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Goodbye, Angels?

College Looking for New, Bolder Meredith Mascot

By Laurel Benedum
Staff Writer

Athletic advancement and the joining of the USA South Conference in fall 2007 has led President Maureen Hartford to search for a new, bolder and more intimidating mascot, college officials said last week.

Joining the conference guarantees an increased level of competition for Meredith's athletic teams, said Director of Marketing and Communications, Kristi Eaves-McLennan.

"With our athletic teams beginning to compete in more regional and national tournaments, President Hartford, the senior management team and the athletics department feel that the timing is right for the College to adopt a different mascot," said Eaves-McLennan.

For the last 26 years, Meredith teams have been known as the Meredith Angels, and the school's affiliation with angels dates back to the mid-1920s. The Meredith Supply Store is full of T-shirts, mugs, and other paraphernalia depicting the Angels logo. But not for long.

Two student representatives were selected to serve on a committee appointed by Hartford to consider



Meredith College Basketball team at a recent tournament in Atlanta. The team won't be called the Meredith Angels for long, college officials say.

the change, said Eaves-McLennan.

The committee is also planning a number of ways, such as holding a forum early in the spring semester and soliciting name ideas electronically, to involve students and other members of the community in the process, said Eaves-McLennan.

The athletic team logo change would need to be implemented by the beginning of the fall 2007 sports season, said Eaves-McLennan.

The 'Angel' has been a long-time tradition and focal point to the college and although it was not officially adopted until April 18, 1980, the mascot has been

heavily associated with the college since the mid-1920s, according to Dr. Jean Jackson.

Eaves-McLennan said it is important to note that the official mascot design, created by Teresa Parker, will only affect the college's athletic teams.

"The 'Angels,' a term for which many students and alumnae have a profound affection, will remain a part of the College's identity and will continue to be associated with Meredith students and alumnae," said Eaves-McLennan.

Eaves-McLennan anticipates that Meredith Angel merchandise will continue to be sold and

promoted in the Meredith Supply Store and many students and graduates will undoubtedly retain the mascot traditionally known to the school: The Meredith Angels.

"The potential athletics mascot change and joining an athletics conference are among several efforts underway to raise the profile of Meredith's athletics teams both on campus and off," said Eaves-McLennan.

In September, the college hired its first full-time sports information director who has been working to promote Meredith's athletics program, Eaves McLennan said.

The newly redesigned athletics page can be viewed at www.meredith.edu/athletics to learn more about Meredith's sports teams.