

4-24-2006 Fair Competition--Women's Basketball

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2 JOSH CENTOR: Welcome to "Mondays With  
3 Myles".

4 I was involved in a discussion board a  
5 couple of weeks ago, and quite a few of the people I was  
6 chatting with offered the opinion that women's sports  
7 shouldn't receive the attention that they do.

8 Dr. Brand, I can't imagine that you agree  
9 with that statement.

10 DR. MYLES BRAND: Not in the least. I  
11 think that's a silly statement frankly.

12 You know, I was in attendance to watch, in  
13 Boston, the women's basketball championship between  
14 Maryland and Duke. And I got to tell you that the second  
15 half of that game was one, if not the most exciting  
16 women's game I've ever seen, and indeed one of the most  
17 exciting basketball games, period, I've ever seen. It  
18 was just awesome.

19 JOSH CENTOR: The closing seconds of  
20 regulation, when Kristi Toliver hit that shot, I mean,  
21 that is one of the greatest shots I've ever seen.

22 DR. MYLES BRAND: It really was. She's a  
23 young player, a freshman, I believe; is that right?

24 JOSH CENTOR: Is she a freshman or a  
25 sophomore? I'm not sure. Underclassman.

1 DR. MYLES BRAND: Underclassman. She  
2 played -- it was a tough game for her. There she is in  
3 the corner with seconds left. Bales, who's 6'7", a very  
4 active defensive player, charging full speed at her, she  
5 calmly takes the shot and ties the score. Incredible  
6 shot.

7 JOSH CENTOR: It was as if there was no  
8 doubt in her mind that that shot was going to go in.

9 DR. MYLES BRAND: She showed an enormous  
10 amount of poise. But I got to tell you in that game who  
11 really impressed me, as much as Toliver did -- and of  
12 course she threw it into overtime -- was Shay Doron from  
13 Maryland.

14 I mean, this young woman was a warrior.  
15 She came in the game, her thumb was taped up because she  
16 had a broken hand -- she had bandages all over her, and  
17 she was flinging herself around. And she, I think, gets  
18 credit in my mind for rousing the team and making --  
19 allowing Maryland to make that run. It was just  
20 incredible, gutsy play on her part.

21 JOSH CENTOR: And she had gotten knocked  
22 down late in the game, had to come out. Somebody else  
23 shot the free throws. And then she came on back in and  
24 led them to the win.

25 DR. MYLES BRAND: She took a hard fall, and

1 I think her -- she fell on her elbow. And, you know,  
2 sometimes, when you bruise your elbow, you lose feeling  
3 in it? I think she lost feeling in her arm. She wanted  
4 to take the shot anyway. Coach said, Now, wait a second.  
5 I mean, she was really a warrior. Quite impressive.

6 I saw them afterwards because I was on the  
7 stage giving out the trophy, and she's a slight young  
8 woman. I mean, she's about 5'7" or 5'8", slight. And  
9 standing next to her, I said, Wow, she really -- for a  
10 person that size, did incredibly well. And the  
11 competition was tough, and I give her a lot of credit.  
12 And I give the whole team a lot of credit for coming back  
13 against a great Duke team.

14 JOSH CENTOR: Definitely. One of the  
15 things that bothered me about that discussion in that  
16 forum was that the individuals in the discussion really  
17 seemed to think that women's sports doesn't deserve that  
18 type of attention, that any high school boys' basketball  
19 team would have beaten Maryland in that game.

20 DR. MYLES BRAND: So what?

21 JOSH CENTOR: That's a good answer.

22 DR. MYLES BRAND: I mean, the fact of the  
23 matter is competition means that you're playing on a  
24 level playing field. It isn't men against women. The  
25 fact is the best women against the best women were

1 playing in this particular game. That's what made it  
2 exciting was fair competition and the success of the  
3 Maryland team against a great Duke team, a more  
4 experienced Duke team. They played hard every second.  
5 Great coaching on both sides of the ball. I was really  
6 impressed.

7 And, you know, I think people ought to  
8 watch women's basketball a little more carefully rather  
9 than just making those comments.

10 JOSH CENTOR: Well, is that why they reject  
11 the notion that women can't play sports at a high level  
12 because they just don't tune in, they don't watch?  
13 Because I tell you, I was watching that, and that was a  
14 high level of sports.

15 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, frankly, I  
16 think that they come in with a bias, and they can't  
17 appreciate a good game. Not all women's games are good  
18 games; not all men's games are good games. But this  
19 wasn't a blowout. It was a close game. And I think if  
20 you just watch the competition and how hard they're  
21 playing, with a high skill level, I was really impressed.  
22 And very athletic.

23 JOSH CENTOR: Definitely. And this is  
24 another step in the right direction for women's sports,  
25 wasn't it? A big time game like this?

1 DR. MYLES BRAND: It was a big-time game.

2 You know, I think women's basketball is  
3 getting better and better every year. Thank God for  
4 Title IX and our ability to allow young women the  
5 opportunity to play. And clearly they've risen to the  
6 occasion.

7 JOSH CENTOR: Well, thanks for answering  
8 those questions.

9 Thank you for tuning into "Mondays With  
10 Myles", which can be found on the NCAA blog, the  
11 DoubleAZone each and every Monday morning. If you'd like  
12 to subscribe, you can find our podcast on iTunes.

13 Dr. Brand, thank you.

14 DR. MYLES BRAND: My pleasure.

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