

## Volleyball still unbeaten after first tournament

**Scott Hildebrand**  
Sports Editor

Last weekend volleyball traveled to Hampton, where they swept four straight matches to

win the Hampton University Invitational Tournament.

Elon defeated Edinboro (7-15, 15-7, 9-15, 15-12, 15-4), Hampton (15-5, 15-11, 15-1), Pembroke State (15-9, 15-4, 15-12), and St. Augustine's (15-7, 15-4, 15-12).

The wins this weekend improved the Lady Fightin' Christians record to 7-0 overall.

"We are off to a good start this season," said head coach Sue Leonard, "this team has worked

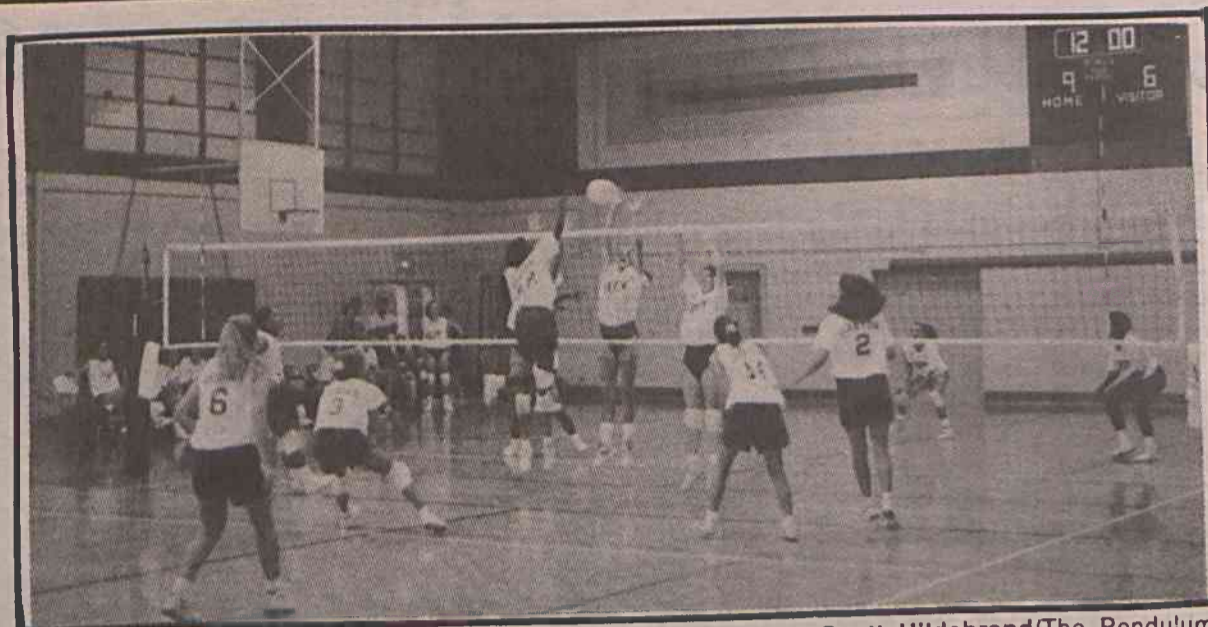
as hard as any other team during the preseason, and it seems to be paying off."

Priscilla Awkard had 111 assists in the four matches, and was named as the tournament MVP.

"I was really surprised to receive MVP honors. There were a lot of good players to choose

from, and I was happy they chose me," Awkard said.

In addition to the tournament MVP, Awkard was also named the South Atlantic Conference



Scott Hildebrand/The Pendulum

Elon blocks off the competition at the Hampton University Invitational Tournament and improves to 7-0.

player of the week.

Named also to the All-Tournament team were Velma Degree and Megan Crooks. During the tournament Degree

had 66 kills and 36 digs, while Crooks followed with 45 blocks and 38 kills.

"The weekend pleasantly

surprised me. We came through the toughest bracket to win the tournament," Leonard said.

## Elon baseball makes Best choice

**Matt Ball**  
Staff Reporter

Hoping to keep a winning baseball tradition alive, Billy Best begins this season as Elon's new head baseball coach. Best takes the reigns from former coach Mike Harden, who recently took an administrative position within the Alamance County School system.

"We are excited to have Billy Best join our staff. He comes to us with outstanding experiences as a professional player, coach, and teacher," said athletic director Alan White.

Best, 35, graduated from East Carolina University in 1981, having set four individual school records as well as leading the Pirates to two postseason berths. For the next four years, Best played for the Kansas City Royals as an outfielder. While with the Royals, Best made

several all-star teams and once again led his team to two postseason appearances.

In 1984, Best left the Royals to return as an assistant coach at his alma mater, East Carolina.

Four years later Best signed as an assistant coach at Auburn, where

he has been up until this year.

Best, a North Carolina native, said there were several factors that led him to take the Elon job.

"It was a goal of mine to get back to North Carolina as a head coach. I wanted to come home."

said Best who is married and has a young daughter. "I've known about Elon for a long time and it really has two things going for it, a very good tradition and a very pretty campus," Best added.

Best says that one of the hardest decisions that he ever made was quitting pro ball to coach at ECU and then whether or not to go to Auburn. However, the decision to come to

Elon seemed much easier.

"My decision to come to Elon took about 10 minutes," said Best.

In his first season with the Fightin' Christians, Best has set lofty goals, but goals he feels are attainable.

"Our main goal will be to win the regular season title. When you win that it shows you've been playing consistently well the whole season. If we can't win that then we'll try our best to win the tournament," said Best.

Learning from his experiences in college and pro ball, Best says there's one piece of advice that he'd try to get his players to follow.

"I'd tell my players to persevere. Too many of my friends are still playing pro ball and perseverance is the only reason. Too many players want to quit," said Best.

Best will test his and his team's skills on February 9.

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