



Junior center Lisa Archie had a career-best 11 rebounds in the team's 70-46 win Nov. 12.

HEATHER CASSANO | Photo Editor

Women's basketball looks to improve after first win

Rebecca Wickel
Design Editor

The Elon University women's basketball team kicked off its regular season with a 70-46 victory against Virginia Union University Nov. 12 in Alumni Gym. But for head coach Charlotte Smith, her first season with the Phoenix still looks like a challenge.

"It feels great to get the win," Smith said. "We're excited. But when I went into the locker room, they were sitting there like it's a funeral. They know there is still a lot to work on."

Smith joined the Phoenix after nine seasons as an assistant coach at the University of North Carolina. She plans to use her skills as one of the most decorated players in Tar Heel history to bolster the Phoenix.

"We need to make a commitment to rebound," she said. "The defense and rebounds are things we can control. We'll work on that."

Although the team "got out of the gates pretty slow," according to Smith, the second half showed both offensive and defensive stamina. With a five point lead to start the second half, the team found its rhythm when

shooting from the field, reaching an overall 45 percent accuracy.

Junior guard Ali Ford led the team with 26 points. Despite this, she said there were more things the Phoenix could work on.

"We've just got to get better at taking care of the ball," Ford said. "We forced them into a good number of turnovers, but we had some ourselves."

Despite a strong finish, the team knows what it needs to improve to have a successful season. Ford said the players need to "concentrate a lot on the process," and work to iron out easy plays and continue to focus on conditioning.

During the game, Ford passed Jamie McNeely for 17th place on Elon's all-time scoring list, bringing Ford's career points to 1,089.

The milestone did not affect her determination to take the team to new heights. Ford said she was unaware of the ranking and has more to look forward to.

"We're not finished yet," she said.

The Phoenix will be back in Alumni Gym at 5:30 p.m. Nov. 18, when the team challenges Virginia Intermont College.

Men's basketball falls to UMass in season opener

Justin Veldhuis
Sports Editor

The Elon University men's basketball team returns home at 8 p.m. Friday, in Alumni Gym to face Division III University of New Jersey Rutgers-Camden.

The Phoenix will continue its non-conference play, as the team's first five games on the schedule are against teams from outside the Southern Conference.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst defeated Elon 85-67 Nov. 11 in both teams' season openers. The Phoenix, playing in front of a hostile crowd in the historic Curry Hicks Cage, led UMass 43-39 at halftime but couldn't stop a 19-2 second-half run by the Minutemen.

"I thought we came out with good energy and I don't think we backed down," senior guard Drew Spradlin said. "We weren't mature and experienced enough to stop (the run). We need to figure out as a team how to stop runs."

Head coach Matt Matheny said the Phoenix kept its composure in the first half but didn't respond well to adversity in the second half, struggling with a loud crowd and a "very long, athletic team committed to running and pressing" in UMass.

"We didn't answer the chaotic bell," he said. "We have to understand that we have to be competitively tough for 40 minutes."

Elon was playing from behind early in the second half and couldn't climb its way back, which is something this team will need to figure out, Matheny

said.

"Our team is talented and potent and has quick strike potential," Matheny said. "That's something we haven't had in recent past. The more we understand that we can be a dangerous team."

Sophomore forward Lucas Troutman led Elon scorers with 15 points and Spradlin added 14 points and five rebounds. Freshman guard Austin Hamilton scored 12 points in 26 minutes off the bench in his first away game as a collegiate.

Hamilton and freshman guard Kevin Blake were thrown into a chaotic atmosphere in front of a sold-out crowd for their first road game against a pressing Atlantic 10 Conference team, Matheny said. Each showed good signs, as well as things to learn, Matheny said, such as quickly moving ahead to the

next play.

"We had some really good positives," he said. "When you make a good play, that's great get to the next, and when you make a negative play, that's OK get to the next."

Elon's next three games are against non-conference opponents. After playing Rutgers-Camden at home, the Phoenix will play at Princeton University, an NCAA tournament team a year ago, Nov. 22, and at North Carolina State University Nov. 25.

Spradlin said the team is excited to play some tough teams early in the season.

"We want to play the best teams we can to get ready for the SoCon," Spradlin said. "We want to play better than we did (against UMass). I don't think we played to the level we're capable of."

Volleyball clinches playoff spot with win against UNCG

Adam Lawson
Reporter

Elon University's Southern Conference tournament hopes looked bleak.

Trailing two sets to one Friday night, the Phoenix women's volleyball team was one bad set away from ensuring there would be no postseason play. Then something clicked for the Phoenix as the team got it together and took the final two sets from UNC Greensboro.

"They looked like a team that wanted to go to the tournament," coach Mary Tendler said.

A loss by UNCG at home the following night to the College of Charleston meant that all the Phoenix had to do to make the SoCon tournament was win on its Senior Day match against The Citadel Sunday.

After correcting some early mistakes, the team swept The Citadel in three sets, earning a place in the tournament as the North Division's fourth seed.

Last year's division champions didn't set out to be 7-9 in the conference. After winning 11 conference games in 2010, the Phoenix was determined to do more this season. But the Phoenix stumbled along the way, and had to win their last three games and get help just to be in the position they are in now.

"Our goal was higher than to just get to the tournament," Tendler said. "Now we have an opportunity to do that."

Standing in their way will be the College of Charleston. A foe Elon hasn't defeated since 2006, Charleston is the only SoCon team that the Phoenix seniors haven't beaten.

"We didn't show up when we played Charleston (last time)," senior outside hitter/middle blocker Caroline Lemke said. "It will be exciting to go out and get revenge."

In September, the Cougars dominated Elon, sweeping the Phoenix out of Charleston's gym and not allowing Elon more than 19 points in any set.

"It's extra motivation playing a team you haven't beaten before," said junior libero Ali Deatsch, who broke the Elon Division-I single-season record for most aces in a season (54) against The Citadel. "We already know it's going to be a battle. Why not make it the biggest battle?"

To have any success, though, the Phoenix need to cure their ills away from Alumni Gym. Elon is just 1-7 against conference teams on the road this season. Stranger things have happened in the postseason, though, something Elon's senior leader Lemke is well aware of.

"Once you get to conference, all bets are off," Lemke said.

Cross Country ends season at NCAA Southeast regional meet



JULIA MURPHY | Photographer

Both the men's and women's cross country team's finished their seasons Saturday, Nov. 12 at the NCAA Southeast Regional in Louisville, K.Y. The men's team placed 23rd out of 32 teams, led by freshman Luis Vargas' 92nd place finish. Redshirt-freshman Sean Magee, freshman Ari Rothschild, senior Clay Sankey (pictured), sophomore Ben Perron, freshman Adam Bernstein and senior Conor O'Brien rounded out the top seven for the men. The women's team placed 21st out of 35 teams. Junior Morgan Denecke finished first for the team followed by sophomore Alyson Oram, junior Emily Tryon, freshman Haylee Dawe, sophomore Kylie Womack, junior Christine Pacewicz and sophomore Brennan McDavid.