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GAME NOTES

Long Beach StingRays (2-0) vs. Colorado Xplosion (0-2)

Game #3, 10/21/97, The Pyramid

THE GAME—After a thrilling opening night and a quick trip to Colorado to dispose of the Xplosion, the StingRays return home tonight in a rematch with the same Colorado team they defeated, 74-62, Saturday night in Denver. Off to a 2-0 start, due in large part to the scoring and rebounding of Yolanda Griffith and the athleticism of the entire team, Long Beach must build on the momentum of its first two wins.

PROBABLE STARTERS

StingRays

F, #24, 6-1, Clarissa Davis Wrightsil, 15.0 pts, 9.0 reb
F, #33, 6-4, Yolanda Griffith, 24.0, 9.0
C, #34, 6-4, Cass Bauer, 8.0, 1.0
G, #11, 5-7, Andrea Nagy, 12.0, 8.0 ast
G, #4, 5-9, Beverly Williams, 13.0, 12.0

Xplosion

F, #44, 6-1, Vicki Hall, 15.5pts, 7.5 reb
F, #45, 5-11, Crystal Robinson, 6.5, 3.5
C, #42, 6-3, Tari Phillips, 14.5, 10.5
G, #14, 5-3, Debbie Black, 5.0, 6.5 ast
G, #21, 5-8, Edna Campbell, 6.0, 4.0

MORE ON MAURA—After four seasons away from coaching, StingRays head coach **Maura McHugh** caught the bug again when the ABL came calling last spring. She was hired as the StingRays head coach on July 9, bringing 13 years of head coaching experience to the team and now posts a professional record of 2-0. She spent 7 years at Oklahoma and 6 seasons at Arizona State before taking a position as executive director for the Business Council on Alcohol Education in Phoenix, Ariz. Her Sooner teams advanced to postseason play six times, reaching the NCAA Sweet 16 in 1982. The Sun Devils reached the NCAA Tournament her final two seasons, 1992 and 1993. Her overall collegiate career record was 226-154 (.595) in 13 years. McHugh was awarded one of the first women's college basketball scholarships in the country when she starred at Old Dominion (1972-75).

DÉJÀ VU—The StingRays won their first road game of the season, 74-62, at Colorado Saturday behind an impressive 27-points, 20-rebound effort from the ABL's No. 1 draft pick, Yolanda Griffith. Griffith's rebound total was only two shy of Natalie Williams' league record as Long Beach outrebounded the Xplosion, 60-44, and forced 23 turnovers. Other Stingrays in double figures were Clarissa Davis-Wrightsil with 14 points, including 10 in the first quarter, Beverly Williams with 14 and Trisha Stafford off the bench with 10 points, five rebounds, three assists and two steals. Long Beach broke open the game in the third quarter, starting off with a 9-1 run including four points from Griffith. Tari Phillips was a one-woman show for Colorado, with 18 points and an Xplosion-record 18 rebounds. Long Beach also defeated Colorado, 58-57, at Austin, Tex. on Sept. 28 in an exhibition game.

GRIFFITH NAMED ABL PLAYER OF THE WEEK—Yolanda Griffith, the ABL's first draft pick in 1997, was named the league's Player of the Week after her spectacular opening weekend performance against San Jose and Colorado. On the week, she averaged 25.5 points, 14.5 rebounds, 2.0 blocked shots and 2.5 steals in shooting 55.9% from the floor. Her 24-point, 9-rebound outing in the opener was eclipsed the next night by an equally impressive 27 points and 20 rebounds. Griffith played one season at Florida Atlantic before playing in Germany the last three seasons. She was named to a pool of players from which the 1998 U.S. National Team will be chosen in September, but declined to participate further in the selection process because of a desire to be home with her daughter as she started school in Long Beach.

KILLER B—Guard **Beverly Williams** had an impressive opening weekend as well, starting off her ABL career with 13 points and a game-high 12 rebounds against San Jose. An excellent defensive player, the 5-9 Williams is a proven scoring threat as well both inside and outside. A 31-year-old rookie, she was a Kodak All-American at Texas in 1988 and played five seasons in Italy before joining the ABL this year.

OPENING NIGHT—With all of the pregame ceremonies, and friends and family in attendance, the StingRays settled down and went to work on the San Jose Lasers last night, building a lead as big as 25 points in the first half (53-28) en route to a 98-91 win. **Yolanda Griffith**, the league's first draft pick, more than lived up to expectations, scoring 24 points, pulling down 9 rebounds and playing tough defense. Guard **Beverly Williams**, at 5-9, had a double-double, with 13 points and 12 rebounds, and added 6 assists and 3 steals, while **Venus Lacy** scored an ABL career-high 21 points in 25 minutes off the bench. The Lasers mounted a big comeback in the fourth quarter, behind the shooting of Jennifer Azzi, and the StingRays missed enough free throws down the stretch to keep it interesting before **Clarissa Davis-Wrightsil** hit her final two free throws with 9 seconds left to seal the win. Said StingRay Head Coach Maura McHugh: "It was very important for us to get that first win. San Jose is a very good team with a lot of depth. We came out really strong and we meshed really well. I am beginning to see this team gelling."

ON THE OTHER BENCH—**Sheryl Estes** is in her second ABL season (25-17 career, 0-2 in 1997-98) tonight after leading the Xplosion to the Western Conference title last year with a 25-15 record. Prior to coming to Denver, she served as head coach of Wayland Baptist College in Plainview, Tex, compiling a 183-62 record (.747) in 7 seasons.

REUNITED—**Clarissa Davis-Wrightsil** and **Beverly Williams** led Texas to an undefeated season (34-0) and a national title in 1986 and have reunited with the StingRays 11 years later hoping to pair for a professional league title. Davis-Wrightsil (then Davis), 30, and Williams, 31, enjoyed successful careers overseas before taking advantage of the opportunity to return home and play in the United States. Both players were All-Americans with the Longhorns, Davis-Wrightsil as a sophomore and senior in 1987 and 1989 (she also won the Naismith Award both years) and Williams as a senior in 1988. Below is listed the combined Texas record for the three years that these two stars played for Texas:

1986	NCAA Championship	34-0
1987	NCAA Final Four	31-2
1988	NCAA Sweet 16	32-3
TOTALS		97-5

XPLODIN' TEXANS—The Xplosion's **Edna Campbell** redshirted Davis-Wrightsil's last year. **Vicki Hall** was a freshman on Davis-Wrightsil's senior team. Look for the two pairs of Texans (Davis-Wrightsil and Hall at small forward and Campbell and Williams at shooting guard) to match up against each other tonight.

AUTOMATIC—The StingRays might boast the ABL's best bunch of free throw shooters, with 4 members of the team shooting 80% or better from the line in their most recent season of play. **Cass Bauer** leads the group after a 93% effort a year ago (40-of-43). She was eight-of-nine from the line in the preseason and four-of-five last night. Other top performers from the charity stripe include **Jenni Ruff** (90.5%, 38-of-42 last year in San Jose), **Trisha Stafford** (148-of-183, 80.9% last year in San Jose), **Andrea Nagy** (57-of-71, 80.3% last year in Seattle). In the opener, the StingRays converted on only 70.6% of their free throws (36-of-51), including **Yolanda Griffith's** 10-of-14 performance from the line.

NOTE: The 36 made free throws in the opener tied an ABL record set last year by Columbus (12/10/96 vs. New England) and Long Beach's 51 free throw attempts broke the old ABL record of 46 set by Columbus in that game.

THE ROOKIES—Five StingRay players are "seasoned rookies,": **Yolanda Griffith**, **Nicky McCrimmon**, **Necole Tunsil**, **Dana Wilkerson** and **Beverly Williams**. Their average age is 28.2 years, compared to 26.5 years for the team's veterans, as Long Beach has no first-year-out-of-college players. The 31-year-old Williams and 27-year-old Griffith are the team's co-captains.

VENUS TO THE HOOP—Venus Lacy is perhaps the most recognized name on the StingRays team after winning a gold medal in the 1996 Olympics. She also won an NCAA title at Louisiana Tech as a sophomore in 1988, and 1990 college player of the year honors. Prior to joining the ABL last year, she played six seasons overseas, in Japan (1990-92), Greece (1992-93), and Italy (1992-95). After missing most of last season with a knee injury, she is back stronger than ever this season. Coming off the bench in the opener, she had a career-high 21 points in 25 minutes, adding 6 rebounds and 2 blocked shots.

INJURY UPDATE—The StingRays have no injuries to report.

UPCOMING GAMES

Day	Date	Opponent	Site	Arena	Time (local to site)
Fri.	Oct. 24	San Jose	San Jose	SJ Arena	7:30 p.m.
Tue.	Oct. 28	Columbus	Long Beach, CA	Pyramid	7:30 p.m.
Thu.	Oct. 30	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, PA	Palestra	7 p.m.

OFFICIAL BASKETBALL BOX SCORE -- G A M E T O T A L S
 Long Beach StingRays vs COLORADO XPLOSION
 10-18-97 7:30 p.m. at McNichols Sports Arena, Denver, CO

VISITORS: Long Beach StingRays (2-0)

No.	NAME	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT		REBOUNDS			PF	TP	A	TO	BLK	S	MIN	
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	OF	DE	TOT								
24	Davis-Wrightsil, C.	f	6	13	2	3	0	0	3	0	3	2	14	1	1	1	26	
33	Griffith, Yolanda	f	12	23	0	0	3	4	6	14	20	5	27	0	8	3	35	
34	Bauer, Cass	c	1	3	0	0	3	4	2	0	2	4	5	0	0	0	11	
04	Williams, Beverly	g	7	13	0	2	0	0	3	3	6	2	14	1	2	0	33	
11	Nagy, Andrea	g	0	3	0	1	2	2	0	3	3	4	2	5	3	0	2	
12	Wilkerson, Dana		0	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0		
03	Stafford, Trisha		4	9	0	0	2	4	2	3	5	4	10	3	4	0	2	
10	McCrimmon, Nicky		2	8	0	1	0	0	1	4	5	1	4	6	2	0	29	
43	Lacey, Venus		0	7	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	2	0	0	1	0	8	
TEAM REBOUNDS.....									8	2	10							
TOTALS			32	82	2	7	10	14	28	32	60	24	76	16	21	4	14	200

TOTAL FG% 1st Half: 15-46	.326	2nd Half: 17-36	.472	Game: .390	DEADBALL
3-Pt. FG% 1st Half: 2-4	.500	2nd Half: 0-3	.000	Game: .286	REBOUNDS
F Throw % 1st Half: 0-1	.000	2nd Half: 10-13	.769	Game: .714	1

HOME TEAM: COLORADO XPLOSION (0-1)

No.	NAME	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT		REBOUNDS			PF	TP	A	TO	BLK	S	MIN	
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	OF	DE	TOT								
44	Hall, Vicki	f	6	13	2	4	0	2	3	3	6	5	14	1	3	0	26	
45	Robinson, Crystal	f	4	8	3	5	2	4	1	5	6	0	13	0	5	0	34	
42	Phillips, Tari	c	7	14	0	1	4	9	8	10	18	3	18	1	5	1	36	
14	Black, Debbie	g	2	6	0	1	2	2	2	2	4	4	6	9	5	0	36	
21	Campbell, Edna	g	3	11	0	2	2	2	1	3	4	1	8	3	1	2	32	
00	Crawley, Sylvia		1	4	0	0	2	2	2	1	3	1	4	1	3	2	16	
02	Wynne, Dana		0	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	
10	Anderson, Keisha		0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	8	
20	Sheetz, Shelley		0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
35	Howard, Melody		0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	7	
TEAM REBOUNDS.....									1	1	2							
TOTALS			23	66	5	15	13	24	19	25	44	17	64	15	23	5	10	200

TOTAL FG% 1st Half: 12-29	.414	2nd Half: 11-37	.297	Game: .348	DEADBALL
3-Pt. FG% 1st Half: 2-9	.222	2nd Half: 3-6	.500	Game: .333	REBOUNDS
F Throw % 1st Half: 1-3	.333	2nd Half: 12-21	.571	Game: .542	3

OFFICIALS: Eric Larson, Clarke Stevens, and Laura Rahe

TECHNICAL FOULS:

Long Beach StingRays- none

COLORADO XPLOSION - none

ATTENDANCE: 4,257

SCORE BY PERIODS:	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT1	OT2	TOTAL
Long Beach StingRays	16	16	21	23	0	0	76
COLORADO XPLOSION	12	15	14	23	0	0	64

COMMENTS: Xplosion Home Opener

Phillips Rebounds Xplosion Record