

4-2-2007 Final Four Atlanta-Monday

1 (File: 20070402)

2 JOSH CENTOR: Welcome to a very special edition of
3 "Mondays With Myles".

4 It is Championship Monday, Dr. Brand. You must be
5 excited.

6 DR. MYLES BRAND: Oh, it's very exciting. Terrific
7 teams playing and it's been a great tournament so far.

8 JOSH CENTOR: Yeah. We have Florida and Ohio State
9 tonight.

10 DR. MYLES BRAND: Yes.

11 JOSH CENTOR: These are two terrific basketball teams,
12 but it's also a rematch of the BCS Championship game, if you
13 will.

14 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, that's really interesting.
15 We're seeing some of our schools excel in more than one sport.
16 Sometimes it was just a basketball school or a football
17 school, but right now we see some mutual sports between teams
18 and sports. And it's not only happening at the two high
19 visibility sports. We're seeing a number of schools being
20 able to, across the board, create good athletic, as well as
21 academic environments.

22 JOSH CENTOR: Is this good for intercollegiate
23 athletics when you have teams such as Florida and Ohio State
24 really dominating the landscape?

25 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, they're dominating for the

1 short period of time. We don't know who is going to be next.
2 That's the interesting thing, because the student athletes
3 change, and in the future it may be very different.

4 But I have to tell you, both of those schools have
5 great fan followings, and so they are national teams and
6 they're very interested in it.

7 JOSH CENTOR: Talk to me a little bit about the
8 weekend experience. I know it's a lot more than just going to
9 the games for you.

10 DR. MYLES BRAND: Yeah. That's exactly right. It
11 used to be, years ago, there was three games, two semifinals
12 and then a final game. And that would be the event.

13 Over the last, say, three to four years, what we've
14 done is we've really made it into a weekend, a four- or
15 five-day event, where, say, on the Sunday before there's music
16 opportunities, there's Hoop City, there's the Dribble for
17 young people. The fact of the matter is we've tried to make
18 it very fan and family friendly.

19 We don't want to turn it into the Super Bowl which
20 creates a really different kind of environment. This has to
21 be a collegiate environment. So we're trying to make it a
22 collegiate environment, but as basketball is the center, of
23 course, we also want to have other events.

24 JOSH CENTOR: Let's talk a little bit about the
25 transformation of this city. I mean, we're in a major city

1 right now, Atlanta. And if you walk down the street, it's
2 Final Four everywhere.

3 DR. MYLES BRAND: I give the people of Atlanta, the
4 local organizing committee, a great deal of compliments and
5 really a great deal of credit for all that they've done.

6 The fact of the matter is there are signs all over the
7 place. The people are very friendly. Everyone knows about
8 the Final Four. I think the city has really risen to the
9 occasion. The people of Atlanta, the volunteers, have just
10 done a tremendously good job.

11 JOSH CENTOR: And the economic impact, it definitely
12 has an effect on the local businesses, the hotels, et cetera.

13 DR. MYLES BRAND: There is a business aspect to it, of
14 course. And the reason why the city invests in the NCAA and
15 college sports as much as it does, you can't put on something
16 this big for free -- the reason they invest is because when
17 fans come in to watch the games, they stay in hotels and eat
18 in restaurants and generally contribute to the economy of the
19 city. So there's a good exchange that takes place.

20 JOSH CENTOR: You referenced some of the concerts we
21 have going on throughout the weekend over at Centennial Park.
22 On Friday, we also had a build Habitat for Humanity. You were
23 over there getting your hands dirty. Talk a little bit about
24 that experience.

25 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, that was terrific. We had

1 a lot of student athletes from the local colleges, Morehouse
2 and from Georgia Tech, and many of the other local colleges,
3 who came by and contributed their sweat equity, their labor,
4 to build houses. In fact, they're putting up two houses, one
5 which will stay here in Atlanta and one which will be shipped
6 to the Katrina area, down near New Orleans.

7 I think, first of all, I asked them a lot of them
8 about how they felt about that, and they thought it was a
9 terrific opportunity to give back to the community. They saw
10 it as a team-building opportunity in which they came together
11 and understood how to work together well. It was great fun.

12 But at the same time, they accomplished something.
13 The young woman -- young mother who was helping build, it's
14 going to be her house in Atlanta. And you couldn't help but
15 be affected by helping her find a place to live, which was
16 incredible.

17 JOSH CENTOR: And what really touched me is afterwards
18 everybody signs part of the frame of the house. And she wrote
19 a message to her 3-year-old son, to Dominic; Love, Mommy. And
20 I thought that was really touching.

21 DR. MYLES BRAND: Oh, I couldn't agree with you more.
22 It's a feel good opportunity and it has benefits for everyone.
23 You know, I think that Habitat For Humanity is a great partner
24 for the NCAA and together with Lowe's that provides the
25 materials, it's a terrific build-out.

1 I have to compliment Division II in particular, which
2 put a million dollars in this last year, as a Katrina effort
3 to kick it off. So Division II really gets a gold star, and,
4 of course, everyone has joined in. But that division, in
5 particular, took the lead.

6 JOSH CENTOR: So all of these events kind of lead up
7 to tonight's, you know, main event. We have a huge basketball
8 game tonight, and I don't want to lose sight of that.

9 Tip off is after 9 o'clock. It's a little bit late.
10 We're doing the school week here, and I just wanted to get you
11 to weigh in a little bit. These are students on the court
12 tonight, and I don't think they're going to get back for class
13 on Tuesday. And I know we're playing a major national
14 championship, but how does that fit in with our mission here?

15 DR. MYLES BRAND: I think that's a challenging
16 question and it's a good question. I think if, within reason,
17 you allow this to happen, it's okay. The problems arise when
18 you do too much, when you keep young people out of class too
19 much. And the tournament, though it only involves a small
20 number of student athletes because everyone else has gone by
21 the wayside, is nonetheless we have to worry about them as
22 well. And the teams travel with tutors. They have homework
23 assignments. Some of them are taking tests. In some cases
24 potentially finals during this period. It's tough on them.
25 But they still have to do their school work.

1 Are they missing class face time? Yes. Is that
2 important? Yes. Class face time is very important.

3 So this is a special time in their lives to play in
4 the final. For one team it's the second special time in their
5 lives. But I think as long as we try and keep it in
6 perspective and understand that it doesn't involve them all
7 year round, that they understand that they have to go to class
8 as well, it's important. I think travel away from school --
9 and some sports like basketball do a lot of that, baseball
10 does, as you know.

11 JOSH CENTOR: Absolutely.

12 DR. MYLES BRAND: Golf, and a number of other sports
13 have a lot of travel away from campus. We have to keep that
14 in perspective and make sure we don't overdo it.

15 JOSH CENTOR: One final question. You have the most
16 exciting -- in my opinion, the most exciting duty tonight.
17 You hand out the championship trophy. What does that feel
18 like?

19 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, that is special. I watch
20 obviously from the sidelines. And about 5 or 10 minutes left
21 in the game, I'll go down to court side, so I get ready to do
22 it. And it's just sometimes obviously you don't know the
23 winner until -- sometimes not until overtime, and then the
24 place just explodes. You know, confetti comes down and people
25 are running around the court. And it is just the most

1 electric time you can imagine. And I'll tell you the best
2 part of it, after handing out the trophy, what they do is they
3 play "One Shining Moment".

4 JOSH CENTOR: That's the greatest.

5 DR. MYLES BRAND: And you know what "One Shining
6 Moment" is about a three- or four-minute video that the CBS
7 crew have put together of the highlights of the entire
8 tournament, ending up with that night's game. And they edit
9 it right there on the spot, so no one has seen it before. And
10 all the players on the winning team stop, as does everyone
11 else, and looks at it. And you know, it's hard to keep the
12 tears away. It is just the most incredible sports-type event
13 that I've ever been associated with.

14 JOSH CENTOR: And what's interesting about that is
15 that we are in a hotel right now, and we have a couple of
16 closed circuit stations that continue to play the "One Shining
17 Moment" from past years in succession, year after year. And I
18 found myself watching one night, the entire docket of "One
19 Shining Moments". And I have a special moment in 2003 when
20 Syracuse won because that's my favorite program. But it
21 really is special.

22 And I do want to mark, because it's just as important,
23 you're going to fly to Cleveland right after this and you're
24 going to do the exact same ceremony with the women's
25 tournament.

1 DR. MYLES BRAND: That's exactly right. So I get a
2 double special treat. After I do the men's, which ends late,
3 as you point out, first thing early in the morning, I fly to
4 Cleveland and I'm able to do that on Tuesday night for the
5 women.

6 And let me tell you, it is equally as exciting. And
7 the women play just as hard and -- as the men do, and it's
8 just as exciting for the schools. Full stadium, full -- you
9 know, we always have full crowds. And it is -- was -- it's
10 spectacular.

11 I remember last year that that Duke/Maryland game,
12 what a great basketball game. It was literally one of the
13 best basketball games I have ever seen.

14 JOSH CENTOR: Absolutely.

15 DR. MYLES BRAND: It was just outstanding. So I can't
16 wait to get to Cleveland. So I get to do it twice. And
17 that's a treat for me.

18 JOSH CENTOR: Well, it's a remarkable time. I thank
19 you for taking time out of your busy schedule here in Atlanta,
20 and enjoy the games.

21 DR. MYLES BRAND: Thank you, Josh.

22

23

24

25