

KATIE ARDREY'S

Letter from America.



KATIE ARDREY IS BACK ON THE HOCKEY FIELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WHERE SHE HAS AN ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP. BUT IT'S NOT ALL ICE BATHS AND TRAINING, THERE'S ALWAYS TIME TO DROP INTO THE WHITE HOUSE...

Saying that a lot has happened since my last letter would be an understatement! Pre-season began on August 11 and was a serious shock to my body. The new freshmen began to get settled in and it was the first time the full 2010 team had been together. Pre-season was a two-week period that aimed to kick-start us into shape and to start work building the structures that would make the team a success. Two practices a day left us feeling exhausted. But, despite this, excitement brewed in the locker room as everyone could see the potential we had. The dreaded ice baths after practices began to make my legs feel like they belonged to me again and before I knew it, pre-season was over!

August 24th seems very early to be starting classes, but while all my



English friends were still off on holiday in Europe somewhere, fall semester had begun at UNC. Classes at 8am five days a week, combined with practice for two to three hours every day left me with little energy to do much else – sleep, school work and field hockey were my life! If it's starting to sound all doom and gloom then don't worry, I quickly got into the swing of things and I am loving every second of it now!

Soon after pre-season our coach informed us that we had received a letter we had been waiting for – an invite from President Obama to come to the White House! Needless to say I was very excited! We made the trip in September on the way back from an away game in Pennsylvania. We got to take lots of pictures of the White House and listened to the President congratulate us and around 300 other athletes for being national champions.

I was lucky enough to get a handshake and a few rushed words (see above) before he had to get back to running the country! It has definitely been a

huge highlight in my time here.

The season has gotten off to a great start. As I am writing this we are undefeated, having played ten games. I have worked my way into the starting lineup and have scored a couple of goals. We have seven more regular-season games left and then post season starts. This is where the 16 best teams, based on their performance during the season, compete in a knockout competition for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) title.

I have also had the chance to play against fellow South and England player Becky Dru (Stanford) and am excited about our match up against Maryland, where I will get to see Harriet Tibble another ex-South player who is also in her second year. The NCAA finals are fast approaching and the national championship is within our grasp. By the time I next write to you, the season will be over and one team will be the 2010 NCAA champions. It's going to be a hard-fought battle and I hope we will come out on top.

