I kind of wanted to try and keep the interview geared toward gender, being a teacher and coach, and transitioning in/out of sport.

1) Did you ever find it difficult to coach being the only female?

I never found it difficult to be the only female coach of the girls basketball team. I understood my role as an assistant and did the best that I could to help mold the girls into players. However, at times I did feel that I had to prove myself and remind that men that I was more than just a female, but also a female that KNEW the game of basketball.

2)  Considering that you were the only female coach, did you every notice any of the athletes going to you in certain circumstances to talk to you rather than the other coach?

That is initially any role for a female in an educational leadership role. We are strategically placed within these roles to be the model for the girls. When it came to health care, fashion, relationships the ladies came to me first (in most cases).

3) Did you have any qualms with going into coaching while teaching?  If so, what were your biggest ones?

I never had any issues going into coaching, in fact, Dr. Ryker came to me and requested that I apply for the position. I was a new teacher and this role gave me the opportunity to stick my head outside of my classroom and meet other girls, parents, and community members.

4)  Do you see yourself going back to coaching after your daughter is older?  If no, why not?

I will definitely go back into coaching once my “cupcake” is older. It is still my passion and I want her to learn, from my modeling, that you can find a way to balance your passions and career, simultaneously.

5)  What was your biggest difficulty with being an English teacher and a coach?

Grading! English is one of the hardest subjects where you can never keep up with your grading (unless you aren’t assigning anything). In English you have grammar, literature, projects, and writing assignments that are constantly being graded and reassigned for a grade. Finding time in between games, on the bus, or having the players help me grade was very difficult.

6)  Did you ever find more effort being put toward coaching, knowingly or unknowingly at the time?

No, coaching and teaching for me was like a switch that I had to learn to turn on and off. When it was time for coaching, I gave it 100 %, and the same for teaching. In fact, I had one of my players as a student in my class, and she commented that I was different on the court in comparison to in the classroom. I had to explain to her why it seemed that I was two different people wearing several hats. As a female coach, you are expected to be able to figure it out and do it all.

7)  How did you get into coaching?

After I suffered a high school injury on the court, I had to hang up my jersey and do something different. My old (middle school) coach contacted me requesting some help with the ladies of the new year. Again, I was needed to be that female figure; however, I did it without hesitation because I knew I could learn a lot from my coach.

8)  Were there any factors that influenced you in going into coaching?  For example, participating in basketball in school.

As a teacher, you need to always find was that will make you become a valuable player on the educational team. As a female, I took advantage of the opportunity to show my skills on and off of the court. However, what I wasn’t expecting was the constant challenge of trying to “measure up” to my male counterparts. No matter how hard I tried, I was never really accepted into the “click” of coaches.

9)  Did you ever find it difficult coaching in an athletic staff that is dominated by makes(males?), including the athletic

As stated above, it was hard to try and become accepted into the “click” of coaches. After while, I gave up and just did my own thing and refused to conform to their ways. After all, they have to conform daily to our (women) way of teaching because they are working in a dominated field of women in education.

10)  Do you think that you had a more difficult job being an English teacher and a coach, which is a more rare combination?

I believe I answered this question…may need more clarification

11)  Overall, what would you recommend to a female coach/teacher?

My advice would be to find a balance between coach, teacher, wife, mother, and self. As a woman in education you have to play all parts, no matter if you want to or not. Because somewhere in your classroom or court, you are going to run into a student who needs a mother figure, or a teacher, or a life coach, or a etc…

12) One of my race/ethnicity articles suggested that minority coaches were often hired in order to help with under-representation of minorities in sport admin/coaching positions or to help recruit minorities, do you feel that this was a part of the hiring process for you?

In high school, recruiting is not a factor at all. So when it comes to my race playing a factor in being selected as a coach, I don’t believed it mattered. With that said, I am the only African American in the district and I definitely feel that my race played a part in why I was chosen as the new teacher. There must be representation of all sexes and races on a staff that teaches a variety of diverse students (both sex and race). However, why I stay and am considered to be a good teacher and a coach, has nothing to do with my race, but has everything to do with my ability. I can’t and won’t speak for other African American in coaching because everyone has a different opinion.