

## Edwina's "Rubber Meets the Road" Adventure

By Edwina Johnson, former WBCA High School Game Intern

It is with great pleasure that I am able to share my summer 2006 basketball camp escapade with everyone. This year's adventure was cut short, but definitely worth the experience. I don't have a "V-Bugg" like the WBCA, but I put my Accord to the test as I made my own "Rubber Meets the Road" debut...Kai that's for you!

My journey started in North Carolina at UNC-Charlotte with [Amanda Butler](#) and her staff for their most popular, Team Jamboree I held June 10-11 where there were 60 teams to participate. The camp was open to high school varsity and junior varsity teams, as well as a few AAU team participants. I was told by the Camp Director, [Janna Maggette](#), that this camp boasts the largest participation each year, so I was definitely excited but a bit nervous.

Unlike the position that I've taken in the past as a coach/counselor for summer camp, I was the Assistant to the Camp Director for this camp, and I did whatever and was wherever Janna needed me. Coming into this camp, I knew that it was going to be top notch. Every coach on staff worked day in and night out, doing their part to make this camp a success. The duties were distributed among the staff to allow each to bring their best to the table. [Brenda Kirkpatrick](#) (serious and technical) handled the team scheduling and game play, [David Lowery](#) (smooth talker and personable) handled all food and donations, Janna (organized and particular) handled the logistics and organization of everything, I took care of registration and concessions, and Amanda oversaw the project and added on to the team participation. Past, present and future players were asked to work or either volunteer for camp, and they did an amazing job. (Keeping things within the family was an awesome idea.) This was a very busy two-day event with games running from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. Besides the usual game schedule changes due to "no-shows" or teams not able to participate the full two days, the Team Jamboree ran smoothly. This was a great opportunity to get athletes and their coaches a chance to visit the beautiful Charlotte campus, and also a recruiting tool for the staff. They were able to watch some of the best prospects for their upcoming recruiting classes, made money and developed relationships without being on the road. (Best of both worlds I'd say...)

I also had a chance to mingle with some of basketball's most popular and well respected officials (Tommy Salerno, Eric Brewton, Joe Cunningham, Bryan Enterline, etc.). Lucky for me, there was also the Mid Atlantic Officiating Clinic going on at Charlotte, so they handled the officials for the games. There were about 75 eager officials on campus looking for their breakthrough in the top ranks of the officiating world.

My next stop was only a gear shift in the mind. I stayed in Charlotte for another four days for their Individual Day Camp which lasted from June 12-15. This camp was not nearly as big as the Team Jamboree, so everyone was able to relax a little bit and come down off of the previous camp. The atmosphere was so much different. I had the chance to show my teaching abilities as one of the camp coaches, the players were used for coaches, and Coach Butler (Amanda) took a more active role with the campers. Again, all of the coaching staff did their fair share in helping camp to run properly. The organization of the camp was good, and everything was scheduled out from registration to bathroom breaks.

At camp each camper had the learning opportunity to improve her skills through individual skill development as well as small group instruction and competition. The camp emphasized fundamentals, individual offense and defense as well as shooting techniques. Incentives were given each day to keep the campers motivated and spirited. There was a Camper of the Day/Week, a quote of the day, Most Improved Camper, and we also had theme days (Mismatch Day and Spirit Day). There was a dance contest, a camp cheer, and fun games were played that may not have had any relation to basketball, but they kept the girls focused and alert. The campers had the opportunity to tour campus and visit the game room and bookstore, they watched highlight films, and they even had a chance to participate in a question and answer session with the players. The strength and conditioning coach, **Jim Krumpos**, came in to give nutritional information and take the campers through a warm-up and stretching session. The campers were exposed to a lot during their four days of camp. Here's another camp gone great!

Road trip time...I took a ride to Lexington, Ken., to see **Mickie DeMoss** and her staff for UK's Individual Overnight Camp. Talk about first impressions...mine was not a good one. I guess I had a little too much enjoyment over in Charlotte because I overslept for my ride to Kentucky. I hit the road two hours later than I had planned. There was a staff meeting that started at 1 p.m., and I didn't get to campus until 1:30 p.m. I definitely had a much appreciated teaching moment there from **Niya Butts** and **Pam Stackhouse** (They chewed me out big time. Thanks Ladies! Coach Butts I still owe you one...) I quickly learned that in order to run a "first class" program, promptness was key and must be carried over in everything. I'll be the first to say that I made sure for the rest of the week I was everywhere I needed to be before time.

The camp at Kentucky was phenomenal and definitely First Class. My claps go out to their entire staff starting with **Angela O'Neal**, camp director. She definitely had the logistics part of things down to a science. The staff at UK worked great together in making sure that things were done UK's way. The most impressive was the visibility of everyone on staff. The campers were able to see **Vonn Read**, Niya, Pam and Mickie in action as they gave instruction and demonstrations. The highlight of the week was having Gold Medalist and "Original Monarch" **Ruthie Bolton** come to speak, instruct, demonstrate and sing (yes, sing) to the campers. This was a humbling and informative part of camp for the athletes and me. (Did you know she was 1 of 20 children that her parents had...WOW?) She gave the girls her heartfelt story of determination and hard work and how they both pay off in the end. ("People can't see what's on the inside of you. Be amazed by the power within." –Ruthie Bolton) I'm sure that the campers had a wonderful time at camp. They learned a lot, had a chance to interact with the players, played a lot of basketball and connected with athletes from across the world. I know that I truly enjoyed myself as I had the chance to meet up with my WBCA intern buddy, Monique Lewis, who also worked camp. We learned some great things and interacted with some great people.

Georgia/South Carolina here I come...I hit the road for another eight-hour trip to the South. I got a chance to spend time with my mommy in Augusta while I put in major hours at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Garden City Roundball Classic in North Augusta, S.C. I went there to direct the AAU tournament for my big brother, **Kelvin Powell**. This guy is doing some awesome things for girl's basketball and his program GA/Lina 76ers. (I am a product of the 76ers, so it has always been my duty to help out when I can.) No more

relaxing for me because now I'm in a higher role. These were the longest four days of my life this summer. The days were early and the nights were late. I had to organize registration, make sure that the games ran smoothly and on time, inform the coaches of their schedules and any changes during the weekend, organize and oversee my staff (feed and outfit them as well...), and keep Kelvin in line.

I had a chance to see some of the top AAU programs and players in the country play ball, and I interacted with all of the coaches. In attendance was Essence Girls Basketball, DFW (Texas), Georgia Hoopstars and the Orlando Comets, just to name a few. The Division I coaches weren't able to be out evaluating during this time, so I was mingling and building my relationships with the Division II, Division III and junior college coaches who were in attendance. This year's event added an interesting twist to the festivities with a visit from [Eric Dailey](#) of Dailey Training. His company is an individual/team basketball skills training company. He is definitely building his reputation and resume while having trained University of Florida's men and women's basketball teams, and some professional players. In between games, he and his staff (former Florida star [Dalila Eshe](#)) gave open court sessions to some of the participants (Brittany Carter, Brooklyn Pope, April Sykes, and more). The weekend tournament went well, and I got a lot of experience under my belt.

So, I'm back on the road again...I gave my mommy kisses goodbye and I headed back to Charlotte (man, I love that place!). I'm going back to work the 49ers Elite Overnight Camp. My role for this camp was a bit more passive. I was a "shadow" to the coaching staff. All of the coaches were a lot more active and involved in the functioning of this camp. The fifty or so campers that participated in this camp received a lot of "hands-on" instruction and attention from the Charlotte staff. This was a major difference from the regular individual day camp. The athletes that participated were on a higher scale athletically than the athletes from the previous camps. Most were athletes that the Charlotte staff was "watching" as future 49ers. The days were jam-packed with extensive basketball instruction. The athletes went through a two-day mock practice of what the 49er athletes go through. The atmosphere was intense, and the expectations of the campers from the coaching staff were high and demanding. I can truly say that the campers got their money's worth during this camp. They were all tired...

I had a few more camps that I was looking forward to working this summer like [LSU](#), [Bickerstaff's Triple Double Camp](#) and [Kenny Smith's](#) basketball camp, but I got a "real" job late in the season, so that put a halt on those plans ([Christie Sides](#), I missed you guys this summer...). I'm sure that those camps went very well because of the people that are behind them.

I absolutely LOVE this game of basketball. It has taken me so many places, and I've had the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with so many people. It has paid for my education, the Nike's on my feet, and I've even been able to start a career in the sport. I thank GOD for the blessings. Well, thanks to the WBCA for allowing a former BFJ intern to share her experience...Hope you all enjoyed! I must leave you with a quote from Ruthie Bolton, "If someone thinks that you're good, just prove to them that you're great. If the door is closed, then go through the window." These words are so powerful...

