

Journal relates experience on the road

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Sports Editor

The Guilford College Volleyball Team: special players, special people. Many of you have probably seen them in action on the court, but here's an insider's view on what a road trip with them is like.

Friday, Oct. 11

7:30 a.m.

My alarm goes off.

8:11 a.m. On the bus

"Hey Coach, Em didn't make it," jokester Carolyn Doss says as Emily King hides behind a bus seat.

"What happened?" asks Head Coach Gayle Currie knowingly.

"She lost track of time," Doss replies.

King grins while listening to her housemate throw Currie a line.

"Well anybody's dispensible," Currie adds.

The jig was up.

11:45 a.m.

Currie awakes to the beckoning of players for a food stop. Walking up the aisle, she notices her polar bear "Bubba" in Doss' clutches. She snatches it away from the kidnapper.

12:15 p.m. Somewhere in Virginia

"It's weird not knowing where you are. Do you know where we are?"

"Somewhere in Virginia," Chris replies specifically.

We walk across the road to McDonald's with Anice the manager and a freshman—Arlene.

3:15 p.m.

We arrive at the Lantham, Md., Red Roof Inn.

4:34 p.m. Gallaudet Courtside

Three matches are taking place; Coach takes the players outside for a team meeting.

Gallaudet, a deaf team, plays in front of us. It's interesting to watch them communicate, frequently using hand signals and facial expressions to relate to each other.

5:15 p.m. vs. Catholic

Down 11-13, up 15-14. lose 15-17 in game one. Up 6-0, down 10-12, tied at 13 in game two.

After a few side outs, a spike by Laura makes it 14-13. Then Catholic hits a ball out to tie the match at a game apiece.

"Intensity," the Guilford players yell in unison to break the huddle before game three. Rally scoring. Confidence high.

Down 4-2, the Lady Quakers reel off five straight points behind Christine Schroeder's serves. Then we go up 14-8 and C.J. the bus driver yells, "We got it, we got it!" After Catholic hits the ball into the net, we do have it—a victory.

Saturday, Oct. 12

7:25 a.m. McDonald's

"Six hours of sleep in volleyball season is a lot," said Currie. "Usually I'm either doing bedcheck or on a recruiting trip late at night."

8:10 a.m. On the road

Molly Seabrook is braiding Christine's hair as usual.

"Jen, have you read these chapters?" asked Susan. "I've read the first four," answered Jen.

Here's a reminder that these athletes are students and must find time whenever possible to study. This makes the team's overall GPA (well above 3.0) that much more impressive.

8:25 a.m. Outside the Gallaudet gate

"It's really important that we go out and do well," Laura said. "Because we have a chance to do really good this season. For us seniors, this is our last tournament. It means a lot to us. Let's go get 'em."

8:40 a.m. Athletic Complex Basement

I walk with Chris downstairs for some ice. We are then sent upstairs behind a deaf person. He leads us to a kitchen to scoop ice. Another deaf guy comes in protesting our getting ice.

Now there we are, Chris and I, standing in between a signing argument. It was fascinating. Chris decides we have enough ice and we thank them and walk back to the court.

8:47 a.m. Courtside

After exercise drills, Carolyn runs up to Currie.

"You need to have that [hip] pad on for five matches," Currie tells her senior.

Though not a big hitter, this shows how important Doss' health is to the team. The scrappy defender goes all out on diving for balls and thus must wear a donut pad on her injured hip.

"When landing [in a dive], you gotta come in like an airplane and ease into it," Currie explains. "Carolyn comes in like a helicopter."

10:40 a.m. Post-match

Guilford has just defeated Greensboro College 15-5, 11-15, 15-13. I was line judge. I had to remind myself to forget the people when calling points.

10:58 a.m. vs. Western Maryland (2-0)

Down 11-7 in game one, Currie calls a timeout. Guilford wins eight of the last ten points to win as the Quakers' entourage of half a dozen parents rise to their feet to cheer.

In game two, the most remarkable point yet was played. Carolyn layed out for her patented one-fisted dive dig to punch the ball to Trudy on the wing. Buckingham spiked it to the corner of the court. This put the Lady Quakers up 5-2 and me in awe.

The match ended how it usually does, with Brenda spiking one home. Time for lunch.

Noon Classroom 214

The parents have prepared a feast. And I mean a FEAST! Sandwiches, baked goods, drinks—you name it.

1:22 p.m. Huddle before EM match

"Intimidate them with your attack," Currie says. Guilford does just that in winning 15-11, 15-7.

2:20 p.m. 4-0 and headed to the semis

"We did a lot of good things—let's keep our momentum." Currie decides after her team swept through the first three matches of the day.

3:03 p.m. The semis

"Here we go Guilco, here we go," Laura cheers. Ali serves to a 5-0 lead. Brends spikes, Clarice spikes, Laura spikes. The Quakers go up 11-0 before triumphing 15-1.

The Lady Quakers turn the match around. A successful tip over the net by Trish Allman wins it, 15-12.

"We're in the finals," Mr. Raney shouts.

4:19 p.m. In the finals

Two return errors put Guilford in a hole at 0-3. At 3-8, Currie calls for a T.O. There's a sense of urgency in the air. The Lady Quakers fall behind 7-14.

Slowly, Guilford chips at the lead until it is theirs! 11-14... 12-14... 15-14! A couple points later, the Quakers have pulled off one most incredible comebacks, winning ten of the last eleven points.

4:55 p.m. Game two

Guilford quickly takes advantage of the momentum carryover for a 2-0 lead. Suddenly, the spikers again find themselves trailing (4-7).

Guilford goes up 14-12 behind good, hard play and when a ball drops harmlessly on the Western Maryland side, the Lady Quakers have won the title.

5:22 p.m. 1991 Tournament Champs

"No singing [on the bus]," a tired Ali pleads to her teammates.

"The determination you showed and the hard, hard work you showed... it's nice to see people really work hard," Currie compliments her team.

"One big 'yes' for me," Laura offers. "Yes!" the squad responds.

"Donut!" shouts the team for Carolyn.

"Ahhh, Quake," the spikers cheer their trademark call.

After midnight

I talk it up with C.J. in the front. He relates to me some of his bus driving stories and his days playing ball against Danny Manning.

2:00 a.m. Ragan-Brown parking lot

The players are not too pleased about having to wake up. Carolyn, Laura, and Trudy played every point of the tournament. We nearly have to carry Laura back to her room.

I don't want this to end, but it must. I miss going with the team—"my team"—to away matches, but times change. I'm glad that I got to experience at least one more road trip with the spikers. They are a really neat bunch of people, besides being talented athletes.

Study in Tokyo, Japan 1992-93

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