

# SPORTS

## Bishoops Take Thriller at Shenandoah as Arrington Scores 33

Junior sharpshooter Jarmel Arrington poured in a game-high 33 points and knocked down seven three-pointers on February 7 to lead his North Carolina Wesleyan men's basketball team to a thrilling 102-98 overtime win on the road at Shenandoah.

Arrington made 7-of-14 attempts from behind the arc and 10-of-10 attempts at the free throw line to pace the Bishoops, who forced the extra period with a buzzer-beating lay-up by Buddy Williams in regulation. Wesleyan improved to 14-6 overall with the win, which includes a 4-3 mark in the USA South.

Both teams shot over 50 percent in the first half with Shenandoah (7-14, 2-6 USAC) holding a slim 46-42 lead at half-time.

The second half featured five ties and six lead changes before SU looked



Trey Drake SI Photo

to steal the victory by forging a five-point advantage in the final minute. The Hornets held an 87-82 advantage with 30 seconds remaining following a pair of Wayne Washington free throws.

The Bishoops proceeded to miss four shots on their next trip down the floor before SU's Kenny Robertson could come down with the defensive rebound. But Robertson was called for traveling after falling to the floor. Wesleyan took advantage and cut the deficit to two points on an Arrington three-pointer with eight seconds left.

NCWC fouled on the in-bounds play, and Robertson hit one of two to give the Hornets an 88-85 lead with four ticks on the clock. The Bishoops quickly advanced the ball into the frontcourt where Robertson was whistled for a foul on a Trey Drake

three-point attempt with 0.8 remaining.

Drake missed the first attempt, and after making the second, he missed the third intentionally. Shenandoah's Kevin Kline knocked the ball out-of-bounds, but no time ran off the clock, giving the Bishoops one last chance.

Drake made the most of the opportunity as he got the ball under the basket to Williams, who laid it in for the game-tying bucket. The assist secured a double-double for Drake, who had 12 points and 10 helpers on the night.

The Bishoops went on to out-score the Hornets 14-10 in the extra period as they hit all seven of their attempts from the line. SU made just 5-of-10 at the charity stripe and 1-of-4 from the floor.

In addition to Arrington's 33 points,

Williams finished with a season-high 19. Other notable performances were by Lamont Stokes (12 points) and Adam Coleman (10) while freshman Alex Murray pulled down a team-high nine rebounds.

(Article courtesy of Sports Information)

## Earlier Action Bishoops Lose Tough Game at CNU

By James Randolph  
Decree Staff Writer

The Bishoops men's basketball team was 2-3 in conference play in January after a 94-80 loss to Averett College in Averett Gymnasium on January 29.

Prior to the Averett game, freshman forward Justin Griffith said "If we win Thursday we're good" but unfortunately the Bishoops did not open well in the conference play.

The Bishoops outscored their opponents in the first five games of the season 490-379. After starting the season a school-best 8-0, the Bishoops lost their first game in the championship of the Roger Taylor Invitational in Rocky Mount. The loss to St. Vincent was followed by a devastating loss to Virginia Wesleyan, which moved Wesleyan off its slot as the 24th ranked team in the National D3 Coaches Polls.

January was particularly cruel to the Bishoops as they dropped four of their last seven games, which were all close with the exception being the Averett contest. The Bishoops lost at Neuman College on the January 6 (73-71), at home against Shenandoah (68-65), and at Christopher Newport (74-71) on a buzzer beater.

In the game at CNU, the Bishoops battled back against seemingly insurmountable odds. Facing a 16-point deficit early in the first half of play, the Bishoops fought back to close the gap to within five points at the end of the half (41-36). Down 71-66 with only 1:22 remaining in the game, Bishoops' star point guard Trey Drake was fouled on his way to the rack, hit the ensuing free throw, and then assisted on guard Lamont Stokes' game-tying bucket with only 15 seconds left on the clock.

Following Stokes' score, the Captains' point guard took the inbound pass, penetrated the Bishoops defense and kicked the ball out to CNU's star guard Theo Baker, who hit what would be a game-clinching three pointer with only 1.6 seconds remaining. Baker led CNU with 17 points while Stokes led Wesleyan with 18. The Bishoops shot 37% (28/75) from the field while CNU shot 47% (29/62).

"We're doing good; we just seem to have a problem with being consistent," Stokes said. "We don't bring it every night. When we do bring defensive intensity it's hard for teams to score on us. Hopefully in the second half of conference play we'll pick it up."

a veteran starting rotation after he compiled an 8-2 record and 3.20 ERA in 2008. "Pitching wise," Long said, "I feel pretty good."

match-ups against several perennial powers. Long explained that success against ranked teams enhances his team's chances at gaining a post-season bid.

An early test will come against ninth-ranked Salisbury of Maryland on February 8th. Other noteworthy opponents include Marietta College (ranked 17th) and Lynchburg (20th), Montclair State (national champs in 2000), as well as strong regional competitors such as Emory, LaGrange and Randolph Macon. "Not many breaks in there," Long said. "We'll find out where we stand pretty quick."

Although Long will field a veteran team with eight seniors and many other returnees, lingering questions remain about the upcoming season.

"Our biggest question is the direction our offense is going to take," Long said. "We lost some offense from last year's team. We brought in some new guys with speed. We like speed and we're hoping some young guys will play."

The Bishoops must replace five seniors who finished their careers in 2008: battery-mates, Ted Williams and Kyle Robertson as well as utility-man Jason Webb. The two most significant losses may be speedy outfielders Matt Smith and Chris Pecora. "They were smart base runners," Long said, noting that Smith ran a 6.5 60-yard dash, and Pecora ran a 6.7. "We're going to miss that a lot."

Both Pecora and Smith hit for a high average and provided pop and speed at the top of the lineup. "We'll have to play a little more small ball this year, more bunting, more hit-and-runs than I like in a normal year."

Long added that he will miss Smith's exceptional defense in centerfield. "Matt was the best defensive outfielder I've had at Wesleyan," the coach said. "He made some plays that were out of this world."

The Bishoops' lineup is almost set. Long will rely upon Justin Batts (.397 avg., 50 RBIs as catcher-DH last year) to produce runs. Other projected starters include Justin Tuck at first base, Travis Beausoleil (2nd), Justin Rahm (SS) and Luke Williford (LF).

The coach expects Daniel Moore to take Smith's place in center, though he may shift to right if freshman Zach Moore proves himself a capable option in center. Justin Diener will see action in right, while Andrew Webb, Zollie Woodlief, and perhaps even Rahm will be given shots at third base. Long said he expects that freshmen Patrick Laffin and Tony Whitehead "to push" for playing time as well. "We've got some options," the coach said.

The team's success will depend, Long said, on the new players' ability to fill the holes in his lineup. Just as important, he wants to see if certain veterans can flourish as starters after years of serving in part-time roles. "We've got some guys who are used to getting 80 to 90 at-bats a year," Long explained. "They need to prove that they can play well as starters, when they'll be getting 160 at bats."

Senior Ben Moore will anchor

## Long Seeks to Avoid NCAA Tournament Near Miss

**UPDATE: The Bishoops opened the 2009 season by splitting their first four games, sweeping Eastern Mennonite on February 7 and then losing two to 9th ranked Salisbury a day later.**

**In the Saturday, doubleheader, staff ace Ben Moore tossed a 4-hit complete game in the first contest and then freshman Patrick Laffin knocked in two runs to lead the way in the second game. On Sunday, Salisbury pounded the Bishoops, winning 13-3 and 12-5.**

By Decree Sports Staff

A rare warm January day gave Charlie Long the first significant opportunity to assess his team in action. He was pleased with his team's performance during what

turned out to be a six-hour scrimmage. "I feel very good about my team," Long said in late January. "We swung the bat really well."

Now in his 12th year as head coach, Long is eager to embark on an ambitious schedule devised with an eye toward the post season.

Last year Wesleyan was 28-14-1 over all, a 667 winning percentage, yet did not get an invitation to the NCAA tournament after it lost to Christopher Newport in the USA South tournament. "We were on the bubble the last two seasons," Long noted.

As a result, Long and assistant coach Ernie Jones have added non-league

## LAX Returns with New Coach

Ramona Walters has been chosen as head coach of the women's lacrosse program. A product of St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York, Walters spent last season as an assistant coach with her alma mater, as well as an assistant coach at Corcoran High School in her native Syracuse.

Walters was a four-year letter winner at St. John Fisher, where she served as team captain and co-president of the Cardinals' Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. As a senior, Walters was an Empire 8 First-Team selection, marking the fourth time in her career she received All-Conference honors. She was named to the All-State Third Team during that same season.

Walters' name is scattered throughout the SJFC record books, having started all 67 of Fisher's games during her career. She ranks among all-time leaders in ground balls (151), draw controls (49) and caused turnovers (58). She completed her psychology degree at SJFC in 2007.

As an assistant, Walters helped lead Fisher to an 11-8 overall record, including a 7-1 league mark and an appearance in the ECAC title game. The Cardinals boasted six all-conference and two all-region selections during her only season on staff.

Her other coaching experience includes volunteer stints at Pittsford Menden and East Ridge High Schools, along with participating as a mentor in several youth clinics. She has also served as a lacrosse official since 2003.

In addition to her coaching duties, Walters will serve as Wesleyan's Assistant Sports Information Director for the Department of Athletics.

The Decree sports staff conducted a recent email interview with the new coach:

**Q.** What are your initial impressions of Wesleyan?

**A.** Wesleyan itself has a very warm feel to it, not just with the weather, February and no snow blows my mind. But the southern hospitality really stands out among staff and students. Everyone has been so helpful in making my transition to Wesleyan fast and smooth. As for the facilities, I'm surprised there isn't a stadium with turf. However I hear nothing but good things about the grass field we will be competing on, so I'm very excited.

**Q.** Of the players on the team so far, what percent are experienced lacrosse players and what percent are athletes

from other sports?

**A.** We're coming into our season with 16 players. I have two young ladies who have played lacrosse prior to college and a handful who first picked up a stick at the beginning of their college careers. Nearly half of our team is comprised of dual-sport athletes, between soccer and volleyball. The returnees consist of Mikey Case, Lauren Stearns, Megan "Gumby" Kintner, Sarah Matulich and Kathleen Penrod.

**Q.** What would you say are the most challenging aspects of the game for an athlete who has played other sports, but not lacrosse?

**A.** An athlete is used to stepping on the field with the confidence that she knows what she's doing. For someone who has never played the game, it's difficult to slow her pace down to learn the basics. What are supposed to be simple techniques such as basic passing and catching do not always come naturally. It's important to keep frustration levels low and focus on the progress and knowledge that's being built.

**Q.** You'll be a club sport this first year (and then a division three sport next year). How many games and scrimmages do you hope to schedule? Can you identify some of the schools you hope to play against?

**A.** This club season we will have 6-7 scrimmages, with teams such as Ferrum and Highpoint University, along with two post-collegiate teams coming out of Raleigh and Charlotte. Next season we'll have roughly 16 dates of competition, between schools in our conference (USA South) as well as Mary Washington, Hollins and Sweet Briar.

**Q.** What kind of style will your team play?

**A.** I don't have a particular style for the girls just yet. I like to wait and see where their strengths are as a whole and then go from there. My plan is to emphasize the basics. I'm hoping for a strong transition, moving the ball quickly and efficiently up the field.

**Q.** Summarize your larger goals for this first season.

**A.** These girls fought so hard to bring lacrosse back to Wesleyan and I'm lucky enough to be a part of that. We're going to have a fun and successful season that will make others take notice and want to participate.

(Sports Information contributed to this report)

## To Draft or Not to Draft

By Richie Fender  
Decree Sports Writer

I want a show of hands for every student who wants to make millions after graduation. Money is the great motivator that decides what we do in life. We go to school in hopes that education will give us the tools needed to make more money. For a select few of students who play sports, this decision is made more complicated. In fact, some of these students don't even need to complete school to make the mega bucks. So what is your education worth?

This is the dilemma that college football's best players face every January. College players as early as the junior class have until the 15th to decide whether or not they will leave school and brave the NFL draft. It's very tempting to not finish the rigorous life of a college student and enter into a life of glamour in professional sports but this is not a decision to take lightly. I mean, it's truly life changing and the

past proves that it can be overwhelming for some.

Injury seems to be one of the most common reasons for leaving college early. Think about it, going through another college season could potentially end in a season-ending injury that may require surgery. This could prove to be detrimental to having a future in the NFL. The NFL draft is like the stock market. Injuries that leave a player out for significant periods of time can drastically reduce the player's draft value. What does this mean? This would directly affect the amount of money a player can earn in their contract negotiations.

I'm sure at some point in time we've all heard the hype that surrounds the NFL draft and the promises of a better life for the players involved. Once these players decide to take the leap, NFL teams set their radars. Coaches take notice and tend to pay more attention to the players at first. They then evaluate the players more closely

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