

# sports

## Duke basketball: the experience of two reporters

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Anyone who has been to a Duke basketball game knows that it is always an exciting event. However, getting a press pass to one of these games opens another whole can of worms.

Think of it. Front row seats, locker-room passes, press conferences with one of the greatest coaches of all time, Coach K. It is exhilarating. College fans screaming and cheering in unison in one of the most feared gyms in all of basketball. You think NCSSM fans are rowdy? You have yet to experience rowdy until you have been to a Duke game in tiny Cameron Indoor Stadium (capacity: 9,314).

We attended the pre-season match-up between Duke and Australia with male dorm coordinator Steve Goldberg, who provided us with the press passes. Granted, this is not the most talked about game of the season, but the players and fans still put on a spectacular show.

The first thing about a press pass is the great parking. We got to pull up right to the gate. Then, we were immediately ushered to the Duke pressroom for a pre-game briefing and dinner.

We could not get over our luck. Not only do we get front row seats and behind-the-scenes passes, but they feed us too. We were given statistics and information on both the Duke and Australian players before the game and during half time. As game time approached, the other media began to take their seats

courtside. We walked onto the court in the bright, hot lights and

to take the floor, the fans greeted them with "G'day mate."

After the tip-off, the noise was so loud that we had to yell at each other to talk. Unfortunately, because we were supposed to be "working media," we were not allowed to cheer with the Cameron Crazies; however, laughing was hard to contain. The Dukies put on a show of three-pointers and high-flying dunks. Even though the game was insignificant, the Crazies were into it the whole way. They only sat down at half time to rest their sore throats and aching legs.

The fans continuously found new and interesting ways to insult the visiting Aussies. When an opposing player missed a free throw or open shot, the Crazies would scream, "Too much Fosters," or "Stick to rugby." At one point during the game, after Duke had an insurmountable lead, they chanted, "New Zealand's better." Late in the game, an Australian player fouled out. The

fans began their trademark yelling until he sat down. However, the brazen Aussie was more daring than most. He braved taunting for more than ten minutes as he refused to take his seat. The Crazies reciprocated, only stopping their yelling when their players were shooting free throws. But, finally, as all players do, the Aussie succumbed to the onslaught, sitting down to a chorus of "See ya."

Duke won a resounding victory, 123-63. However, our adventure was far from over. We still had a press conference and locker room interviews to attend. Coach K entered the room amid rapt attention and wonder on our part. He then proceeded to break down the game piece by piece. He seemed to talk more about the upcoming season than the game that just occurred. He felt that the three things that made the team play well were that they were ready to play and play hard, and had good spacing on offense, and were not selfish.



Jon Dougherty and Stephanie Hartung pose with the Duke Devil after their press conference with Coach K.

~Duke P7~

## "TEAR IT UP BASKETBALL" IS BACK FOR THE UNI'S

katie watlington

"Tear it up" is the motto that can be heard in a huddle with the women's basketball team. They say the phrase after practice, before every game and during timeouts.

"It helps boost our confidence and gives us a sense of team unity," said Junior Emily Warren.

The 1999-2000 women's basketball season began in early November with the start of practice. The team works out everyday from 4:15-5:30. Practice consists of conditioning, shooting, going over plays, and lots of lay-ups.

The season ended for the Uni's Tuesday night, February 23, with a defeat by Cardinal Gibbons in the first round of the conference playoffs. Their regular season record concluded at 5-12. Despite their record, the girls have played hard this season, many of the games coming down to the wire.

"We had a hard time playing to our full potential, especially after Christmas break. I think we have the ability to win more games than we did," said Senior, Emma Hardison.

This is Coach Melissa Hill's first season with the women's basketball team at NCSSM.

"I feel that we had a good season, although I feel that we could have been more victorious in a couple of games," said Hill.

This season is Coach Hill's first year actually coaching a team. While she lacks coaching experience, she makes up for this lack of experience in playing time. Beginning in the seventh grade, she played basketball all of the way through school, including while she attended Fayetteville State University.

"I think Coach Hill really cares about the team which shows through her actions. Though she is a first

year coach, she should be commended for turning the team around," said Senior Jonelle Stovall.

The women's basketball games for the majority of the season started at 6:00 pm. This has usually resulted in a smaller crowd at the women's game, compared to the men's. The one game where the women played after the men resulted in a much larger turnout for the women's game.

"Our season would have been a lot more exciting if we had more support. The one game when we played after the guy's team was probably the most exciting game of the season," said Junior Meera Sridhar.

The women's basketball team worked very hard this year and deserves everyone's commendations.

"Despite our overall record, we still had a great season because we practiced hard and learned a lot," said Junior Emily Warren.

## Boys' basketball ends season with loss to Cary Academy

william garneau

The boys' basketball team ended its season with a tough loss in the first round of the TISAC tournament to Cary Academy. Although the Uni basketball squad had a hard time this year, its solid talent was revealed at Cary Tuesday night.

With Tuesday night's loss, the record of the boys' team fell to 1-16. Some of the difficulty that the team encountered this year is surely attributable to the announcement midway through the year that Ray Sanderson, the team's coach, had resigned.

The team had very little experience since the three returning seniors were the only ones with varsity basketball experience. But the losses are surely not due to a lack of working. The team practiced for close to two hours each day during the season and even came in on Saturday mornings for practice.

The prospects for next year are promising. Alex

Hawkins, a starting forward and departing senior, believes that there is much potential.

"Depending on the situation with the new coach and the incoming junior class, I think that the team could be very good," said Hawkins. Alex was also quick to add that the TISAC conference was very strong. The conference, which includes private and independent schools in the area, is composed of Cardinal Gibbons, Cary Academy, Durham Academy, Ravenscroft, and NCSSM.

Evan Burness thinks that the support that the fans bring really helps the team.

"It's really great playing at home and nice having fans that go all out for us," said Burness. He also credits the support of the cheerleaders for helping to raise the spirits of the fans during the season.

The home games were very well attended this season and provided an activity for the entire NCSSM community. We thank the players for their hard work this season and look forward to what next year brings.