

and North Carolina have one of the most legendary rivalries in the nation. That being said, I truly have been behind this team—I even wore Carolina blue to several events in North Carolina last week to show my support!

On Monday night, the Tar Heels defeated the Illinois Fighting Illini 75-70 in a remarkable display of teamwork and talent. Led by the performance of Raymond Felton and Sean May, the Tar Heels played strong basketball on both ends of the court. They were able to make critical baskets when the game was on the line and played tenacious defense that stifled their opponent. With this victory, this year's Tar Heel team has solidified its place in college basketball history alongside Carolina greats such as Michael Jordan and James Worthy.

Roy Williams, who returned to his home state and alma mater just two years ago, earned his first title and demonstrated once again why he is one of the best coaches in college basketball. Under his leadership, this group of talented young men developed into truly great players with heart and determination.

The Tar Heels' Sean May was named most outstanding player in the Final Four for his dominant scoring and rebounding. Sean finished an incredible season with 26 points and 10 rebounds against Illinois.

This year started with great expectations as the Tar Heels were picked as the pre-season #1 team by Sports Illustrated. However, in recent years, such impressive rankings were not always the case. Seniors on this Tar Heel team faced great adversity early in their careers as they fought to overcome a disappointing 8-20 season their freshman year. Still, these players were determined to work hard to become a better team. And did they ever. Just 4 years later, these young men completed an incredible turnaround and are now able to call themselves national champions.

Today is a proud day for Coach Williams, his terrific players and the state of North Carolina. College basketball is a special tradition for so many North Carolinians. It is a pastime shared from generation to generation and amongst neighbors and friends. It's what so many folks chat about at the grocery store, before class, over dinner, and after church. We are so proud of the North Carolina Tar Heels' accomplishments this season and delighted that they gave us yet another memory to talk about for years to come.

I yield the floor.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS MEN'S BASKETBALL SEASON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Monday night in Saint Louis a dream season came to an end. The University of Illinois was defeated for only the second time this season as they fell to the University of North Carolina Tar Heels. But as painful as the loss was, it does not detract from a remarkable season.

Head coach Bruce Weber and his Illini should know there is nothing to be disappointed about. As much as I would have enjoyed seeing the Illini conclude their remarkable run with an NCAA championship, there is no doubting what the Illini have accomplished. The team tied an NCAA record with 37 victories. They made the first championship game appearance in the school's 100-year basketball history. They won regular-season and conference tournament Big 10 championships and were ranked first overall in the Associated Press poll since early in the season.

If I could pick one word to describe the Illini this season, it would be "team." Rarely has a group of young men worked together as well as the Illini has. After Illinois defeated Louisville 72 to 57 on Saturday evening, Louisville head coach Rick Pitino said, "I don't know if they necessarily had the greatest talent I've seen from a Final Four, but they're the best team I've seen in some time."

The Illini are the ultimate team, and that is the ultimate compliment to coach Weber and his players.

Every man on the floor was capable of leading the team to victory, whether it was guards Dee Brown, Luther Head or Deron Williams, or forwards James Augustine or Roger Powell. Yet Illinois plays within head coach Bruce Weber's system and doesn't allow ego, personal statistical goals, or anything else to disrupt their teamwork.

Unfortunately, they came up short against North Carolina. But the State of Illinois is proud of their Illini. An orange hue has been cast across the State as Illinoisans got behind the team for their NCAA tournament run. So many people have enjoyed this tournament and they won't soon forget where they were when the Illini shocked Arizona, or when Roger Powell slam-dunked the rebound from his own three-point shot against Louisville.

I would like to congratulate B. Joseph White, who became the University's 16th president on January 31 of this year, and the administration, faculty, staff, student body, and fans of the University of Illinois on making it to the championship game of the 2005 NCAA tournament.

To the coaches, Illini players, and their families, thanks for the memories. Thanks for showing us what teamwork is all about.

HONORING ARLEN LANCASTER

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a longtime staff member who is moving onto a new and exciting work challenge. Arlen Lancaster has been a valued member of my staff since the start of my first term in the Senate in 1999. He is leaving my staff to become the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Arlen joined my staff as a legislative correspondent and worked his way

through two promotions. He now serves as senior policy adviser, covering agriculture, conservation, rural development, energy and the Idaho National Laboratory, natural resources and public lands, defense as well as serving as the staff director of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Forestry, Conservation and Rural Revitalization. Arlen was instrumental in the work that I have done regarding the conservation title in the 2002 farm bill and shepherding the historic Healthy Forest Restoration Act through Congress.

While Arlen's family hails from the Burley area in my home State of Idaho, he lived in many areas due to his father's work with the U.S. Air Force. He attended high school and college in Utah, graduating with a political science degree from the University of Utah. He is definitely a Westerner at heart and his work for me has benefited many in Idaho.

On a personal note, Arlen was great to work with. He is decisive, insightful and innovative. His easy-going personality and sense of humor permeated all that he did in his public service for the people of Idaho and the United States. He provided a certain spark to my office. In fact, he sparked so much with another LA that they will be getting married this summer and Arlen and Staci have my best wishes for a long, happy life together.

I am excited by Arlen's new challenge at USDA and know he is well up to the task. Although I won't have the same opportunity to work with him on a daily basis, I look forward to our new working relationship and Arlen's continuing successes. His extensive knowledge of agriculture, natural resources and other policy issues will serve Arlen well in his new capacity.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ANTONIO R. BAINES

• Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to an exceptional officer in the United States Army, Lieutenant Colonel Antonio R. Baines, upon his retirement after more than 20 years of distinguished service. Throughout his career, Colonel Baines has personified the Army values of duty, integrity, and selfless service across the many missions the Army provides in defense of our Nation. As a Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the office of the Secretary of the Army, many of us on Capitol Hill have enjoyed the opportunity to work with Lieutenant Colonel Baines on a wide variety of Army issues and programs, and it is my privilege to recognize his many accomplishments. I commend his superb service to the United States Army and this great Nation.

Lieutenant Colonel Antonio R. Baines, the son of Mr. Albert and Yolanda Baines of Jonesboro, GA, attended high school in Hephzibah, GA,