All Eyes On Us
BUILDING THE CHARACTER OF CHAMPIONS

A Liberty Champion Basketball Special
January 16, 2003
One man, one vision
Flames Coach Randy Dunton knows that the key to rebuilding a program is to have one thing... a blueprint

By Andrew Martin, reporter

Randy Dunton, in his first year back as head coach since he left after serving as interim head coach for the 1997-1998 season, has brought an excitement and buzz back into “The Furnace” that has been missing the last few years.

With renewed energy from the student body and a backing from the administration, Dunton and his coaching staff say they are looking to provide the community with a top-notch Division I program that it can be proud of.

“It’s a process to build a competitive Big South team that is a perennial challenger for the NCAA tournament bid. We need community and student support to climb one rung of the ladder at a time,” Dunton said.

Among the support wanted by Dunton is a season ticket base of 2,000 community members and 4,000 students screaming at every home game. It may take some time to see this vision accomplished, but it will be fulfilled if the involvement from the community and the student body continues now and increases as the season and years go on.

When this takes place, it will pave a way to lure big time recruits into Liberty University, as these players will see a commitment to winning by the coaching staff and the community. Once the players are attracted to the program, they will feel the charisma put off by their coach, and be drawn into the university.

The vision of the coaching staff for the program goes deeper than just on-court success. With winning as a focus point of the team, character, discipline and academics are the ingredients the student-athletes must possess to be a part of Liberty University’s winning, the staff says.

“My coaching philosophy is a ministry of Reconciliation. The Lord challenges us to reconcile ourselves to values through God’s word with integrity, excellence, and service, then put them into place on the basketball floor,” Dunton said.

This philosophy is very lofty and can only be accomplished with the right people in and around the program. Dunton says the players have to sell-out to this philosophy for it to take affect. This can pose some problems when recruiting time comes around. The players must be able to compete in division one, but also must buy into what the university represents.

“The type of player we want in our program is one that is obviously a high level basketball player with the desire to be part of the Christian community education process and part of this program,” Dunton said.

Dunton has built a good foundation of committed players with his first recruiting class. Freshmen Jeremy Monceaux and Norman Simmons both have big time talent and the desire to grow in this Christian environment.

“Both kids are mid-major talent or better and both are committed to the big picture,” Dunton said.

These players along with the community support will continue to move the program in the right direction. But, Dunton says that a winning commitment has become evident already in the early part of the year by this group of players and coaches.

Becoming only the second team in Liberty University history to win five division one games before Christmas break is an accomplishment that should be recognized. This along with more achievements should be expected as long as Coach Dunton is at the helm.

“This team has had a positive start, but the real fire is yet to come. We need to put ourselves in a position to challenge for the Big South Conference this year,” Dunton said.

VISIONARY— In his nine months on the job, Coach Dunton has been a breath of fresh air to the program.

PHOTO PROVIDED

STANDING ROOM ONLY— It wasn’t long ago that LU fans were crammed into the Vines Center. Coach Dunton wants to see at least 4,000 students and 2,000 season ticket holders.

Did you know... That the highest attendance for a Liberty home game was 9,003 against Virginia Tech (1/23/97)
Living a Dream: The Ryan Mantlo story

By Robbie Adams, sports editor

From the first time you play sports when you are a small child you set goals for yourself. No matter how lofty they may seem, you strive to attain them. Very few individuals get to reach these goals, and of those, how many realize they are living a dream?

His dream is to be a Division I men’s basketball player but in high school he was voted all state as a defensive back. Colleges looked at him as a football player and he was recruited as such, even though it was his heart’s desire to play basketball. This young man then decided to enter Grand Junction Junior College to hopefully hone his basketball skills. He was able to lead his team to a 29-6 record as a sophomore, scoring 19 points and ripping down six rebounds per game.

He then got the call from new Liberty University men’s basketball coach Randy Dunton to join the Flames and a Division I NCAA program. His coach was even recruited to join this new and energized Flames squad.

His name is Ryan Mantlo, and he will admit he is not the most athletic man on the court but he makes up for it with a vision that has not been seen in the Furnace for a very long time. He is a 6-1 junior who has made an immediate impact on and off the court for LU. He was named as one of the team captains and said, “It is a great honor and something I truly cherish. One of the reasons I came to Liberty was because I was given the opportunity to become a team leader.”

Now let’s step back in this story for just a few seconds, how many people give up going to a premiere university to follow their heart and try to live a dream? How many guys sell out on every play to make their team better? How many still have a work ethic and follow their goals all the way through? Your answer is, not many. That is what makes Mantlo unique.

Mantlo looked at this year’s schedule and was asked what he thought about a December road trip that included Virginia, Clemson and Iowa. Mantlo said, “You have to always expect to win, I have never gone into a game with any other attitude.” Some may say that is just a kid showing his optimism in the face of sure defeat. However, if you heard him utter those words, you must realize that this is an individual who fears no one and is not afraid to let you know it.

As far as this year goes, Mantlo understands where Liberty was, but says this about where he thinks it can go, “We are moving forward, and we have a lot of new players. We are ready to go to the Big South Championship. We are ready to bring it home, and get back Liberty basketball the way it should be.”

Mantlo has also expressed an interest in coaching someday as well. He said, “I love kids and just being around the game, and being able to out coach another coach is a dream of mine.”

For the moment he is the Flames floor general, but in the future who knows what doors may open for him. Ryan Mantlo is a man who has earned his way to the top. He understands what hard work is and knows what he wants in life, so who would bet against him being a coach someday and living out yet another one of his dreams?

SPORTS TALK RADIO
AT ITS BEST.
Also, its worst.

JOHN FISHER
BACK OFF— The agile Mantlo has the ability to cut to the basket and either create his own shot or find the open man while in traffic. He also leading the team in steals.

JOHN FISHER
RIM ROCKER— The 6-1 Mantlo may not be the biggest player, but he finds any lane to the rim during crunch-time for the Flames.

Did you know... That Liberty’s career scoring leader is Karl Hess (1977-80) with 2,273 points?
Blue chip freshman still fights for respect

By Wes Rickards, managing editor

It was June of 2001, and the time had come for him to prove his critics wrong. He broke the state’s record for career points (and was yet to play his senior year), and he already shattered Alabama’s single-season points record...twice. But some still had their doubts. He was being courted by big-name schools like Kansas, North Carolina State, Auburn, Alabama, etc., but some thought that there really wasn't much to Jeremy Monceaux.

Take this player evaluation on him after a tournament, as an example: “Monceaux, the leading scorer in Alabama state history, didn’t show the ability to keep up with quicker guards on either end of the floor. [He] has the ability to fill up the points column, but only if he maintains the level of competition that his small high school faces on the next level.” Ouch.

“They have the right to say what they want to say,” Monceaux offered in response. “In those [tournament] games, I had 22 points, 11 assists. But they were asking me to score 40 games, I had 22 points, 11 assists. I played pretty well, even though our team got blown out.”

A year prior, he held his own at the Adidas ABCD camp. And the ABCD camp didn’t exactly have the type of players that his small, 1A high school faced. No, it featured guys who are now college superstars (like T.J. Ford, Daniel Ewing, Elijah Ingram.) Even a few that are NBA up-and-comers (Kwame Brown and Eddy Curry) were there. He was ranked as the No. 58 prep prospect by PrepStars Brick Oettinger, but there were a few who reserved their doubts. And so, in June 2001, Jeremy traveled to the prestigious “Rumble in the Bronx” tournament, where he could showcase his abilities in front of collegiate scouts.

But at the tournament (which once again featured top stars, including North Carolina’s freshmen triumvirate of Raymond Felton, Rashad McCants and Sean May), he was trying to penetrate the lane when he suffered a partially torn anterior cruciate ligament in his right leg. While going for a layup, Monceaux’s leg collided with an opposing player in mid-air, immediately “disturbing” his ACL. Such an injury has the potential to sideline someone for their career, yet Jeremy sensed that it wasn’t over.

“There wasn’t a point when I said, ‘I’m done,’” Monceaux said. “However, not everyone felt the same optimism as the 6-1, high school hero felt. Some of the major schools no longer showed interest; others, such as Auburn (to whom Monceaux verbally committed), began to voice concerns. Would he still be the same prolific scorer that he always was? Or would he need a lengthy curve before being able to compete, something which a school such as Auburn cannot afford? Once again, there were doubts.

“Even now, I play the same as I always did,” Monceaux said, saying that the ACL injury didn’t change him a bit, causing no reason for those worries. “I’m not scared to drive the lane... I’m the same player I always was.”

He had surgery on July 2, 2001 and was back in time for his senior basketball season (which was his sixth on the varsity level, he spent four in Alabama and two seasons in Spencer, La.). For the second straight year, he led his team to the Class 1A finals; Parkway Christian finished with a 22-7 record, and he was named Alabama’s Class 1A player of the year. Yet this time around, there was something missing. Maybe it was the injury, maybe it was a better supporting cast (teammate Jammel Halsey, a second team all-state nominee, was considered by some to be the best on the team that year), but the year lacked the typical panache expected from Monceaux (although it really is a tribute to his pre-injury career to say that a season in which he still averaged 28.3 points and 8.6 assists a game was a drop-off).

A month after he earned the Class 1A player of the year honor (actually, the third consecutive time he earned the award), Monceaux still didn’t know where he was headed. While he had verbally committed to Auburn, he was a little apprehensive. With the impending spring signing deadline drawing nearer with each passing day, he still didn’t have a college to call home for the next four years.

“I had three visits left,” he said, saying that he was looking at Vanderbilt, Florida State, and a school he was familiar with, but had entered into the mix late, Liberty. “Liberty made me feel at home.”

“I chose Liberty University because I really believe in Coach Dunton’s vision for the basketball program,” he said, according to a press release. “After my visit, I realized what the combination of academics and spiritual emphasis will do for my life. I want to play a role in helping the Liberty University men’s program get back to the NCAA tournament.”

But there were doubts, still. Sure, his numbers were impressive. They were downright outstanding — More points than anyone in Alabama history (4,555 in high school), a 50 point scorer 20 times, more three-pointers made than any other’s career, top three in assists, numbers one, two and three in single-season free throws made. Jeremy Monceaux brought jaw-dropping statistics to Liberty University. But then again, would he be able to put up the same type of numbers against Division I basketball, a far cry from Parkway Christian’s Class 1A competition?

“Playing for a 1A program just meant that I played 1A schools in the playoffs,” Monceaux explained. “I played big schools all the time.” In addition to big schools, there was some big-time competition. Some of his contemporaries for Alabama all-state recognition were Gerald Wallace, now a member of the NBA’s Sacramento Kings, and Ousamane Cisse, who was drafted by the Denver Nuggets right out of high school.

Given that level of competition, we can assume he’s up to the task.

Currently, Big South play is underway, with Liberty a pre-season pick to finish last. But this is a different team, and Monceaux has been a significant part thus far. But some still doubt him and his team.

It’s January 2003. The time has come once again for him to prove the critics wrong.

Did you know... That Liberty’s Carl Williams led the nation in steals in 2000?
The fire and the fanatics are back in the furnace!

All Photos by John Fisher
Who has the edge in the Big South?

By Wes Rickards, managing editor

- **Birmingham-Southern**: Diminutive junior Derek Williams may be small (5-9), but comes up big nightly for Birmingham-Southern. Their backcourt rounds out with Corey Watkins and Iceland native Jakob Sigurdarson, who also plays some forward. Birmingham-Southern has a strong team but will not be eligible for the Big South tournament until next season.

- **Charleston Southern**: Is a deep, balanced team without a recognizable star. But, they are a good defensive team. The Warzynski brothers are tall and Kevin, the younger one, can score. Guard Ed O’Neill is good at ball control for the team that should wind up somewhere in the middle of the conference.

- **Coastal Carolina**: Torrey Butler returns from an injury that shelved him last year, and the 6-3 forward is gunning for player of the year honors. University of Albany transfer E.J. Gallup and former walk-on Tony Darden round out the Chanticleers, the team to beat in the Big South conference.

- **Elon**: No one really expects much from Elon, and it’s living up to those expectations. Elon no longer has Brendan Rowell, and so the job of keeping the Phoenix out of the cellar will fall upon guard Ross Sims, center Rasmi Gamble, and forward Gary Marsh. However, their actions may be futile.

- **High Point**: Joe Knight is shooting over 40 percent from three-point range. However, the real spark for High Point is another sophomore Danny Gathings, a Virginia Tech transfer, who could be a 20-10 man in conference. Also with the Panthers is Dustin Van Weerdhuizen, one of the top players in the Big South last year.

- **Radford**: Raymond Arrington and Whit Holcomb-Faye are the only scorers on a team that is a shell of its former self. Seven-footer Jason Bees is tall, but a far cry from last year’s Andrey Svatychenko. Radford is a team that accumulates a lot of rebounds, but most of those boards are due to the fact that they miss more shots than anyone else in the conference.

- **UNC Asheville**: The preseason Big South favorites are led by seniors Andre Smith and Alex Kragel, both capable of putting up 20 points a night. The Bulldogs stand with a low RPI rating because they lost a lot of out-of-conference games. But those contests were against top teams, like Minnesota, Michigan, Oklahoma, Connecticut and Kansas.

- **Winthrop**: The departure of last year’s player of the year Greg Lewis has pretty much decimated Winthrop’s hopes of earning a fifth straight trip to the tournament. Senior Pierre Wooten and JUCO transfer Tyrone Walker are legitimate athletes on a team of role-players.
A look at the rest of the pack

By Robbie Adams, sports editor

The Lady Flames were picked unanimously to win the conference once again and look to bring the seventh straight Big South championship home to LU. However, along their trek they will face some competition...

❖ Birmingham-Southern: The Bucs come into the season as an official member of the Big South. Lindsay Boyett, a 5-10 Jr. guard, is the top returnee averaging 15.6 points per game last year. They look to contend behind four returning starters and a fresh start this year.

❖ Charleston Southern: Katie LaRue, a 5-6 Jr. guard and Erin Jedikowski a 6-0 Sr. forward are their top players. They will rely on team speed to compensate for a distinct height disadvantage to most teams in the Big South. The team will also use press to there advantage to force turnovers.

❖ Coastal Carolina: Preseason Big South Player of the Year, Nikki Reddick will provide the offense for the Chants. Reddick led her team to the Big South Conference record from last year. Sherrie Daniels, a 5-7 Sr. guard, averaged 7.3 points per game as well as 6.8 boards. A few newcomers will try to make an early impact, including Kristal Hood, a 5-6 guard from Frederick, Md.

❖ Winthrop: Janette Arrington, a 5-6 Sr. guard, who averaged 10.2 points per game as well as Stephanie Pannell, a 6-3 Jr. center, who averaged 10.5 points per game will provide the power. Games played between LU and Winthrop in Rockville, S.C. are very competitive.

❖ Radford: Had the coach of the year last year and looks to keep on track with new coach Jerri Porter. They came out of nowhere to finish third in the conference, and were led by Amanda Nesby who averaged 11.7 points per game. Radford didn’t lose many players and hope team chemistry can give them a boost to the top.

❖ UNC Asheville: They will hope to improve on a 1-13 conference record from last year. Sherrie Daniels, a 5-7 Sr. guard, averaged 7.3 points per game as well as 6.8 boards. A few newcomers will try to make an early impact, including Kristal Hood, a 5-6 guard from Frederick, Md.

❖ Elon: will return the duo of Holly Andrews and Jayme Chikos for the last time. Andrews, a 5-9 Jr. guard, averaged 16.4 points and four rebounds per game. Chikos a 5-8 Sr. guard averaged 7.5 points per game and 6.7 assists. Elon was the only team to beat LU in conference play last year and looks to try and unseat the champion in 2003.

❖ High Point: will be led by Narelle Henry who averaged 11.9 points per game last year. She is not afraid to take key shots and will look to take High Point above its fourth place finish in the Big South last year. Misty Brockman also returns and she averaged 13.5 points to lead the team last year.

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ONE TEAM....ONE DREAM

PHOTOS PROVIDED
Local girl begins to star on the next level

By Wes Rickards, managing editor

Because Tekita Butler is a local girl, she can count on loads of community support when she dons a Liberty jersey. After all, she helped lead Heritage High, a school just around the corner on Wards Ferry Road, to the state tournament each year of her career. So yes, she is a bit of a hero to the Lynchburg faithful.

Yet, while she is greeted with a resounding applause from the fans when she enters the game, her biggest fan isn’t seated in the arena. The one person, who above everyone and everything else, Tekita plays for hasn’t watched Butler play since her freshman year in high school. That individual, Butler’s biggest supporter, is her aunt.

The reason she doesn’t attend her games is a simple tragedy: she died in 1998.

During the Thanksgiving break of 1998, she and her aunt planned a trip to their native Florida. However, Tekita opted not to travel during the holidays, and she stayed at a friends’ house. Tragically though, her aunt fell asleep behind the wheel near Danville and she was killed.

Butler says of her aunt. “She made me strong.”

“She taught me never to give up on anything in life, because you never know when it’s your time,” Butler poignantly says. “You have to enjoy life one day at a time. I’ll always take that lesson with me, because she didn’t know when she’d leave, and she made sure she did things that she liked and enjoyed.”

It was then that Tekita dedicated her career towards her late relative and wound up paying her the ultimate respect the following year. As a sophomore, she led her Heritage team to a 24-2 record (ultimately losing in the states to a team that had won 52 straight) and earned her a spot as a USA Today All-American, being placed on its Virginia honorable mention team.

Butler didn’t just play her heart out for one sport but instead three; she was an all-district player in volleyball and all-state in track.

“I have to be strong, because you never know when it’ll be your final day,” she said, once again citing the most important lesson she ever learned. “I have to look at life day by day because one day at a time.”

After all, she had to perform at the best of her ability; to do otherwise would disrespect the woman who taught her to be the best that she could be.

In her senior year at Heritage, Butler showed her indomitable spirit by helping her team win the district, contributing 16.8 points and 12.0 rebounds en route to another nationally recognized season; she was a McDonald’s All-American nominee.

Plus, she managed to do it despite missing four weeks of action when she slammed her hand into a wall during a game, breaking a metacarpal in her right hand.

“It aches every now and then, but it’s better,” Butler said.

With a phenomenal career under her belt, the colleges predictably came calling, most notably JMU (some schools even pursued her after she had signed). But, those schools never really had a chance to land the blue-chip; Tekita already had her eyes set on the school just down the street, Liberty.

“I want to build a closer relationship with God and I figure I can get it through this school, and the basketball team,” she said. Additionally though, she had an ulterior motive for wanting to attend LU; her aunt graduated from here.

But unfortunately, she was beset with tragedy within weeks of the start of her first semester. During a routine check-up, the doctor noticed an abnormality with her thyroid. The thyroid, which is part of the body’s endocrine system, is primarily used to help regulate metabolism and aids in growth. As for Tekita, the doctor noticed a growth that they believed to be cancerous.

Butler, who plans on pursuing a career in nursing after graduation, explained that she had a knot that was three times larger than normal, and the doctors didn’t know why. And so, she had to undergo a “total thyroidectomy” which left her with no thyroid.

“I have to take synthroid every day for the rest of my life,” she said.

“Right now, I’m trying to adjust to the medication. It’s going to make me more tired, but it hasn’t affected me in terms of basketball.” So far, this has proved to be only a minor setback for her.

“I thought maybe it was a sign from God saying, ‘This is not what I want you to do.’ Injuries keep coming, but I keep pushing on,” she said before recalling the immortal words of wisdom. “Don’t give up. You can’t give up.”

And so, Butler overcame yet another obstacle and was ready to play in time for the Lady Flames first game, a home contest against Morgan State. During her few minutes of action, she recorded six points, three steals, two rebounds and a block in front of an enthralled hometown crowd.

“It’s nice. You have home fans, but you also have new fans that embrace you and treat you like family. It’s amazing that you have people looking after you,” she said.

But of course, the one that looks after her and cheers for her the most is nowhere to be found inside the Vines Center walls.

Somewhere, that one person is proud of her niece.

TWEETY— Tekita Butler has had her share of tragedies, but she still represents an important part of LU’s future.
A different view of game preparation

By Robbie Adams, sports editor

Athletes today are sometimes seen as superhuman. They take on the role of something that everyone else envies and are instantly elevated to a celebrity status. What happens though when you find out that person is no different than you and has to fight everyday to stay on top?

Now imagine a young lady who in high school was all district volleyball three times and could jump as high as many girls despite her distinct height disadvantage. Imagine a girl who was all state in track and still holds the record for the 400 meter dash, 200 meter dash, 4x100 and the 4x400. She was also a district and regional long jump champion twice. Imagine that, even though she a success in these other sports, she chooses to play basketball because it was more intense, more challenging and more rewarding to her. Imagine all these accomplishments, but at the end of the day she still has to worry about her blood sugar.

Yes, that’s right, Stephanie Walker is a diabetic. But she makes no excuses for an illness that on game day she may have to check as many as 10 times just to make sure she can have the energy and stamina to make a difference. Her life revolves around watching everything she eats and drinks. The look in her eyes that will tell you she is not a quitter and it will take more than having to watch her sugar levels to slow her down.

Walker is a 5-8 sophomore from Richmond, Va. As a freshman she led the team in scoring very quietly with 277 points. She scored 23 points at Charleston Southern last year and opened a lot of people eyes to a freshman class that was overflowing with talent. She is said to be one of the quickest players, if not the quickest, player on the team. She considers that speed to be one of her most useful assets while on the court. She also says that if she had one major thing that she needs to improve it would probably be her skills with her right hand. She knows that teams try to make her go right, but watch out for her left. She is confident and she is always getting better and won’t hesitate to show it off.

In her first ever NCAA tournament last year against South Carolina, one of the top five teams in the nation, Walker scored 19 points and grabbed four boards. After this, she found time to run the anchor leg of the 4x100 for Liberty in the Big South Championships and brought home a first place finish.

One misconception Walker says may be that people see her as a very calm player showing little if no emotion on the court. Occasionally you may catch a smile but she lets her game do most of the talking. She says however, that in the locker room, she is all over in anticipation of what is to come.

Off the court Walker says she is a sports fanatic who is an avid follower of the WNBA as well as the NFL. She made it clear that if the opportunity presented itself for her to make the jump to the next level, she would definitely consider it. However, she knows that for right now she needs to get an education.

She also spoke highly of the importance her parents have made over the years in barely missing a game. She said they have supported her since day one and helped her get to the level she is at today.

She considers one of her best friends to be teammate Crystal Peace, and says that she is a bit wild (which is the exact opposite of Walker), but they still have a lot in common.

This year she is currently the third leading scorer for the Flames and ninth in the Big South in field goal percentage.

Walker is currently majoring in sports management and looks to take a position in the athletic field, possibly dealing with the ticket office at a major university some day.

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HIGH SCORE— As a freshman last year, Stephanie Walker scored the most points for LU, the first time since 1997 that a rookie achieved that mark.

Did you know... That the single-season points record stands at 648 (by Elena Kisseleva in 1997)?
Second place is no longer an option. Winning the Big South is not going to be enough. But still, the goal is...

Crystal Clear

By Robbie Adams, sports editor

Crystal Peace and Kristal Tharp are two girls with at least two things in common. The first is they have the same first name (well, close enough). The second, and most important, is that they take Liberty to the next level and help the Lady Flames win their first ever NCAA tournament game.

It is crystal clear what the Flames want to do this year, but the road to get there won’t be easy. “On any given day anyone can win. So we have to come together as a team and rely on the talents that God has given us and keep our focus on him,” Tharp said. Peace also added, “Losing is not an option, we expect to win.” The Flames must focus on this conference season and attempt to go undefeated if they want to earn the respect on the NCAA and get a good seed. The Big South Conference does not have many strong teams and in turn pulls Liberty’s rankings down every year because LU has to play them. The Flames lost only one conference game last year to Elon and it had an affect on their seeding and bracket in the NCAA tournament.

On court, Tharp and Peace seem to be completely different on an emotional level. “I am going out there to have fun. God has blessed me with a talent. I want to go out there and do my best for him. And if I am having fun, I am going to show it. The game of basketball is supposed to be fun. So, that’s what I go out there and do,” Peace said. Peace has been known to be very vocal and scream after making a shot, and some consider her to be one of the emotional leaders of the team. Tharp said of Peace, “She brings a spark to the court, and you can tell when she is not in.”

Tharp countered by saying, “I am more of the leader in the way I play. I just have to keep my excitement in sometimes.” Tharp was part of one of the most exciting moments in Lady Flame’s history earlier this year when she hit a three-pointer with one second left to tie the game with UVa.

Off the court, both players are heading in different directions. Tharp intends to pursue a career as a veterinarian. She wants to go to veterinary school at Ohio State and settle down once college is finished. “That is what I want,” she said, “but we will see what God has in store.”

Peace however wants to stick with basketball but just in a different aspect. She intends to try to coach at the high school level if she does not enter graduate school. She thinks she can have an impact on kids. “I want to show some girls what I have learned, and be able to tell them so they can apply it to their game.” Peace also expanded on the fact that she wants her coaching job to be in a public school.

“I can share some things I learned throughout my career as well as share God with them when they probably wouldn’t hear about it at home,” she added.

Both players may be headed in different direction after basketball is over, but while it is still here they both agree on two things: They will be disappointed with anything less than the Big South Championship, and they think this year could be Liberty’s year in the NCAA tournament.

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KRISTAL & CRYSTAL— Both Tharp and Peace will be looking to help Liberty win the Big South Championship again and do some damage in the NCAA tournament this year.

Did you know... That the Lady Flames have a 83-11 record (.883) in Big South play during their six-year streak?
Crystal Clear

The goal is clear...
...the road is not.

A Liberty Champion Basketball Special
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