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NCAA 2014 BASKETBALL
CHAMPIONSHIP
DIVISION I WOMEN'S
FIRST/SECOND ROUNDS
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, HOST

An interview with:

**Coach Lisa Bluder
Ally Disterhoft
Melissa Dixon
Theairra Taylor**

COACH BLUDER: Last night's game was enjoyable for us. I thought we played well. I wish we could sit around and enjoy it a lot longer, but unfortunately we got to enjoy it for about an hour and then all thoughts shifted quickly to Louisville and being able to play them today.

They're a tremendous team, a team that a lot of people around the country questioned why they were a three seed. When you only lose four games, three of them are to the number one team in America, it's pretty crazy to think of them being a three seed when they've been ranked in the top all year long.

We know we have a difficult challenge. We have a lot of respect for their program, what they did last year, as national runner-up.

At the same time, it's a new year. We have the opportunity to play at home. We're going to give them our best effort.

Q. Theairra, you've been through this. Do you feel this is your best chance to get to the Sweet 16?

THEAIRRA TAYLOR: Yeah, I feel like this is the perfect team to do so. We've been so close, gotten to this mark so many times. Frankly, we're sick of doing it. We're going to go out and give it our best shot.

Q. Ally, what have you seen of Louisville so far? What do you think the biggest challenge they present is?

ALLY DISTERHOFT: Having played just yesterday, we didn't have a lot of time to look at them before yesterday's game.

They're a very talented team. They're pretty balanced in scoring and they're great on the boards. But we're just going to have to focus on playing Iowa basketball, sticking to our fundamentals, what we know how to do, and come out and execute.

Q. Melissa, what do you think about the advantage or benefit that you get to play them at home? How much can that help you?

MELISSA DIXON: It's absolutely a benefit to us. We're used to playing in Carver. We didn't have to travel anywhere. We've been sleeping in our own beds. We're used to playing at Carver together, so it's definitely an advantage to us.

Q. Melissa, does it feel, even at home, like the NCAA?

MELISSA DIXON: It feels a little different. Carver looks a little different with all the NCAA stuff. It looks really cool in there.

It's still Carver to us. We're used to playing here. We practice here every day.

Q. What kind of challenges do they present offensively?

THEAIRRA TAYLOR: Well, they're great in transition. They can shoot the ball really well. Obviously, they have Schimmel. She's been playing extremely well for them and is a top player in the country.

We just have to go out, communicate, and do what we did last night. Again, just play Iowa basketball.

Q. What kind of matchup does Shoni Schimmel provide for Sam?

COACH BLUDER: She's a great player. I mean, she's been around. She's played in the national championship game. She's incredibly experienced. She's physical. She's strong.

Sometimes Sam can out-physical, out-muscle, or out-grit people. But this is a pretty

unbelievable matchup right here between these two guards because they emulate each other quite a bit.

Q. How much do you enjoy that you're getting to face Louisville at home, and the benefit of playing the first two rounds at home?

COACH BLUDER: Everybody would tell you that it's an advantage to play at home. It's more that you don't have to travel, that you might have a few more fans cheering for you. It's the comfort level of playing at home.

It's important. I wish it was the most important thing in taking on Louisville tomorrow, but it's not the most important thing.

Q. What is the confidence level after the offensive performance last night heading into Louisville?

COACH BLUDER: It's pretty high. I mean, they're feeling good about themselves right now, and you should when you perform that well in the first round of an NCAA tournament. Again, this wasn't a 16-1 type of game. We played against a good Marist team, a team that's fared very well in past NCAA tournaments, and is very seasoned in the tournament.

It's not even just last night that we feel good about. We feel good about the way we've been playing the last six weeks to two months. We've won seven of our last eight games. We've been playing well down this entire stretch.

Q. What would it mean to finally get over the hump and get to the Sweet 16, to you and to the program?

COACH BLUDER: Yeah, it would mean a lot. It's something that has eluded me personally, and our program has certainly been there. We've been in the Final Four in 1993. But it's been a while. It's something that our team would really, really like to have the opportunity to claim that they did.

They've talked about it. But we know it's a very difficult task. It's a very difficult thing to get to the final 16 teams in the country.

But I feel like lots of times we've been up against the Notre Dames and Connecticuts in this situation, and Louisville is certainly to be talked about among that group. But at least we have it on our home court.

Q. What is your evaluation of Shoni's sister Jude?

COACH BLUDER: She had a really nice game and hit some good shots for them (last night). I think it's something she probably is very, very capable of doing but hasn't done consistently all year long. But when they have that added dimension of her coming in and hitting shots, it makes them a lot more difficult to guard instead of being able to sag off of her.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach.
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