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**NCAA** 2013 BASKETBALL  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL  
FIRST/SECOND ROUNDS  
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, HOST

An interview with:

**COACH MIMNAUGH  
MOLLY SCHLEMER  
CAROLINE REEVES**

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Cal Poly.

**Q. What's it like being at the NCAA Tournament and being there?**

MOLLY SCHLEMER: It's a dream come true for all of us. We're enjoying every moment of it. It's a great team bonding experience, and we're all really glad we're here and that we've made it this far.

**Q. Caroline, I know you are traveling and everything else, but obviously you've probably been paying attention to the men's tournament. Are you all for Florida Gulf Coast? Putting yourself in that frame of mind?**

CAROLINE REEVES: It's definitely exciting seeing them win. It's encouraging that we have nothing to lose, and we're excited to just go play tomorrow.

**Q. Molly, records are made to be broken. But being the first to do something is something that doesn't go away. Talk about the feeling of being on this first Cal Poly team, people remembering you and your team for getting this far.**

MOLLY SCHLEMER: It's a crazy opportunity that we have worked for. It's surreal and hard to get used to because Cal Poly has never been here before.

But like I said, it's crazy and just taking it all in. We've worked really hard for this moment, and we're just enjoying being here.

CAROLINE REEVES: We're just excited to be here. It's been neat to see where the program has come and seeing it improve every year. This is my fifth year, so I've got to see a lot of things happen over the years. It's great for Coach Faith to have the opportunity. She has been here for so long and given so much of herself to us, so it's a really neat thing.

**Q. Ladies, obviously playing Columbus State and Cal earlier in the season, what does that do to help you prepare for the team tomorrow?**

MOLLY SCHLEMER: I think the athleticism of both of those teams is similar to what we will see tomorrow. It was a while ago in the early season, so we just have to remember what we did in both of those games. We have to keep going on what that was and playing our game and not letting other people take us out of what we're doing.

CAROLINE REEVES: It was helpful to just -- the physicality of those games, just having the experience and knowing what to expect in these games. So I think it helps put us in the right mind-set of how we're going to need to play and just that it's going to be a battle every play, can't take any plays off.

**Q. Caroline, thoughts on Maggie Lucas, one of the stars of the game right now, and having to go up against her?**

CAROLINE REEVES: Yeah, Lucas is an excellent player, really, really good shooter, quick shot, green light on whatever. So there's going to have to be a lot of pressure on her, a lot of trying to get her into her second looks, maybe not her primary options, a lot of help on her from other teammates. It's definitely going to be a battle and just try to make things a little difficult for her.

**Q. What made you guys so good during your stretch run at the end of the season?**

CAROLINE REEVES: What made us so good? I think just hard work, just really focusing on each individual play and knowing that it wasn't going to be handed to us. Try to have the same mind-set, whether we were winning or whether we were losing.

If we made a score, great. Now let's go play defense. If we turned the ball over, hey, let's go play defense. I think it was focusing on individual plays and knowing the game isn't over until the buzzer sounds.

MOLLY SCHLEMER: Staying together as a team. We worked really well together toward the end of our conference, letting go of our mistakes and not dwelling on them, just playing together. We're one of the leading assist teams in the nation, I guess.

So that has been to our benefit. Just sharing the ball, playing together and staying together and being friends on the court helps us.

**Q. Molly, you talked about this is a dream come true, but now you got a game to play tomorrow. Why are you confident y'all can win this game tomorrow, make it more than just, hey, we finally played a game on this side of the Mississippi River?**

MOLLY SCHLEMER: We have just been watching the NCAA Tournament and how there's been a bunch of upsets. Anything is possible, and confidence is key. We have to go out there, have a good practice today and just remember what we do, because when we do what we do, we do it well.

We just have to go play our game and know that anything is possible and nothing can stop us if we have the right mind-set.

**Q. Caroline, you mentioned nothing to lose earlier. Do you see yourselves as underdogs in this ballgame?**

CAROLINE REEVES: Yeah, we are underdogs just because we're undersized. But I do think we have a lot of heart and we play hard. I think sometimes that can be a better team.

So our goal is just to play really hard. It's potentially our last game, so why not go for every loose ball and pull an upset.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies, thank you very much. Good luck. Let's start with questions for Coach.

**Q. What does it mean to you and the program to get this NCAA Tournament berth?**



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COACH MIMNAUGH: We see the quality of student-athletes we have at Cal Poly; they're exceptional. Everywhere we go people are impressed by the character they have. After the game, you're going to see them pick up their water cups from the bench. You're going to see them gather their towels and put them in a neat pile. You will see the locker room spotless. You will see how they have character on the court and compete.

They're the right kind of people that NCAA wants represented in this tournament; and Cal Poly is privileged to have them representing them. They're first-class, and this is a first-class experience for them to have. We're so proud to be able to represent our great university and our outstanding conference as well in the Big West.

**Q. I know you lost two key players over the course of the season.**

COACH MIMNAUGH: Actually three, all over 6 foot.

**Q. Did they all make the trip with you?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: Two made the trip; one did not.

**Q. Who didn't?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: Maddison Allen, 6'4" center from Australia.

**Q. She is the one who didn't come?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: She did not.

**Q. Obviously, the desire to play for these players and this motivation, is there any concern that those kinds of emotions can hurt your focus? How do you deal with that and the loss in the Big West final is so fresh?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: The loss of Griffin is substantial for us. She had everything coming through her. Even though she is our 4 player at 6-foot, she is somebody that handles the ball. She is leading our team in assists, second in rebounds, kinda the heart of the team.

We have an award that we give every year to a player that represents what we call the "unbroken spirit." A herd of horses is unbroken and that's what she is, too. There is a "never quit" attitude about her, and she was the recipient two years if a row for us. So the loss of her is significant to our program, certainly for this game.

Caroline Reeves is going to fill in as best she can, swing from the 3 spot to the 4 spot. We're thin at the forward spots, so hopefully we won't get into any foul trouble. But it will be a physical game and they have excellent post play. So we're going to do our best to hang as tough as we can with their great players.

**Q. The players were saying -- it almost came through like we're just glad to be here. How do you instill in them that you have a game and a chance to win and your season is on the line?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: Anytime you take the court you're always in a position that you could win or you could lose. Our team, we're workers. Nobody is going to have us in their top 25 and on the "USA Today" poll. Pennsylvania State is deserving of that. We are hard hat, blue collar, dive on the floor, take charges, box out, do-whatever-you-can kind of team. Anything can happen with those kind of teams.

We got to our championship game in the Big West tournament. I was reminding them because I was at N.C. State for a few years when Jim Valvano was there. So I told them about that Cinderella team being able to march through, and they were inspired by the fact that you could overcome a lot of things, injuries included, if you play together.

Our team has done that this whole season long and we talk to them about throw your hearts over the bar and your body will follow. You're going to see a whole lot of hearts out on the floor tomorrow and their desire to win.

**Q. What are your impressions of Penn State?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: They're tough, really tough. As the girls said, very athletic. Size is going to be a major problem for us. We have two dinky guards -- I'm kind of dinky myself; I try to have at least three dinkies on the team, so I can talk to somebody.

Molly it's always like, hello! But they're going to be much bigger than we are. We can match some places in the quick department. We can't in the post. Molly is a good, strong post player. She hasn't, except playing against Oklahoma State, she hasn't faced playing somebody as big as she is, so that's going to be a challenge for her.

We're going to start out with a committee trying to play Lucas, and that's going to be a

big-time job. Caroline Reeves is going to start out on her. We will try to keep up with her zillion screens she has, and hopefully we can wear her out.

**Q. Talking more about Penn State, it would seem to have, I guess, good coaching, talent, and experience, probably a trifecta for a successful run. How do you see that?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: I see them really well-coached. They run excellent sets, things that are going to -- things that I think exemplify the strengths they have on the team. They make it tough for you, because not only do they run Lucas off the screens, but at the same time they're posting you up their bigs.

So there is no great opportunity to stay on double teams on the court. We'll do our best to give support, as Caroline Reeves said, with the ball screens coming off those. We're going to be totally isolated on the post play for a bit and how well we can have pressure on the basketball will give us a little bit of time to try to get around the post and try to do a better job defending them.

Well, I can't say that they're used to it, because I've seen them play quite a few teams and they've been really, really strong and they're going to be a battle. They're really well-coached and obviously their players are excellent.

**Q. We're working on a story at the AP about how coaches have competitive playing backgrounds as well, and I'm trying to illustrate that. Your thoughts on -- I don't know how much you get out on the floor with your players and work them in practice. But you played and Nikki played and Coquese played. How do you think you would do against any of these coaches in the tournament one-on-one, or what do you know about them as players?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: Well, they're all great players, much better than I ever was. I remember when I was -- my first Division I coaching job was at North Carolina State, and when I was there I was a graduate assistant to start out with. So I was on the court a lot against Andrea Stinson and Rhonda Mapp, and I remember getting back on defense and we were doing this drill, and I would always get in because I would take charge and be really tough.

Andrea Stinson is coming at me, and I got her. I got her, and she crosses me up and gave a

reverse layup and I had her, I had her; and that's probably what Ms. Washington would do and Nikki would do. They're all really, really great players, and thank God I don't have to get out on the court anymore.

**Q. You come to win and at the same time it is a first for your program, for your players. How much did you want them to balance the goal of concentrating and practicing and preparing to win a game, and yet you're in a different part of the country and the thing is a novel experience for you for a lot of different reasons?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: This is a fantastic opportunity. We just had final exams all this week for our winter quarter, and I can tell you that I'm just glad we were able to go to dinner last night. Caroline Reeves, our mechanical engineering student, normally brings her books and homework, and she is writing away doing her computations. I don't understand any of it. She didn't have to do that last night. She could come here and be free spirited. We are largely a team of faith-minded people, so never bet a against a coach whose name is Faith because anything can happen!

**Q. Can you talk about your reflexes on Kay Yow and how well you knew her?**

COACH MIMNAUGH: She is just the best. Anybody who was blessed enough to be in her presence would know how special that was as an opportunity. I was playing basketball overseas in Australia and I sent my resume out to 50 different colleges, and the one thing that Kay and I shared is our faith in Christ. I had put in there that I was part of Athletes In Action. I just had done a tour with them. I got all these different letters, places that I had never even really heard of. Obviously, I wrote it on the novel where I was sending my resume to. But I get a call from America from Kay Yow and she wanted me to come and be her coach, and I just -- Kay Yow? Kay Yow? Kay Yow? I get to coach with Kay Yow? I was going crazy!

The opportunities that she gave me to get into coaching and as a human being, I will never forget. It's just been a journey to see the kind of perseverance that she had. When the girls -- they hurt their finger or whatever, I'm like, you know, Kay Yow went through three battles with cancer. I think your little finger is going to be just fine, go on out there!

She taught me about perseverance and keeping the faith and how to run a program. I've been fortunate to be around some really good coaches, and she really talked about the wholeness of a program, how to help students get jobs, how to make sure they have study hall arranged and get all the supports they need in place.

I didn't have that back at Loyola University in Chicago. We were all just smart and left to our own devices. For how she was able to -- to love is one of the great things that I think she -- I feel bad she never got to win a national championship, because she deserved that. And the ability to love your players and not just have it be a business is something that was refreshing to see at that level because I know it doesn't always exist. That's something I try to do with my team members is love them.

I feel really bad, my first head coaching experience I was at University of Evansville and I had just lost my mom and wasn't really available emotionally to the kids the way I wanted to be. I try my hardest, but I feel bad for those kids that they didn't have the kind of experience that I got to enjoy in college, Kay gave her players, and the experience that these Mustangs get to enjoy; it's vastly different. It does start with loving your kids, and I think we got that in place.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach, best of luck tomorrow.

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