



Women's basketball adds new players, gears up for season

JOHN ARMSTRONG
jarmstr1@unca.edu -
Staff Writer

Women's basketball team members said they hold high hopes for the season ahead.

After finishing eighth overall in the Big South Conference tournament last year, the UNC Asheville women's basketball team looks forward to advancing further in the conference tournament this season, according to team members.

The women's team surprised the conference in the first round of the tournament last year with their 43-42 win over Radford, but fell to High Point in the quarter finals 69-79.

The win over Radford gave the Bulldogs a record of 11 wins overall, shattering the amount they held in

previous seasons.

"I think that this season is going to be by far the best season that I have been a part of at UNC Asheville," said **Jeannie Buckner, a senior on the team.** "We've really changed our culture and having a lot more competitive practices and the expectation level is there for ourselves and the outside community."

In her third season as head coach of the women's basketball team, **Brenda Mock Kirkpatrick** said she hopes to see her squad show an increase in consistent success to maximize their potential.

"The seniors have brought great leadership and there are 11 people returning on the squad this year. We didn't have any seniors to play last season, and I don't think we were

ready for last year because we had so many questions," Kirkpatrick said.

Kirkpatrick and Buckner said the East Tennessee State University squad will be their toughest opponent. This matchup will reflect on the Bulldogs' performance throughout the season.

"We are looking forward to our exhibition game obviously, and we open up with ETSU. That's the game we're looking forward to the most to get off to a good start at home," Kirkpatrick said.

Kirkpatrick said High Point is a team that gives them a hard time, and a rivalry exists between the two teams.

"In conference, we definitely want to beat High Point this year, because that's one of the teams that

we have played really well against, but could not pull off a win. Last year they knocked us out of the tournament. They'll have an 'X' on their back," Buckner said.

Liberty University is the top team in the conference. Kirkpatrick said Liberty is picked to win the conference almost every year.

"It's hard to pick one through 11 though because our conference is so competitive," Kirkpatrick said.

Kirkpatrick said a lot of the teams have most of their squads returning, but they also remain hard at work picking up new recruits.

"We have had other teams in the same boat as we are -- and are starting to move their way up the ladder," Kirkpatrick said.

Kirkpatrick said she

looks forward to playing the conference games not only because of the competitiveness, but also because of its size.

"Our conference is great because we get to play everyone twice, home and away," Kirkpatrick said.

Lloyd Brookshire is currently heading into his third year as student manager for the team.

Brookshire said during the 2012-13 season the team struggled with injuries, only tallying two wins.

"During the 2012-2013 season, we lost Shonese Jones, Brittany Gwyn, Tacey Trammell and Leah Wormack all to season-ending injuries, with the first three being all ACL tears, forcing other freshmen to step into a premiere role," Brookshire said.

The 2012-13 season was also Kirkpatrick's first season as head coach for the women's basketball team.

"Any time you have a coaching shift, there's going to be a transition period, but I think we should start to see the result of that transition in its full effect this year," Buckner said.

Buckner, along with the four players who are returning from last season's injuries, make up the five seniors this season.

Kirkpatrick said Jones will be the one the team relies on most when it comes to scoring, Gwyn a key point guard, Buckner for her growth and urgency, Wormack as a great motivator on the sideline as well as a great player on the court and Trammell, the best shooter.

SEE WOMEN'S ON PAGE 10

WE ACCEPT FINANCIAL AID.

LUXURY LIVING CAN STILL BE YOURS.

NOW LEASING FOR FALL 2015!

Reserve your spot today!

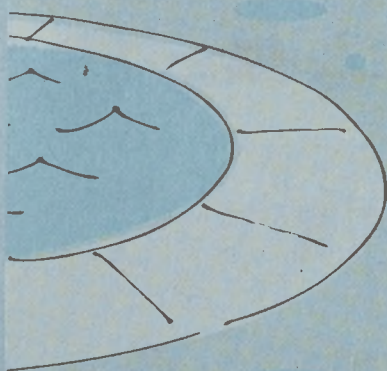
Are you involved with campus activities and groups?
Ask about our group rates and discounts.

Phone: 828-254-6237

Email: infoasheville@gogrove.com

Walk, Drive, or Ride the shuttle to tour today!

600 Bulldog Drive, Asheville NC 28801



GOGROVE.COM | 1.888.GROVE4U



FULLY LOADED COLLEGE LIVING