

NOTRE DAME WOMEN'S BASKETBALL 2005-06 SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES

2005-06 Notre Dame Women's Basketball – Game 29

BIG EAST Conference Championship, presented by Aeropostale – Quarterfinals

Notre Dame Fighting Irish (18-10 / 8-8 BIG EAST) vs.

#7/7 Connecticut Huskies (26-4 / 14-2 BIG EAST)

DATE: March 5, 2006

TIME: 6:00 p.m. ET

AT: Hartford, Conn. / Hartford Civic Center (16,294)

OVERALL SERIES: Connecticut leads 18-4

IN BIG EAST CHAMPIONSHIP: Connecticut leads 6-0

LAST MEETING: 2/19/06 (UCONN 79-64)

LAST MEETING IN BIG EAST CHAMPIONSHIP: 3/7/05 (UCONN 67-54)

TV: CSTV/College Sports Television (Eric Frede, p-b-p/Ann Schatz, color)

RADIO: ESPN Radio 1580 AM in South Bend (Sean Stires, p-b-p)

LIVE STATS: www.und.com and www.bigeast.org

NOTRE DAME TAKES ON #7 CONNECTICUT IN BIG EAST QUARTERFINALS

For the seventh time in its 11-year affiliation with the BIG EAST Conference, Notre Dame will play Connecticut in the BIG EAST Championship, taking on the seventh-ranked (and second-seeded) Huskies in the quarterfinal round Sunday at 6 p.m. (ET) inside the Hartford Civic Center.

The 10th-seeded Irish (18-10) advanced to the conference quarterfinals for the 11th consecutive season with a 73-66 victory over South Florida on Saturday evening. Notre Dame trailed by as many as eight points in the first half, and was down five with six minutes to play, but closed on a 16-4 run to pull out their fourth consecutive win.

Senior All-America guard **Megan Duffy** scored all of her team-high 16 points in the second half, sparking the Irish resurgence and extending her personal streak of double-figure scoring games to 13 in a row. Notre Dame tied a season best with five double-digit scorers, with freshman guard **Lindsay Schrader** tallying 14 points, sophomore guards **Tulyah Gaines** and **Charel Allen** tossing in 12 points and senior forward **Courtney LaVere** adding 10 points.

NOTING THE SOUTH FLORIDA WIN

- Notre Dame has advanced to the BIG EAST Championship quarterfinals in each of their 11 seasons in the conference (1996-present). The Irish also have won at least one BIG EAST Championship game in nine of their 11 tourney appearances (only "one-and-done" trips came in 2002 and 2004). Notre Dame now is 14-10 (.583) all-time in BIG EAST Championship play.
- The Irish lead the all-time series with South Florida, 3-1. Saturday's game was the first postseason meeting with the Bulls in any sport. USF also is the 12th different opponent for the Irish in its history at the BIG EAST Championship.
- Notre Dame improves to 19-4 (.826) against Florida schools, including a 12-1 (.923) record away from home.
- The Irish continue to play well in close games, moving to 10-4 (.714) this season in games decided by 10 points or less.
- Notre Dame is 10-5 (.667) away from home this season (7-5 road, 3-0 neutral).

- Notre Dame picks up its second win in seven all-time games at the Hartford Civic Center. The Irish also won their BIG EAST quarterfinal match-up with West Virginia last year, 70-59.
- Notre Dame is 3-0 in its green uniforms this season, with all three wins coming in the last three Irish road games (West Virginia, Cincinnati, USF). The Irish are 8-4 (.667) all-time when sporting the greens (4-1 regular season, 4-3 postseason).
- Saturday's win over USF marked the eighth time this season Notre Dame has been tied or trailed in the final 11 minutes and come back to post the victory.
- Notre Dame's five double-digit scorers vs. South Florida tied a season high set back on Dec. 18 vs. #22/21 Utah in the title game of the Duel in the Desert at Las Vegas. The Irish have had three or more double-figure scorers in each of their last 10 games and 22 times in 28 games this season. Notre Dame is 16-6 with at least three 10-point scorers and 7-2 when they have at least four reaching double digits.
- The Irish are 14-2 this season when either leading or tied at halftime.
- Notre Dame has scored 70+ points in its last four games, its longest run since a five-game stretch from Nov. 20-Dec. 4.
- The Irish won the rebounding battle, 39-34, their first plus-margin on the glass since Feb. 4 vs. Providence. Notre Dame is 11-2 this season when it outrebounds the opposition.
- The Irish late-season penchant for ball protection now has seen them commit 15 or fewer turnovers nine times in the past 10 games (only exception: 16 vs. Connecticut on Feb. 19); Notre Dame is averaging just 12.2 turnovers in its last 10 outings.
- Senior All-America guard **Megan Duffy** extended her personal double-digit scoring streak to 13 games.
- Sophomore guard **Tulyah Gaines** scored in double figures for the fourth time this season (second in the past three games); in the last four games, Gaines is averaging 10.3 ppg., 6.8 rpg. and 4.8 apg.
- Freshman guard **Lindsay Schrader** collected her 13th double-digit scoring game of the year and seventh in the past 10 games (12.6 ppg. in that span).
- Sophomore guard **Charel Allen** has scored in double digits eight times in the past 10 outings, averaging 11.0 ppg. during that time.
- Senior forward **Courtney LaVere** has come alive down the stretch with her seventh double-digit point game in the past nine contests (11.8 ppg. in that time); LaVere's recent shot-blocking prowess also continued vs. USF with four swats, giving the Irish co-captain 13 in her last three games (4.33 per game) and moving her into fifth place on Notre Dame's career blocks list with 143, two more than All-American Katryna Gaither had from 1993-97.

NOTRE DAME/CONNECTICUT SERIES TIDBITS

- Connecticut leads the all-time series with Notre Dame, 18-4, including a 6-0 record in BIG EAST Championship play. The Huskies won the only meeting between the teams this season, a 79-64 decision on Feb. 19 at the Joyce Center in South Bend.
- The Irish and Huskies will meet in the conference tournament for the seventh time since Notre Dame joined the BIG EAST Conference for the 1995-96 season. Four of those six prior games occurred in the title game (1996, 1997, 1999, 2001), with the other two coming in the semifinal round (1998, 2005).
- Notre Dame's only postseason win over Connecticut occurred on March 30, 2001, a 90-75 conquest at the NCAA Women's Final Four in St. Louis.
- The last time the Irish played UConn in the state of Connecticut, they defeated the Huskies, 65-59 on Jan. 30, 2005 at Gampel Pavilion, snapping UConn's 112-game winning streak in BIG EAST regular-season home games.
- The Notre Dame-Connecticut "No. 1 vs. No. 2" match-up at Gampel Pavilion in the 2001 BIG EAST Championship game (won by the Huskies, 78-76, on Sue Bird's jumper at the horn) garnered an 0.96 Nielsen rating (730,914 households) on ESPN2, making it the highest-rated and most-watched game in that network's history. It also was the third most-watched non-NCAA Tournament game in the annals of either ESPN or ESPN2, and five

days later, it was replayed on ESPN Classic as that network's first-ever women's basketball "Instant Classic."

- Since the start of the 1998-99 season, Connecticut has lost by 15-plus points only six times, with half of those losses coming to Notre Dame (twice in 2000-01, once in 2003-04).
- Notre Dame is one of only three teams in the nation to defeat Connecticut at least three times in the past 11 seasons (1995-96 to present). During that 11-year stretch, Tennessee (eight) and Rutgers (four) are the only programs with more wins in that span.
- The Irish and Huskies have combined to win the five of the past six NCAA championships, and made the BIG EAST the only conference to win the national title in five consecutive seasons (2000-04). The BIG EAST also is the only league to have two different teams win the NCAA championship in consecutive seasons (Connecticut in 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2004; Notre Dame in 2001).
- Either Notre Dame or Connecticut has appeared in eight of the past 11 Final Fours, with both teams reaching college basketball's biggest stage in 2001.
- Including Sunday's game, at least one of the participants in the series has been ranked in all 23 contests, with both teams having been ranked 13 times.
- Connecticut freshman forward/center **Cassie Kerns** is a native of Valparaiso, Ind., and graduated from Valparaiso High School.
- Both head coaches — Notre Dame's **Muffet McGraw** and Connecticut's **Geno Auriemma** — were appointed to the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) Board of Directors last June by new WBCA president (and DePaul head coach) **Doug Bruno**. McGraw assumed the title of NCAA Division I Legislative Chair for the group, taking over for another new BIG EAST coach, Marquette's **Terri Mitchell**.
- McGraw and Auriemma both hail from the Philadelphia metro area, and cut their coaching teeth in the region. McGraw spent two seasons as the head girls' basketball coach at Archbishop Carroll High School (1977-79) before becoming an assistant at her alma mater, Saint Joseph's, from 1980-82 under her mentor (and current Ohio State skipper) **Jim Foster**. Meanwhile, Auriemma coached the boys' basketball team at Bishop Kenrick High School in Norristown, Pa., from 1979-81, and also spent a season (1978-79) as an assistant under Foster at SJU.

DOMER OMEN

Notre Dame may have seen a good sign or two prior to its BIG EAST opening-round win over South Florida on Saturday. Arriving at their morning shootaround, the Irish noticed the main building at their practice site, Saint Joseph College, was topped by a golden dome. Then, as they returned to the team hotel, the Notre Dame bus passed by the Connecticut state capitol — also crowned with a golden dome.

ALIVE AND KICKING

Eight times this season, Notre Dame has come from behind in the final 11 minutes to pull out a victory. The Irish registered their latest comeback win on Saturday, erasing a five-point South Florida lead with a 16-4 game-ending run.

BALANCING ACT

Notre Dame tied a season high with five double-digit scorers vs. South Florida on Saturday, marking the 10th consecutive game in which the Irish had at least three players score 10-or-more points. For the season, the Irish are 16-6 when they have three double-digit scorers, and 7-2 when four or more players reach that standard.