

## Volleyball ends season with an upset and a second place finish in conference tournament

By Rory Kelly  
STAFF WRITER

The women's volleyball team defines their season as a success after retiring six seniors, a 25-7 record and second place in the Big South Conference Tournament.

"We have had an amazing season," said Talia Ogle, senior outside hitter.

The team expected wins in their 2005 campaign, but the expectations were limited to what they believed to be reasonable goals.

"If you would have told us how this season would have ended last spring, we would have all laughed at you," said Allison Lambert, senior right side blocker. "We have come so far in so many ways."

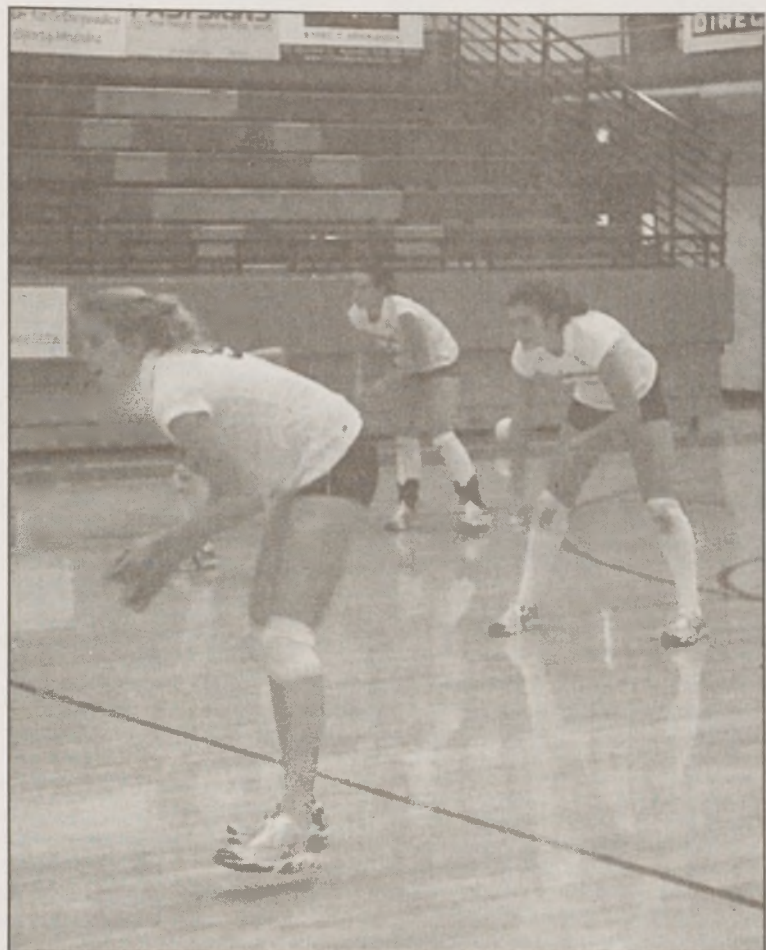
The team began playing together cohesively toward the end of the season, beating their competitors 3-0 for the last six matches until they ultimately lost to Winthrop in the final conference tournament match.

"We played our best and peaked at the very end of the season, which is exactly what you want to happen," Ogle said.

They took on Liberty in the first round of the conference tournament, defeating them in three at the Justice Center on Nov. 15.

The Bulldogs then took on the No. 2 seed, Coastal Carolina, on their home court. The Chanticleers had a very successful banquet that night where the players and the head coach took away the top awards.

"Coastal was expected to win, and the player of the year and the coach of the year were both picked



SHAY SLIFKO - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Rose Butler, senior middle blocker, Megan Murphy, senior libero, and Elif Unlu, junior outside hitter, work on defense during practice.

from their team before the match," Unlu said.

The Bulldogs took a few prestigious awards home as well. Junior outside hitter for the Bulldogs, Elif

Unlu, took away first team All-Conference honors.

Senior setter Amanda Wiles was awarded second team All-Conference and Rose Butler, sen-

ior middle hitter, took All-Academic team honors.

"We knew we were going to beat Coastal," Ogle said.

The Bulldogs defeated the Chanticleers in three games.

"That was the best feeling to take out the team who thought they already had the whole thing won," Ogle said.

Unlu tallied 23 kills against Coastal along with three service aces and 11 digs. Megan Murphy, senior defensive specialist, tallied a team high of 15 digs.

"The Coastal game was honestly supposed to be our last game," Lambert said. "No one ever imagined us beating Coastal, because we lost to them twice during the regular season."

The Bulldogs outplayed them in nearly every category leading the team into the final game against the No. 1 seed, the Winthrop Eagles. The reigning champions for three years running.

"I hate that our season ended on that note because we really have had a phenomenal season," Ogle said.

The Bulldogs walked away with both Lambert and Unlu making the All-Tournament Team.

Unlu finished the season leading the Bulldogs offensively with 476 kills and 35 service aces. Havens led defensively with 493 digs. Wiles had 1,374 assists. Sophomore middle blocker Ashley Wrightenbury finished the season leading with 132 total blocks.

"This was truly an amazing ride," Lambert said.

### Opinion

## Elite teams fight for top spots in the NFL playoffs

By Ben Walsh  
STAFF WRITER

With five weeks left in the NFL season, certain teams know they will see the playoffs.

The Indianapolis Colts remain the team to beat in the AFC. At 11-0, they show no signs of slowing down. The NFL will see an undefeated regular season team for the first time since the 1972 Dolphins.

The Denver Broncos also do not look to lose the rest of the season. The Broncos will win the AFC West and capture a first-round bye for the playoffs at 14-2.

The AFC East will remain the disappointing of the NFL season. The New England Patriots will beat up on the rest of their weak division to make the playoffs, but remain a mere shadow of the former Super Bowl champions.

The Pittsburgh Steelers look to finish the season 12-4 to capture the AFC North. The Steelers' Super Bowl hopes rest on the shoulders of Ben Roethlisberger. If he does not return to his previous form, the Steelers will exit the playoffs early.

The Jacksonville Jaguars and Cincinnati Bengals look to end with around 11 wins to take the

two AFC wild card spots.

The NFC South contains three of the most competitive teams in football.

The Carolina Panthers will emerge from the pack to win this competitive division. With their dominating defense, the Panthers will ensure that Michael Vick and the Falcons do not see the playoffs this year.

Tampa Bay lucks out with two games against the New Orleans Saints in the last five games. As long as they wrap up these easy games, the Buccaneers will see the playoffs as a wild card.

The NFC East contains two evenly matched teams. The Giants and Cowboys sit tied for the division lead at 7-4. The Giants can bounce back from a tough overtime loss to Seattle and take control of the division, leaving Dallas to settle for a wild card spot.

With their overtime win over the Giants, the Seattle Seahawks sit four games ahead of the Rams in the NFC West. The Seahawks need to play smoother ball and not rely on the mistakes of the other team's kicker if they want to get a bye in the first round of the playoffs.

The Chicago Bears won their seventh straight game and show no signs of stopping. The Bears can wrap up the NFC North and a first round bye.

These teams will ensure another exciting month of NFL football.



Walsh

## Hood leads women's basketball

By Ingrid Allstaedt  
STAFF WRITER

Surpassing the 1,000th point mark and earning Big South Player of the Week are just two honors added to senior guard Kristal Hood's long list of accomplishments.

"When I was 4 years old, my mom bought me a Michael Jordan basketball hoop," said Hood, co-captain of the women's basketball team. "I have been playing basketball ever since I can remember."

Hood, management student, went over the 1,000th point mark of her career Nov. 22 at Gardner-Webb University, and received Big South Player of the Week for the week of games played through Nov. 28.

"She is a leader for the team," said Stacy Shepard, sophomore center. "She has always been our go-to player."

Hood's personality is addicting, according to Shepard.

"She can make people laugh," Shepard said. "She likes to joke around."

Hood turns to Adell Harris, assistant coach, for her growth as a player.

"Coach Harris has made me realize that there is more than just driving to the basket," Hood said. "She has taught me that people will grow, and I will have bad games."

Hood is from Frederick, Md., and helped lead Frederick High School to three championships.

Hood scored 1,082 points during her high school career, and set the record for steals in a game with 12.

Hood found her way to UNCA with the help of Faisal Khan, assistant coach.

"In high school, Khan coached the summer league I played on," Hood said. "He saw that I was not signed. He called me up, and I came on an official visit."

Hood has no set plans after her graduation in May.

"My dream job would be to keep playing basketball or be a coach," Hood said. "If I had the opportunity to play basketball after college, then I would in a heartbeat."

## Men's basketball brings in big bucks to play guarantee games

By Melissa Deckert  
STAFF WRITER

The men's basketball team got paid approximately \$100,000 for playing Georgia Tech and Wake Forest University in their first two games of the season.

"These games were two of our guarantee games, which means these teams pay us somewhere in the neighborhood of \$50,000 to come and play them," said Eddie Biedenbach, men's basketball head coach. "They call them guarantees because they don't return the game, they don't come here to play. We just play at their place, and because they don't return the game, they pay us to play there."

The men's team has five guarantee games this year. The other three are against North Carolina State, North Carolina, and UNC - Charlotte, according to Biedenbach.

In total, the men's team will bring in about \$250,000 from these five guarantee games.

"Those games are good for us from the standpoint that we have an opportunity to play big teams in that arena. If we win our league, we wind up playing a team like that in the NCAA tournament," Biedenbach said. "It helps us with recruiting, with our budget for scholarships, and it helps us with national recognition."

The team lost 80-52 against Georgia Tech after they went on a 14-0 run at the end of the first half.

"We played very hard in the game, but we didn't play well at all," Biedenbach said. "We didn't execute, didn't make open shots, didn't play defense or offense well, but we did play hard."

UNCA was led by Chad Mohn, senior forward, who had a career high of 21 points and pulled down nine rebounds. Oliver Holmes, senior guard/forward, added 12 points and shot a perfect 8-8 from the free-throw line.

"We chose to play Georgia Tech because of Omar Collington, who's a senior from that town," Biedenbach said. "We like to play in each of these guy's towns at some time during their college career so their hometown fans can travel a short distance, rather than

go all the way to Asheville to see them play."

After UNCA's first five points, Georgia Tech went on a 12-2 run, getting their lead back up to 52-28. The Bulldogs could not get any closer than 24 points the rest of the game.

"Playing in Atlanta was fun, because it's where I'm from and everybody who hasn't seen me play since high school got to come and watch," Collington said. "We were nervous and psyched because it was the first game of the season. We played hard, and they just happened to be a little better than us."

The Bulldogs lost 79-63 against Wake Forest, before a sold-out crowd of 14,665 at Joel Coliseum.

"We went in there, we executed and played very well for 15 minutes in the first half," Biedenbach said. "We took another step up, we played against a top 25 team and we played well."

Wake Forest led 38-29 at half-time with four of UNCA's starters on the bench with two fouls each late in the half.

"We got into foul trouble and it was difficult," Biedenbach said. "Wake shot 14 free throws and we didn't shoot any. They were more aggressive and tried to bully us more around the basket, but they were better athletes and so we fouled them some, but I felt they fouled us some also."

In the second half, Asheville got as close as 45-39 off a layup by Collington on a turnover.

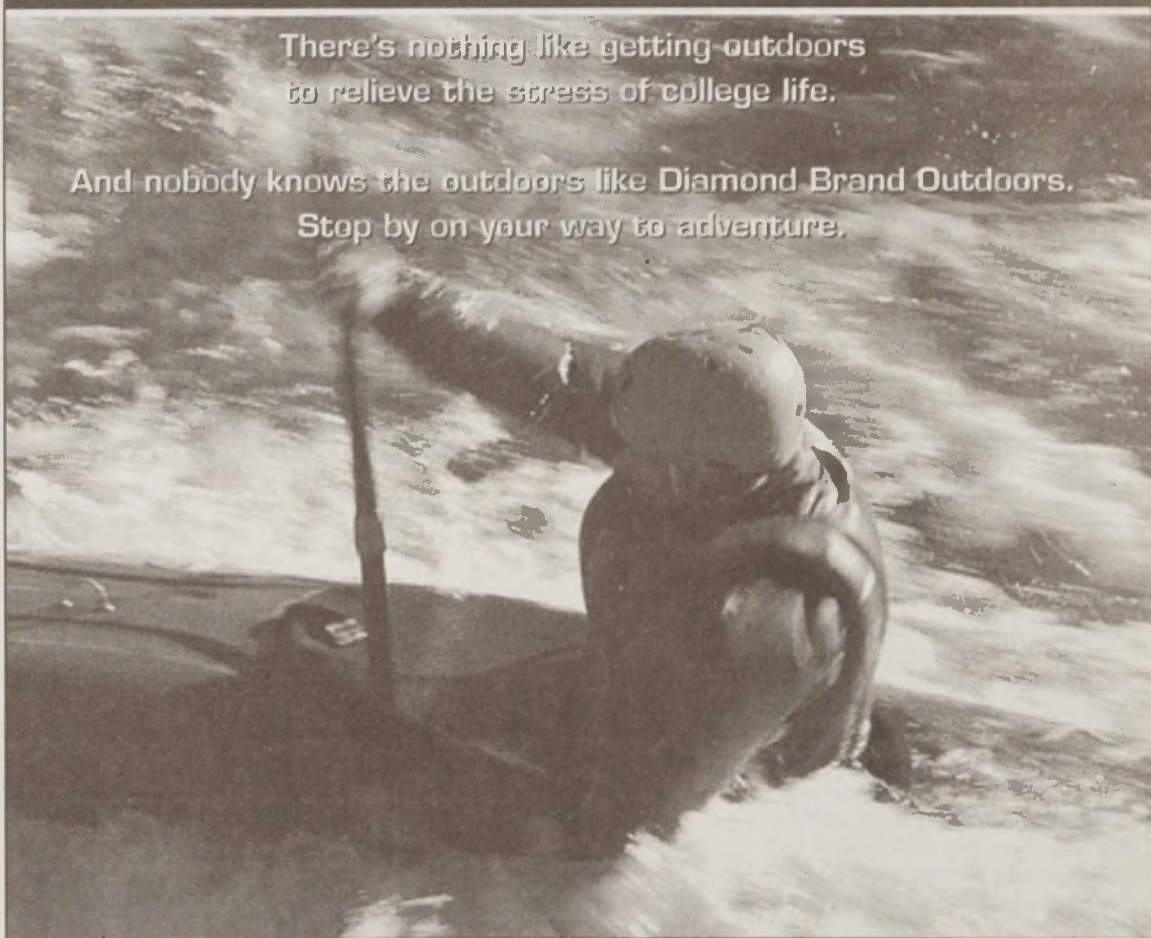
"They were having some adjustments to make anyway and then coupled with us changing defense, it put them in a position where they were unsure of themselves a bit of the time and that kept us close in the game," Biedenbach said.

The Bulldogs were led by Joe Barber, senior forward/center, with a game high of 17 points. Holmes added 11 points and seven rebounds.

## College Survival Tip #4: Study physics in a whitewater lab.

There's nothing like getting outdoors to relieve the stress of college life.

And nobody knows the outdoors like Diamond Brand Outdoors. Stop by on your way to adventure.



◆ Custom fitted footwear

◆ Huge selection of guidebooks & maps, including WNC trail maps

◆ Largest selection of day packs, fanny packs & backpacks in the Asheville area

◆ Largest selection of outdoor equipment & supplies in the southeast

◆ Helpful, experienced staff with outdoor knowledge & expertise

Diamond Brand Outdoors  
172 Charlotte Street, Asheville  
Open Mon-Fri 10:00 am - 7:00 pm  
Sat 9:00 am - 6:00 pm

828-251-4668



www.diamondbrand.com

Serving outdoor enthusiasts since 1964