: I see them all. They always talk about my shoes, because they don't get to see them, I guess, but they're talking about things like clothes and stuff, because they don't get much. There's not one that stands out more than the others.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Alyssa, things that you like to do in your spare time, when you have some? Life of a student athlete is very time consuming, balancing everything. You said you like to write poetry, why, and where did that start?

ALYSSA HOLLINS: I don't know. I remember when I was 13 I read something in one of my classes and I was inspired by it. I thought it was neat that you could -- the way you could say something and rhyme words and make it have an impact. I always liked it. I was just really into it. I started writing a little bit. I don't know how good it is, but I enjoy it. It's relaxing.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Courtney, you are working on your communications degree. I read where you're interested in maybe being a novelist one day. For all the writers in the room today, do you have any idea of what you may like to write or are you in the process of writing something now?

COURTNEY PARIS: I don't know. Just anything. I love to write, just fiction, makeup stories. I think that's the dream job. I love to play basketball, but writing is my passion and story telling. That's something I'd really like to, in my career and life to do.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: No idea, no outline going, no --

COURTNEY PARIS: Those are my secrets.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: You don't want to give out any of your secrets? We'll wait.

TOCCARA, you are from the same town as Coach Fennelly, Davenport. He is quite a legend in many parts of Iowa, many parts of the Big 12. What is it like being the only senior on the team this year and having to feel like you're going to be responsible for a lot that goes on with practice and with being a leader?

TOCCARA ROSS: It's a big job, especially -- I was a junior college kid, so I came in, obviously as a junior, it was kind of like I was a freshman right away. To be put in that position of being senior, it's a tough task, but I think my teammates have helped me a lot. We understand there's not going to be one set leader on the team.

There's 13 of us, there's going to be 13 leaders, and we also have to follow each other as well. Knowing that I have people surrounding me, helping me every day, adjusting, that's going to help a lot. And down the road we'll see the benefits of that definitely.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Taylor, your parents are both college basketball players, and your mom played at Wichita State. What have you been able to learn from your mother that has helped you with your own game?

TAYLOR MCINTOSH: She played a different position, she was a point guard. And I'm more an inside player. But she always encouraged me to play at an early age, because I was so tall. But I didn't come around until about middle school, but she said if you're going to play, play, give it all your effort and energy, and if you're not, you're not. So that's the biggest message I got from her.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Jhas, the Jones Cup experience this summer, talk about that a little bit, because you got a chance to meet a lot of players in the Big 12 and play with them.

JHASMINE PLAYER: Yeah, my teammate Rachel Allison and I were I guess blessed with the opportunity to go to Taiwan and play under Vic Schaefer, and we played alongside a lot of people out of the Big 12. Those are people we never get a chance to meet. So the best example would be Rush, we thought she was the devil. Because we were always playing against Leah, and then we got there and were playing with Leah, and we found Leah is probably one of the most inspirational players I played with.

It was great to know those people on a personal level. It was a good opportunity for myself and my teammates. And we thank Vic and everyone who helped support us.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Coach Goestenkers makes you guys read, outside of what's required in your academic work. Why and what have you read and what do you do after you read it?

ERNEISHA BAILEY: This summer when we were done with summer school, Coach Goestenkers assigned us books to read. And mine was *The Right to Lead*. And it was inspirational quotes from leaders. Someone read *The Secret*. And when we came back we had to do a book report and explain what happened in the book and you couldn't just get like Spark Notes, because Coach Goestenkers read all the books. She knew

exactly what was going on. And we had to write a book report and go back to our team. And we were in the process of going through all the book reports.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Your team was picked 12th. It's not a place you're familiar being picked. Talk about a little chip on your shoulder and what you can prove and what you've been doing in the offseason to get ready for the conference play?

ALYSSA HOLLINS: Being picked 12th, I think it's a blessing in disguise. We didn't before, but now we do. We were picked last, but everyone knows we have to put in work. In practice coach has been focusing on details and being detail oriented. We know the little things are going to be what push us over. We have a lot of girls, everybody is a brand-new, fresh face, and working hard and to prove that we're talented. And we're better than the 12th pick.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Jhasmine, Coach Mulkey has what has been termed Mulkeyisms, some of it is from her southern upbringing. She said if you wallow with pigs you'll smell like them. What does she share with guys in practice, and what other Mulkeyisms are out there?

JHASMINE PLAYER: Coach Mulkey shares with us life in practice. Whatever she goes through, she shares it with us the next day in practice. She makes us make sure we know -- when we're outside the gym, whoever you hang around or associate yourself with is what you're going to be like. She tells us -- she asked us about 24 times in practice how good do we want to be, and that's just -- we've lost a lot of players in the last couple of years. So someone now has to step up. She tells us the difference between doing something part way right and all the way right is the difference between winning and losing.

When we get in the game if we do those little things wrong, it could be the difference in the game. She tells us a lot of things. She's a really good coach. And when you sit back and think about it, I guess when you grow up you learn a lot.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Toccara, you worked Connecticut's basketball camp this summer, and what did you gain from that?

TOCCARA ROSS: I would say coaching experience. I've always been in the uniform. And this was a chance for me to step outside of it and experience that. I developed a passion, a love, over one or two summers, seeing the type of kids that come in from that program, being able to help these kids was probably the most important thing

I've ever had to do in my life, to see a smile on a kid's face, when they've never touched a basketball, let alone played with other people, and it was motivating to me. And something I brought back to my teammates.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Taylor, with you and Toccara both being in the north and having only Oklahoma on your schedule once, unless you meet them in a tournament, you both are undersized post players, you have to guard Courtney, and you get one more shot at it, is there anything you want to ask Courtney, you might like to know about her game right now? Ask her.

TAYLOR MCINTOSH: I was thinking about this. The only thing I was going to ask you about is how is it playing with your sister? Do you guys ever argue or anything in practice?

COURTNEY PARIS: Every once in a while we'll start doing our at-home bickering, like the team will say, Ashley, you be quiet. No, you be quiet. The coach says, what are you doing? It's fun, though. It's cool, being able to experience something as big as college and playing Division 1 basketball, since you guys are doing it you know how big it is, but to do it with your family, and let alone with your twin sister, it's awesome.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: What about sharing the car?

COURTNEY PARIS: She doesn't drive. I'm her driver. She has a personal driver.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: She says, Pick me up outside of class, I'll be ready, take me over here?

COURTNEY PARIS: Exactly. I don't mind it. I love driving.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Can I get your cellphone number?

What about Toccara, what do you want to ask Courtney?

TOCCARA ROSS: Do you plan on missing any games during the Big 12, Courtney?

COURTNEY PARIS: I hope not.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Courtney, in Norman and all around the Big 12, you get so much attention. Whenever you go somewhere people know who you and Ashley are. And it's got to have changed your life. How do you maintain your own privacy, and how do you balance all that when you're in the grocery store and someone wants your autograph, or you go to the movies and everybody is whispering?

COURTNEY PARIS: Sometimes it is

frustrating, because you want to be -- you are running late, but then you realize there was a time when women weren't allowed to play, and have people, grown men coming to you, and saying hey, can I get a picture, it's pretty humbling. I have to remember that I'm representing a good cause and it's worth it.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: The last two years at Texas you guys have won a combined 31 games. Coach Goestenkors comes and she's had 7 straight years where she's won 30 plus. What is the most physically challenging thing that she has asked you all to do so far, since she got to the job in April? Please don't say it was reading a book.

ERNEISHA BAILEY: No, she wants us to be mentally tough. I know I struggled with this, this was probably the worst thing I struggled with my whole college year. She wanted us to be mentally tough. She wanted us to run a mile. And guards had to get in at a certain time. My time was 6:45. I hadn't ran a mile since eighth grade. So it took me probably 7 weeks to get it in 6:43, finally. But she wants us to be mentally tough. And a lot of things that we do, like she makes it we'll do drill for ten minutes and you'll be fatigued and tired and want to quit and that's when you have to get tough mentally, and she's training us, because being mentally tough is what's going to win games.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Alyssa, you have that big pancake breakfast coming up. What is that all about? And share what the team does at that?

ALYSSA HOLLINS: Homecoming weekend, it's part of the festivities. In the rec center, there's a big pancake breakfast, anybody that can walk through and watch us scrimmage. It's a lot of fun. For a lot of people it's part of the homecoming day. We enjoy it. The best part might be all the pancakes and sausage afterwards, but it's a good time.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: Courtney, there's a lot of comparison, people make the comparison between you and the other CP3, Candace Parker at Tennessee. You split a lot of the National Player of the Year awards last year, and now you have a chance to play with her and get to know her a little bit. Assess your relationship with her a little bit and how you guys have become friends and how you're really two different players and there's no comparison?

COURTNEY PARIS: I think it was cool that we got to spend this last September together. We played together before high school, before she came to college, and we were cool and friends and

we were roommates. And then we got to college and it was the rivalry thing; who's better. It's more people saying it instead of you. I never got a chance to talk to her and be around her. But that stuff sits there. It was cool to be around her and it's just like -- obviously she's a totally different player, I'm a totally different player. None of it matters. We're normal kids trying to do what we love. And she's a sweetheart, a great person and just fun to be around. But I think that rivalry is good for women's basketball, but it's nothing personal.

DEBBIE ANTONELLI: E-Bai, you're from Kansas City, you told me your high school was down a few blocks. What would it mean in your senior year to have a chance to win that?

ERNEISHA BAILEY: This would mean a lot. We haven't really been a force, and I think this year we have all the keys to being successful, and coming back to Kansas City my senior year, and not being on the bench will make this experience a good one. I want to do well in the tournament and play well in front of my parents and people from church, my hometown, my coach.

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