

Coach Flamini hits her stride in 2012 with tenacious team, successful season

By Linda Catoe
STAFF WRITER

Women's Head Basketball Coach Stephanie Flamini sees her team-building efforts come to fruition in her 2012 team as they continue to climb in the ratings.

Electric and intense, the action on the court sizzles with the precise cohesion of a team come full circle. Head Basketball Coach and Guilford's Senior Women's Administrator, Stephanie Flamini zones in on her team.

In her ninth season at Guilford College, Flamini owns the second-place record for all-time wins in the history of Guilford College women's basketball. Currently, her 2012 team is tied for first place in the ODAC division at 11-1, with an overall 14-3 standing. Not too shabby.

Coach Flamini hails from King of Prussia, Pa., named after the King of Prussia Inn, originally a cabin built in 1709 by Welsh Quakers William and Janet Rees. Attending Clarion University from 1989 to 1992 on a basketball scholarship, Flamini helped the Eagles win a Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference title and two NCAA Tournament appearances. Flamini was an integral part of the Clarion teams that made it to the national quarterfinals in 1991 and the Sweet Sixteen in 1992.

Next Flamini moved on to West Chester University in Pennsylvania, graduating with a bachelor's degree in philosophy and an associate degree in elementary education. Flamini went on to earn a master's degree at West Chester in athletic administration while working as a graduate assistant coach from 1996 to 1998.

You can hear a minute Pennsylvania accent in Coach Flamini's voice, usually when she is cracking wise. A dry sense of humor belies her watchful countenance, as a hint of mischief glints across her face.

In a Jan. 19 ODAC podcast, ODAC

Commissioner Brad Bankston recalled Coach Flamini calling her own speech at his Rotary Club luncheon a "list of clichés."

"Her sense of humor is dry and she always is smiling," said Bankston. "I can remember few pre-season media day talks, but her 2011 version with 'clichés' was priceless, made even better by the number of coaches before her using several from her planned list."

Coach Flamini gives her team all of the credit.

"Jaz is doing a great job of leading this team this season," said Flamini of senior guard Jazlyn Gibbs. "She's grown in the way she leads."

"I mean, Jaz could go out there and just try to be the lead scorer all the time. That's easy to do, that's not a bad thing, but when you have other players who are just as good who can help you, it's hard to swallow that and dish off to them."

What Coach Flamini most likes to see is the individual talent of her players coming together as one.

"Something Coach said to me this year that stuck with me since she said it was 'Play for the G,'" said junior guard Brittany Atwater. "She was talking about how we can't play selfish basketball. In order to be successful this season we have to play together as a team."

"She said this during practice and pointed to the 'G' on the front of our practice jerseys to symbolize the team," said Atwater. "Ever since she said that, we did as she asked and have had a successful season so far."

Individually, the players look to Flamini for direction in other aspects of their lives.

"Working with Coach has been a great experience," said sophomore and forward Gabby Oglesby. "I love that she cares so much about things that go beyond the basketball court. We can go to her with issues and she genuinely cares. I am very proud to be a part of this extremely talented team and to be coached



Coach Flamini has injected a passion to win into her team that clearly shows on the court. The Lady Quakers carry a 12-1 (ODAC) and a 15-3 overall record as the move into the final leg of the season.

by her."

Flamini admits this is her favorite season so far. She came to Guilford after building Chowan University's team because she wanted to coach in the ODAC division.

"I won't kid you, it wasn't easy; this has been a long, hard road," said Flamini. "Even when you think you're making headway in the ODAC, everybody else is too."

"Coach Flamini was a great addition to the ODAC, in coaches, a number of years ago," said Bankston. "She has increased her involvement in the ODAC serving as Guilford's SWA."

So this is something special, this team. It is palpable when you see them in action. Confident and working together, they are living, breathing proof of their coach's team-building expertise.

"Coach Flamini really helped lead the program this year by believing in us," said Gibbs. "Sometimes it's hard to tell if a coach really believes that their team can win, but Coach really shows us that she feels we are unstoppable. I really feel that this year the entire team, coaches included, really have something special going."

"I feel that Coach Flamini has taken the time out to get to know all of her players on a personal level, and by doing this, strengthened the relationships we have with her, on and off the court," added Gibbs. "The main thing that Coach does is to listen. If we have a concern, or if there is ever anything we need, on or off the court, she's done a great job of providing support. This 2011-2012 season has truly been amazing."

Swim team strokes its way to a brighter, faster future

By Kim Kleimeier
STAFF WRITER

"I am more dedicated than I have ever been," said junior Becca Dozier about the upcoming swim season.

The Quaker ladies swim team has been experiencing some big changes, brought about by their newly appointed Head Coach Emily Wilson.

Wilson has been with the Guilford Quakers for the past five seasons as the assistant coach of the swim team.

This, however, is not her first time being the head coach of a swim team. She is applying her 14 years of coaching experience now more than ever.

"The changes started from day one," said Wilson. "The workouts are focused on quality instead of quantity. We use the clock and do a lot of interval work."

"I have been working heavily on technique with many of the swimmers as well," said Wilson in regards to the new practice regimen.

Swimmers are now being pushed to do things outside of their comfort zones. Wilson has asked everyone to step up and work harder to improve the overall team.

The changes are not only applicable to the practices. "People are a lot more dedicated," said Dozier.

She describes Wilson as a dedicated, motivated and very organized coach.

One of Wilson's hopes for the upcoming season consists of moving up in the ODAC standings. In order to do that, she says, the team needs to compete in all the match events. These would include the breast stroke, freestyle, backstroke and butterfly.

"Every single point counts and is recognized whether you are first, second, third or last," said Wilson. "It would be great to develop a team to have more depth and be able to fill every lane at meets."

One of Wilson's biggest challenges as head coach so far has been the small size of her team.

Just as Wilson does, Dozier also hopes that the team will gain more people and that more Guilford students will come out and support them in the meets.

Individual performance of the swimmers is also a priority for Wilson.

The team has already been able to celebrate some career-best swims as well as some personal bests.

Rebecca Bacon swam the 100M butterfly the fastest this season with a time of 1:25.77. Her teammate, senior Kelcey Johnson, reached the season highs in the 50M freestyle with her time of 30.63 seconds.

"I want the swimmers to really be proud of what they are doing, push through difficult swims and focus on technique when they are tired," said Wilson.

Outside of the pool, Wilson wants the team to be more active in the community. She describes it as being key to personal growth as an adult.

"I would like to volunteer as a team at the Guilford County Animal Shelter, volunteer to work at national competitions at the Greensboro Aquatic Center, work in the public schools reading with students, or volunteering to work at the Women's Only 5k in October — water stations, food stations, etc.," said Wilson in an email interview.

Coaching is only one of the things that occupy Wilson's time.

She is entering her seventh year as a full-time teacher in the Guilford County School District.

The two positions work hand-in-hand.

"As a coach, the end game is ODAC's championships, so I need to form a plan of workouts that give the swimmers the best chance of improvement, as well as the team the most possible points at the meet," said Wilson.

"In teaching I need to differentiate for my students, which is similar to coaching as you differentiate your workouts for swimmers as well," Wilson added. "As a teacher, I also have to be able to break down concepts and give a lot of explicit instruction."

Time commitments are a challenge for Wilson and her swimmers as well.

Being a Guilford student and participating in college sports means being able to manage time wisely. Between class, practice, homework and meets, it is often difficult to fit in the necessities like food and sleep.

Dozier describes being on the team as having to organize her time well, which is made easier with having night time practices.

Since college students are night owls, they are more motivated at night to put in the time and work. In previous seasons, practice was held in the mornings.

"The practices are hard, but in a good way," said Dozier. "I always feel better after practice. I am more dedicated than I have ever been about the upcoming swim season."

The Guilford swim team is working hard to improve and make Quaker Nation proud, so come out and watch the fruits of their labors at this season's meets.