

# Terrapins expected to contend for ACC title, high national recognition

By **MIKE SCHOOR**  
Staff Writer

With last year's entire squad returning, the Maryland Terrapins (20-10 and 8-6 in the ACC last year) should be one of the NCAA's most dominant forces.

Junior Adrian Branch leads an attack that features experience at every starting position, backed by considerable depth all-around. Coach Lefty Driesell (15th season, 280-125) is quick to caution, though, that a veteran unit doesn't assure the success most predict for the Terps.

"Experience doesn't win games," Driesell said. "Performance wins games."

"Always the goal of our team is to play up to our maximum potential."

Branch figures to lead a formidable offense. At 6-8, he sees time at both guard and forward. Last season he averaged 18.7 points and 5.2 rebounds per game. He uses his size to post up smaller defenders while he takes the bigger ones outside, where he can hit the 15-footer with the best.

Joining Branch as one of Maryland's biggest weapons, is 6-9 center Ben Coleman. Coleman, who scored 15.1 points and grabbed 8.5 rebounds a game last year and joined Branch as a second team All-ACC selection, enters his senior year. He transferred from Minnesota prior to last season.

Driesell thinks Coleman may be the conference's dominant center. "He'll be good," the coach said. "He can hold his own against anybody."

Junior Jeff Adkins (9.9 points per game last year), will play guard for Maryland this season. The question is at which guard spot he'll play. Driesell said Adkins will share duties at the point with sophomore Jeff Baxter and freshman Keith Gatlin. But he could see action at swing guard as well.

Gatlin is a rookie who has excited people in College Park. Driesell signed him out of Greenville, N.C., where he was one of the top high school players in the state last year.

Senior Steve Rivers and junior Chuck Driesell, the coach's son, provide guard depth.

Maryland has a handful of role-playing forwards. Senior Herman Veal leads the group. The 6-6 Veal, one of the ACC's most physical players, got almost seven points and seven rebounds a game last year.

Sophomore Len Bias (7.2 points and 4.2 rebounds per game) and senior Mark Fothergill (6.2 points, 3.7 rebounds) will see plenty of time on the front line also. Bias had a productive preseason, shooting the ball consistently well. He scored 21 points in an exhibition victory over Athletes in Action. Fothergill, who doubles as a reserve center, sat out most of the preseason with a sore knee. The versatility he lends to the lineup is vital to Maryland's success.

Senior Pete Holbert and freshman Terry Long are the Terp's other forwards. Another forward, Ed Farmer, transferred to the University of the District of Columbia.

Sophomore Bryan Palmer and 7-2 freshman Greg Stevens, who was redshirted last year, are reserve centers.

Ranked in most preseason polls among the top 10, Maryland should challenge North Carolina and Wake Forest for the ACC crown.

Despite all his success, Driesell's never captured an ACC tournament title nor has he taken a trip to the Final Four. He has often been accused of getting his team up for the big games while downplaying other contests. But he isn't worried about that this season.

"There are no lesser opponents in the ACC," he said.

Still, he concedes that his emotional coaching style will again have an impact.

"If they (emotions) have played a role in the past, I guess they will this year too," Driesell said.

A great deal is expected of the Terrapins this season. They have a scoring machine in Branch, a proven center in Coleman and a plethora of experienced role players. But Driesell doesn't expect there to be anymore pressure than in other years.

"We're always pressured," the coach said. "I pressure them."

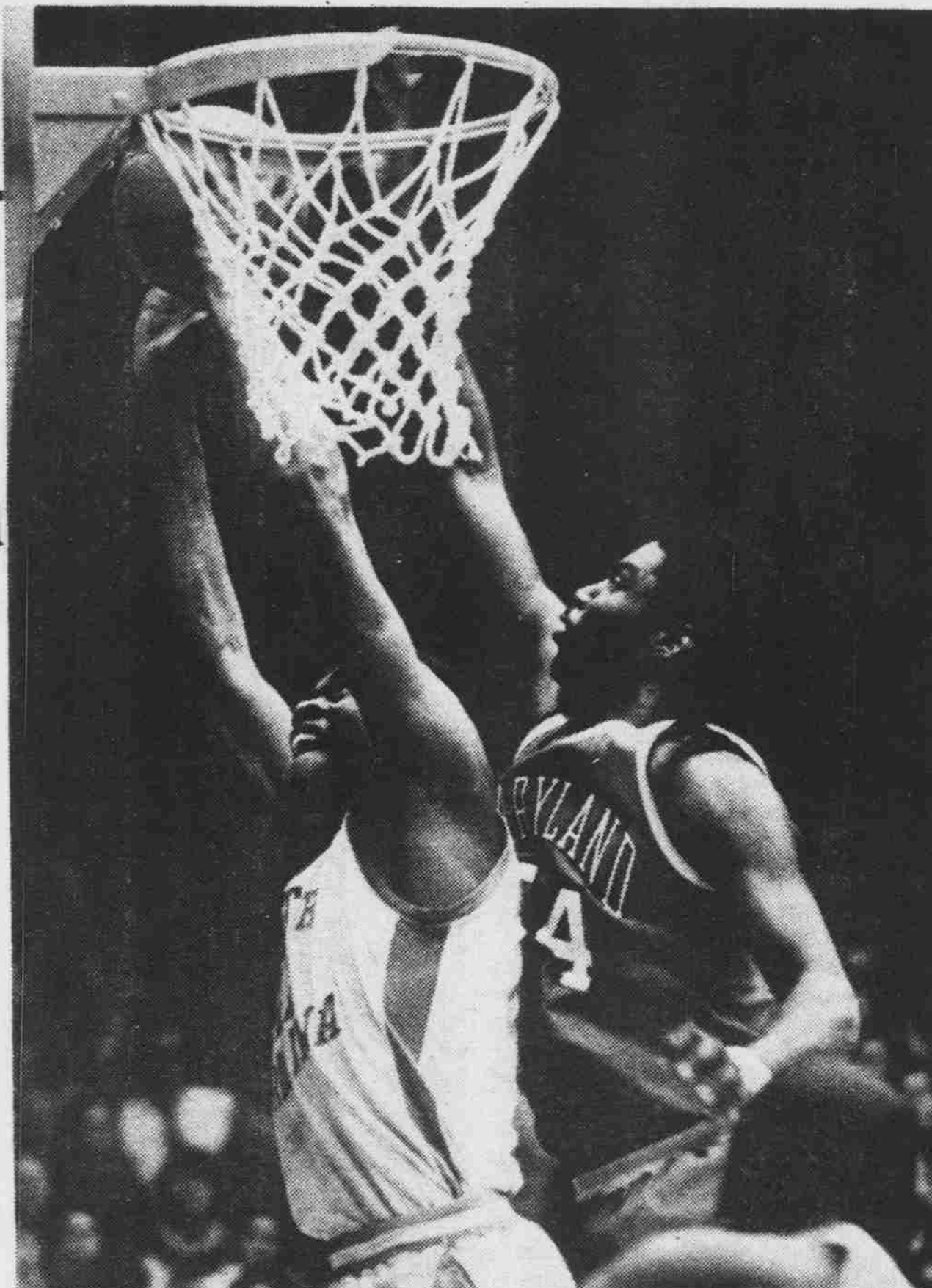


Photo by Allen Dean Steele

Ben Coleman may challenge as the ACC's most dominant center.

## MARYLAND TERRAPINS

No.	NAME	HT/WT	CLASS	HOMETOWN
10	Jeff Adkins	6-5/180	Jr.	Martinsville, VA
12	Jeff Baxter	6-1/165	So.	Washington, DC
34	Len Bias	6-8/195	So.	Landover, MD
24	Adrian Branch	6-8/185	Jr.	Largo, MD
54	Ben Coleman	6-9/220	Jr.	Minneapolis, MN
11	Charles Driesell	6-2/170	Jr.	Silver Spring, MD
20	Ed Farmer	6-8/210	So.	Somerset, KY
3	Keith Gatlin	6-5/165	Fr.	Greenville, NC
33	Pete Holbert	6-6/190	Sr.	Fairfax, VA
32	Terry Long	6-8/240	Fr.	Richmond, VA
31	Bryan Palmer	6-10/205	So.	Glen Rock, PA
14	Steve Rivers	6-3/170	Sr.	Uniondale, NY
52	Greg Stevens	7-2/260	So.	Stow, OH
42	Herman Veal	6-6/200	Sr.	Jackson, MS

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