

**2011 NCAA Women's Volleyball Tournament**  
**First and Second Rounds**  
Dec. 2, 2011  
Penn State vs. Liberty

**Penn State Quotes**

**Head Coach Russ Rose**

*Opening Statement*

**Rose:** I would first like to thank the administration for putting in a bid. Tim Curley and Graham Spanier were the people who put in a bid to host this tournament. I appreciate the contribution they made to the program. I want to recognize Liberty for a terrific season. You are always pleased when you get that first match out of the way. You never know how you are going to play, especially with a team with as many young people as we have. I can't pretend like I know exactly what is going to happen because I have had four months of not knowing what is going to happen. I thought Ariel Scott came out and for two-and-a-half games as an exceptional attacker before getting a little careless in the third game. It was good opportunity for Katie Kabbes to come in. Other than some of the back row people serving, I thought we played well against a team that I knew was going to play very hard and with great spirit. They represented their university in a positive way.

*Q: Was the circle on the court after the match preplanned?*

**A:** Much like the Nebraska game, it is a great opportunity for some healing in the Penn State family. We appreciate Liberty's guidance in that area.

*Q: How do you think your freshmen did tonight in their first NCAA tournament game?*

**A:** I thought a couple of them were a little crazy, but they are crazy most of the time. I thought Nia (Grant) looked like she was our best server tonight. We would like her to get more involved offensively, but I thought she did a nice job overall. Micha (Hancock) had some nice sets and good choices. I am not sure that we need to give them all a grade, but I saw some things that were good and some things that were a little disappointing. I thought that Aiyana (Whitney) came in and took a nice, big swing and had a nice block to wrap up the first game.

*Q: What are the expectations for this team?*

**A:** To do the best we can; to play hard and have some fun. It is a great opportunity for people to step up and challenge themselves to be the best they can be. There are some years where people's expectations are that you are a Final Four team without any credentials to be a Final Four team. This is a team that has a lot of up and downs throughout the season and I don't expect the tournament is going to be any different. It's about how do you handle things when they go bad and how do you keep things going when they are going well. I haven't set a bar for this team because I have seen enough of their efforts over the course of this season to be smarter than that.

*Q: What are your thoughts on Delaware?*

**A:** They are a scrappy team. I coached Bonnie (Kenny) a long time ago in the sports festival. She is a great competitor. She recruits kids who are tough. They were down in that fourth game and found a way to come back to win. They were disappointed in their performance last year when they came to Penn State for the tournament. I am sure they are going to play hard. They are going to stress us out in some areas. We are going to have to be better from the end line for sure.

*Q: What do you think you have to do differently to get Deja (McClendon) going tomorrow?*

A: I don't have a great answer for that. She has been a little under the weather. I think it reflects in her energy. Hopefully she will get a little rest tonight and be feeling better tomorrow. If not, it will be an opportunity for Aiyana (Whitney) or Darcy (Dorton).

***Q: What did you think of Liberty's scrappy defense?***

A: We knew that they were not going to be able to match us at the net. The scouting report said that they were going to play hard and with a lot of pride. I think they did as they had to do to get into the tournament. They earned their right to be here and they did what they do well. They are keeping their heads high.

***Q: Was there any plan to use your size advantage with bigger hitters against Liberty?***

A: No, we can't really change what we do. We can't just go with a smaller line up. If you go to a small line up, we would probably have a hard time terminating. We had to be little smarter with what we did. Tonight, I thought the best match up was Ariel Scott going over the top. She had good control of where she was hitting. That is why she was racking up all of those kills. It was a favorable match up. Not every match provides you with the same match ups.

**#1 Ariel Scott Opp., So.**

***Q: Was the circle on the court after the match preplanned?***

A: One of their girls asked us if we wanted to pray with them and we said yes. Their coach said a few words. It was really nice of them. It a tradition they have at their school, to pray with the other team.

***Q: You had 16 kills tonight. How did you feel swinging tonight?***

A: I felt really good. Micha (Hancock) and I have been connecting really well. It has been good at practice and is carrying over to the games. We are really happy about that.

***Q: How did it feel to get the first win?***

A: It definitely feels good. Every win counts no matter what team it is. Every team is going to play hard. Anyone can win. It feels really good to win our first match and hopefully we win again tomorrow.

***Q: What did you think of Liberty's scrappy defense?***

A: They played really hard. Their libero was really good and dug a lot of balls. They dug every one of our hard-hit balls. We had to do roll shots and tips to mix it up.

**#4 Dominique Gonzalez, DS, Fr.**

***Q: What are your own feelings about playing your first match in the tournament?***

A: It is definitely a milestone. It is an honor to be able to play in the NCAA tournament. You want to go out and do your best for your team. You want to step up and be the player you can be to help your team out the best way possible.

***Q: Were there any pre-match jitters?***

A: I don't think so. Our upperclassmen have done a great job of letting us know what it is all about. Everyone is going in looking to make a good run and we just need to stay focused on our team and doing what is best for our team.

***Q: In the back row, you guys have been saying all season that you need to pass better. Do you feel that you are doing a better job with that?***

**A:** We go in everyday to practice and work hard. We specify that without passing, we can't run an offense. We have to be good and work on getting three balls, which means you can set all three hitters. We work on that so we can make Micha's (Hancock) job a little bit easier.

**#15 Maggie Harding, DS, Fr.**

***Q: How did it feel to get into the match tonight?***

**A:** It was really fun. I love playing. It was good to be able to contribute.