

Sports

ECSU Coach Visits South Africa

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It was a busy summer for Elizabeth City State University Baseball Coach Terrance Whittle. Coach Whittle participated in Major League Baseball's Envoy Coaching Program, which sends American coaches to different countries where they teach various baseball skills. Whittle, along with other coaches from around the U.S., traveled to South Africa where they evaluated South Africa players and conducted clinics. Coach Whittle's objective was to help elevate the introduction and development of baseball in the post apartheid country. Players between the ages of 8-12 were taught basic fielding, catching, hitting, and base running skills.

"For the players that were between the ages of 13-16, we tried to teach them about team play," said Whittle.

Coach Whittle also conducted clinics and workshops for coaches and teachers.

Although much of his time was spent training teams in the populated cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria, Coach Whittle also had the opportunity to assist in the development of baseball talent in the rural cities of Tokoza, Timbiza, Mpumalanga, and Soweto.

"Going into the tour I didn't know what to expect. I was warmly embraced, and I have plans to return to South Africa in the near future," he said.

THE VOLLEYBALL TEAM STARTS OFF A SPIKY SEASON

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The Lady Vikings Volleyball Team started off a very spiky 2002-2003 season with two losses to the University of the District of Columbia and Virginia State University.

The Vikings loss their season opener on Sept. 8, to the University of the District of Columbia, playing three sets with the scores of 30-14, 30-23, and 30-21.

Captain Nicole Higgins and Venkia Jones had 13 assists between them; the team had a total of seven service aces and 37 digs.

On Sept. 10, ECSU faced their next opponent, VSU. ECSU began the game with good intensity, winning the first two sets 30-24 and 30-21 quickly after VSU set up for their comeback, winning the remaining three sets 30-20, 30-16, and 15-8. Nicole Higgins led the team with 14 assists and nine digs. Kandis Riddick led the team with four solo blocks.

The Lady Vikings are being plagued by injuries early in the season. The team suffered two losses due to injuries in the VSU game. Kristen Bowen suffered a hairline fracture to her wrist and Captain Riddick tore her lateral meniscus. She is scheduled to be out for at least a month. Captain Sharon Gorgani said she felt that the team had a very shaky start due to the injuries, but she is hopeful, they will be able to pull together, considering that majority of the team are freshmen and its new edition is Kristen Snead.

"The transition from basketball to volleyball was easy. It's similar in quickness and lateral movement. The tough part was getting back to my rhythm of volleyball," Snead said.

The Lady Vikings Volleyball team will have to learn to adapt and play without captain Riddick and Bowen. Riddick said that she is going to work diligently to come back in enough time for the CIAA Tournament in November.

ECSU BASKETBALL TEAMS HEADED IN NEW DIRECTIONS

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As a result of coaching changes that occurred at the end of last year, the Elizabeth City State University men's basketball is headed in a new direction.

Shawn Walker, formerly head women's coach, has been named headmen's basketball coach replacing Barry Hamler who left the university at the end of last season. Coach Walker says that he is ready to lay a foundation for the changes he plans to make in the program. Walker says he stresses education first, and plans to have all of his ball players maximize their potential in the classroom throughout their academic and athletic careers. One of Walker's major goals this season is to make sure that all 14 returnees have the correct National Collegiate Athletic Association grade point average in order to retain their eligibility for the 2003-2004 season.

"My team should win on and off the floor. We'll be very exciting to watch, we're a talented team, aggressive, and young," Walker says.

Walker hopes that the team's quickness will overcome its lack of size.

"With hard work, and discipline we will have a good year," he adds.

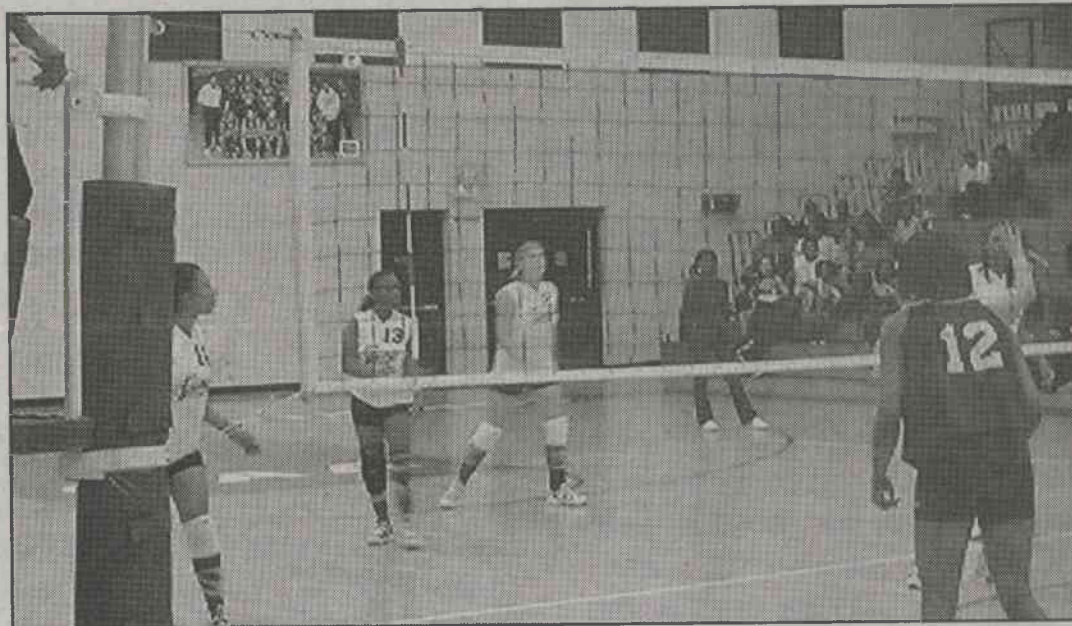
A new experience, challenges in learning, a new environment, and excitement are only a few of the words that coach Fred Batchelor uses to describe how he feels about coaching the Lady Vikings this year.

"I'm even more excited about the players I get a chance to coach, said Batchelor. The former head coach at Buffalo State University, says he is going to enjoy the challenge of coaching the Lady Vikings.

"I want my ladies to set an example for what student athletes should do in the classroom," he said in a recent interview. Batchelor says that he encourages his lady Vikings to have put their studies before athletics and to maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average. He says that on the court he wants the ladies to continue to improve and do their best each day. "Give it their all and improve every day" is how he puts it.

He says that if each of the Lady Vikings does this they will rise to the challenges they will face and have another outstanding season.

"We will definitely be an example of what truly epitomizes teamwork," Batchelor says. "As far as the season is concerned, a lot of hard work has been done, and now it is time for us to claim what is ours," he adds.



The Lady Viking Volleyball Team

Photo by Jason Mitchell

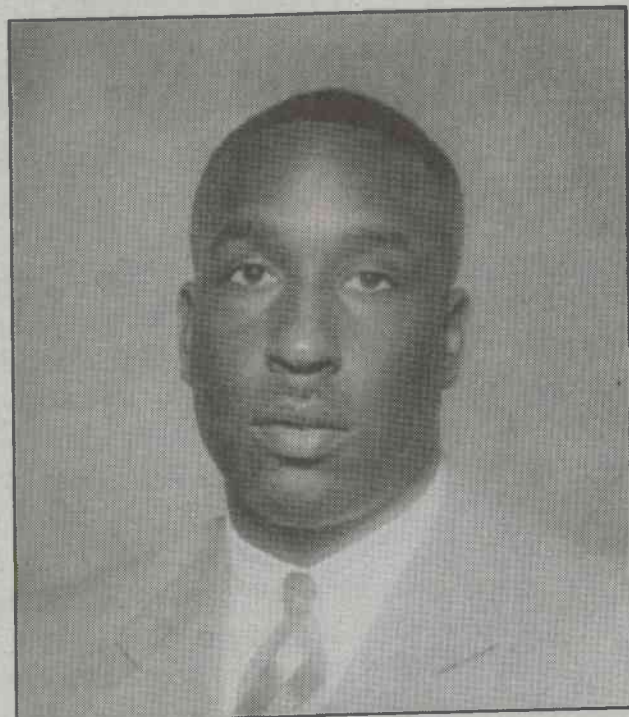
BOWLING SEASON IS ON ITS WAY

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Last year was the first new competitive sport for the CIAA: Female Bowling. There are approximately 12 CIAA schools with bowling teams. ECSU finished second in its division and fifth overall. The team is coached by Coach Jeremy Williams. All female, there are ten students on our bowling team. Only five are permitted to bowl each

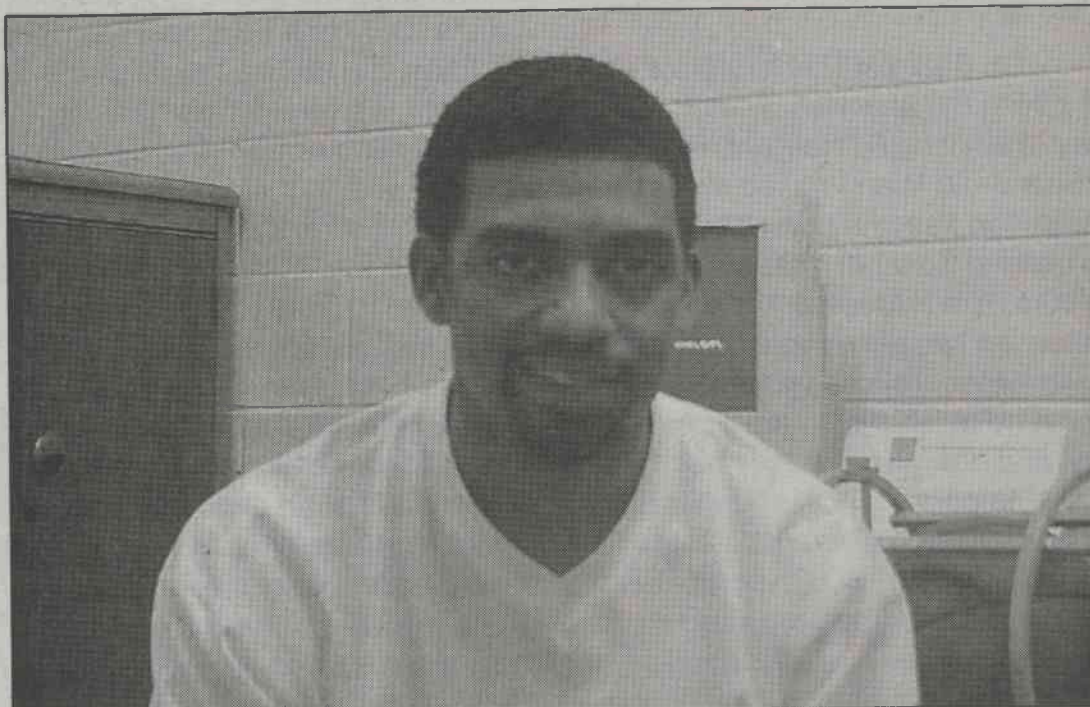
game.

Second-year Bowler Demetra Gilmore says she enjoys the team's sisterhood the teammates display towards each other and the competitive nature of bowling, and is looking forward to another spectacular season. Gilmore hopes to bring home the CIAA Bowling Championship for 2002-2003. Catch the Bowling Team in action on October 19-20, 2002 in Elizabeth City.



New Men's Basketball Coach Shawn Walker

Photo by Shawn Walker



New Women's Basketball Coach Fred Batchelor

Photo by Kristal McClendon

This year, let us support the Vikings at the home games and the away games. GO VIKINGS!! GO VIKINGS!! GO VIKINGS!!