

Hawks Headed to Brooklyn: Women's Basketball Dominate in A-10 Championship Tournament
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As the buzzer rang on Sunday afternoon, March 10th in Michael J. Hagan arena, guard Natasha Cloud, '14 ran into the arms of head coach Cindy Griffin, picked her up, and spun her around. The elation of the Saint Joseph's women's basketball team was palpable as they defeated #11 Dayton in the semifinals with a final score of 61-54.

This win means a spot in the Atlantic 10 Championship game against the #3 seed Fordham, who defeated Temple right after the Hawks won.

The Hawks played Duquesne on Saturday, March 9th, in order to advance to the semifinals on Sunday. With a 61-54 win over Duquesne, the Hawks were confident going up against Dayton, but knew they had a tough game ahead of them. "We have to play harder than we played today. [Dayton] can beat us at basically every spot...we gotta be tough," guard Ashley Prim, '13, said following their win against Duquesne.

Following Prim's advice, the Hawks took the lead right off the start, with forward Chatilla van Grinsven, '13, scoring two jumpers and one layup within the first two minutes, giving the Hawks a 6 point lead. Guard Erin Shields, '14, followed van Grinsven with a 3-pointer, increasing the lead, 9-0. From there, the Hawk kept their lead for the first half, with outstanding efforts from van Grinsven, Shields, and forward Ilze Gottfrida, '14.

At the start of the second half, trailing behind SJU, 35-24, Dayton began fighting back, but couldn't hold off the Hawks. With 2:45 left in the game, Dayton guard Andrea Hoover, '15, all but tied up the game with a two-point jumper, leaving SJU with an only one-point lead. But van Grinsven was unstoppable, despite getting into foul trouble early on in the game; she scored two points, increasing the lead to 54-51.

As the clock wound down, Shields hit six free throws within the last minute and a half, helping the Hawks to win with a seven point lead. "It was an unbelievable game," Griffin said, "the kids did an unbelievable job."

van Grinsven, who led all scorers with an outstanding 19 points and 10 rebounds, was confident in the Hawks' ability to beat Dayton. "We definitely knew from the start that we could beat this team." van Grinsven also said that her father came all the way from the Netherlands to watch her play for the first time in her college career.

Prim was pleased to do so well in her last home game. "I'm excited to go out with a bang," she said. "Just getting there was exciting." Prim scored a total of eight points during the game. Shields and Gottfrida helped bring in the win for the Hawks, with Shields hitting twelve total points, and Gottfrida with 10 points and eight assists.

"You gotta give St. Joe's a lot of credit," Dayton Flyers head coach Jim Jabir said after the rough loss. "[They] were a lot tougher, we were all out of sorts from the beginning."

The Hawks will take on Fordham next Saturday, March 16th at 7 p.m. for the A-10 Championship title at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, NY.