

3-12-2007 Basketball Championships

1 (File: 20070312mwm)

2 JOSH CENTOR: Well, the tournament bracket for the
3 men's was released yesterday, the women today. You're the
4 president of the NCAA. Does that mean you know who's going to
5 win each game? Which team will win? Putting you on the spot.

6 DR. MYLES BRAND: No, I don't know it all, and that's
7 what makes it so exciting. It's reality TV written large.
8 You know, why do people like college sports and the tournament
9 so much? And the answer is we don't know who's going to win.

10 JOSH CENTOR: That's right.

11 DR. MYLES BRAND: As they say, it's why we play that
12 game.

13 JOSH CENTOR: Even you don't know who's going to win.
14 But it's an exciting time of year. And just a quick point:
15 The Divisions II and III tournaments are going on, and it's
16 exciting at every single level.

17 DR. MYLES BRAND: It absolutely is. I mean, they get
18 less national exposure, but the fact of the matter is it's
19 exciting for the fans, it's most exciting for the schools, and
20 it's a lifetime experience for the student athletes.

21 JOSH CENTOR: Obviously, Division I tournaments get
22 the majority of the coverage. And a lot of people have things
23 to say about the tournaments, about college sports, and use
24 the tournaments as a platform. Is this okay?

25 DR. MYLES BRAND: Only if they tell the truth. And

1 sometimes, people exaggerate for their own purposes, and I
2 think that disadvantages the schools and the teams. It's
3 unavoidable. I appreciate that fact just because there's so
4 much publicity and it's so popular, but the fact of the matter
5 is, you know, let's treat the schools and the tournaments with
6 some respect.

7 JOSH CENTOR: How does the NCAA try to keep that
8 hoopla to a minimum?

9 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, we don't try and keep it to a
10 minimum, to be honest about it. We like the fact that it's an
11 exciting event. It's good for the schools; it's good for
12 college sports; it's great for those who participate. We want
13 to keep in proportion with good sportsmanship and good sense
14 and respectfulness, but getting excited about it is fine.

15 JOSH CENTOR: But there's been a problem with ambush
16 marketing. That's something that we've seen in past years,
17 and I assume that people try and take advantage of the March
18 Madness name and the NCAA Basketball name.

19 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, ambush marketing just means
20 that you're not paying for the use of the time or the name,
21 but you're sticking yourself on the screen in one way or
22 another. That strikes me as unfair and pretty shady business,
23 and we try and prevent that.

24 We're doing a better job. We want to make sure that
25 our logos and the schools' logos are used appropriately, and

1 we do pursue those vendors who don't do that. We look very
2 carefully at the kind of advertising we have so that it really
3 represents college sports. Well, not everything goes. We
4 don't accept all advertising.

5 And so we try and keep some sense of the collegiate
6 values as part of the -- and I think in the tournament, we do
7 a pretty good job about that. I've had a lot of people say to
8 me that they like the way the tournament looks and feels.

9 JOSH CENTOR: What makes these events so attractive?
10 Is it that these are 18-to-22-year-old kids on the court?

11 DR. MYLES BRAND: Yes. And first of all, they're
12 young. But, I mean, I think that's part of it, but also that
13 they're identified with the schools. Remember the schools who
14 are playing, and these young men represent the schools. The
15 young women represent the schools. And I think it's the
16 schools and the universities that make it so attractive.
17 People like to identify with either their old school that they
18 went to or other schools in their neighborhood or in their
19 community.

20 And so I think the fact that the universities are
21 engaged in this is what makes it so exciting.

22 JOSH CENTOR: And it's important to keep that focus on
23 the student athletes, isn't it?

24 DR. MYLES BRAND: It is absolutely important to do
25 that. These are young people; they are not professional

1 athletes. It's not as refined a game, for example, as the
2 professionals because, frankly, they aren't at that level of
3 play. But it is very competitive, and you can bet they'll
4 play their hearts out.

5 JOSH CENTOR: Absolutely. And what we're going to try
6 to do on "The DoubleAZone" is a different student athlete from
7 each and every team -- if we can get all of them in time
8 because the brackets are just released -- and we're going to
9 try and tell a little bit of a different story, not just what
10 you see in the box scores and the recaps, and we're going to
11 do that during the tournament. So I hope you'll check that
12 out.

13 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, Josh, I'm glad you're
14 doing that. Of course, those student athletes deserve all the
15 attention we can put on them.

16 But let me add, you might want to do something for the
17 schools too. You know, say a little bit about the schools to
18 which they attend and what's special about that school.

19 You know, our universities are not all the same.
20 They're all different. The great diversity in the American
21 higher education is represented by our tournaments. It would
22 be nice to say a little bit about the schools. What's special
23 about this school? How is it different from the others? What
24 are their strengths? Where is -- not just the athletic
25 programs -- what are the academic programs? Maybe you can

1 take that --

2 JOSH CENTOR: That's a good idea, and we will
3 definitely look into that.

4 DR. MYLES BRAND: Terrific.

5 JOSH CENTOR: Thank you, Dr. Brand.

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