

WSSU Women's Basketball

New Coach Likes Fast Pace

By JEROME RICHARD
Chronicle Sports Writer

The players on this year's Winston-Salem State University women's basketball team better be in shape because new head coach Debra Clark likes a fast pace.

"We want to keep it a fast-paced game offensively and defensively," said Clark, who is in her first year as a head coach after a seven-year stint as the top assistant at Norfolk State. "We naturally have to rebound and we want to go from offense to defense as fast as we can and visa versa.

"The players are used to a slower pace where they walk the ball up the court and at first they were not quite sure about what to do, but they have adjusted pretty well. They've been receptive and caught on to what we are trying to do."

Clark believes she has the athletes to play an up-tempo style, though the Lady Rams will have to overcome their lack of height in order to get the ball off the board to trigger the transition game.

"We have good athletes, good quickness and speed, and we run the floor well," said Clark, who will try to improve upon last year's 7-18 record of Stenson Conley, her predecessor. "We have the talent to hit the outside shot or go inside."

The long-range shooting is in the capable hands of Kendra Horne, an All-CIAA preseason selection at guard. Horn averaged 19 points per game last year and Clark thinks Horne can score more this year.

"I feel confident she can do that (19 points per game) and more," the first-year coach said of the 5-8 senior. "We'll also look to Chellia Nelson, a transfer from Louisburg, to help with the outside shooting. On the inside we'll rely on Denetra Parker (6-2 junior center, 10.8 ppg, 6.4 rpg) and Keisha Butler (5-10 sophomore forward, 8.2 ppg, team

high 7.6 rpg). Parker is a force inside and we would like to see her double her points and rebounds from last year. Butler is a quiet, steady player and will get the job done. She has improved a great deal from last year and we will rely on her on the inside."

Backing up Parker, at center will be Chasity Whitaker, while Butler will be spelled by Sharon Allen and Nikita Clement at forward. Horne will get relief from Dalma Vasquez at shooting guard. Handling the point guard duties will be the trio of Natasha Buford, Manita Broadus and Diya Wilson, while the small forward spot will be the domain of Nelson and Shavonda Smith.

Parker and Butler are the Rams' only big players and the Rams' lack of size concerns Clark.

"We are small overall so we will have to emphasize rebounding position," she said. "We'll be small-

er than most of our opponents."

Clark's strategy for overcoming the height disadvantage is to press full court using both a man-to-man and zone.

"We don't want to be too predictable," she said, noting that the man-to-man is the primary defense and she'll call for a 2-3 zone on occasion. "With our style of play we can't get by with just five players, so we need others to step up."

So far, Clark has been impressed with her team's work ethic and inside and outside balance, but she is concerned about instituting a new style, and even more concerned about the Rams' anemic free throw shooting.

"Since we are playing a new style there might be more turnovers than we would like to see, but that is understandable as the players get used to me and me to them. If we could improve our free throw shooting that would be a great asset."

CIAA 1994-95 Women's Preseason

Predicted Order of Finish	Preseason All-CIAA	
	Name	School
NORTHERN DIV.		
Norfolk State	Kendra Horne	WSSU
Bowie State	Christina Hollins	Fayetteville
Hampton	Kristi Greene	Norfolk
Virginia State	LaTina Bullock	Norfolk
Virginia Union	LaTina Bullock	Norfolk
Elizabeth City State	Lisa Rick	Norfolk
St. Paul's	Kendra White	Va. State
SOUTHERN DIV.		
Fayetteville State	Felicia Adams	Shaw
St. Augustine's	Shani Bauldrick	Hampton
Shaw	Rachelle Pierce	St. Augustine's
J. C. Smith	Alvita Williams	Fayetteville
WSSU	Brandi Lemmons	Bowie St.
NCCU	Salema Coaxum	J.C. Smith
Livingstone	Rolanda Dent	Norfolk

Pre-game ritual reflects

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situations, how they respond to adversity, and the teaching of my children is extremely important, even though I don't get to do as much as I would like. My wife Cheryl does a great job with them and she spends a lot more time with them than I do, but they are very important to me."

Caldwell spends long hours toiling in the pressure cooker of big-time college football. He has the added element of being the first black head football coach in the history of the Atlantic Coast Conference. That distinction does not add extra pressure, he says, but it is not one that he takes lightly either.

"I do have some responsibility. I have responsibility to my family. I have to make sure, first and foremost, that I'm a good husband and a good father. I think that takes a good role model and quality leadership," Caldwell said. "Being in the position I'm in professionally, I'm one of a very, very select few and obviously we are all hoping that there are going to be more of us to get an opportunity to be head football coaches at the Division I level. To some extent that will depend on how well some of us do that are in this position. I think it is sad that so

many very, very qualified individuals might be judged by the precedent I set, especially if you look at the antithesis of that. I've been asked on several occasions if I felt any pressure knowing that if I don't do well that some schools across the country will say they aren't going to hire an African-American because look what happened at school A or school B.

"I say how come that never happens when you look at the reverse of that. Will school B say we'll never hire another Caucasian because look at what so and so did. I don't think that is how it should be determined. The job we do here will have some bearing upon the standards set by other universities and the decisions made by other institutions, but by no means do I think that it is fair. We'll have great success at Wake Forest. It does not mean that someone else at another school, simply because he is an African-American, can do what I was able to do. So you have to look at the reverse of the situation also."

Caldwell is a man of paradoxes. On the one hand he makes his living in an emotional, violent game peppered with big egos, yet comes across in interviews as reserved,

controlled and calm.

Part of that outward calm may be attributed to deep religious convictions dating back to his childhood. The religious roots run deep throughout the Caldwell clan. All of Caldwell's siblings are in the ministry and his brother Darrell is a nationally-known evangelist in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

"We have several ministers in our family," he said. "It goes way back. It is a deep tradition. The church has been a very, very strong driving force in our lives and much of our activities growing up focused in and around the working of the church and the gospel. It is still very, very important to me."

Though Caldwell has never been called to the ministry, he says there are similarities between coaching and the call of the cloth.

"I tell my brother we both have been given the opportunity to lead, guide, direct, and be looked upon as an example," Caldwell said. "Our position shouldn't be taken lightly. I always joke with my brother and tell him my congregation is probably a little more faithful than his because every time I call a meeting they are all there."

Sponsors Make Dream

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from bigger schools) and make just as many sacrifices."

The Trophy, named for Grambling State coach Eddie Robinson, will be presented on Dec. 8 at the Omni Hotel in Atlanta, Ga. Robinson is the most winning coach in college football history and could become the first to win 400 games. The Robinson Trophy is the brainchild of Reggie Rutherford, President of the Rutherford Group, a Los Angeles-based production company.

"As we define our business, we feel we're in the recognition business," says Herff Jones Vice President Joe Slaughter. "We specialize in the academic community, but when we view an individual like Eddie Robinson, he has contributed not only to academics but society in general. If there is an outstanding contributor of our generation, he's one of them. We're delighted to

honor a life that has touched so many lives. This is a tremendous opportunity for us to be associated with an outstanding gentleman."

Jean Riggins, President of Black Music for Arista Records, said sponsoring the Robinson Trophy was a natural fit. "In our industry, we normally celebrate Black History month and Black Music month," said Riggins, Co-Chair of the Robinson Trophy award ceremony. "It makes more sense to invest in young people. We need to quit doing things just because we've always done them and do things that make sense."

USAir was the first sponsor to sign on with the Robinson Trophy. The airline was already involved in several sponsorship programs. "Because I was already involved in a wide variety of sponsorships, there was no compelling need to take on

another," explained Shirley Henderson, USAir Director of Urban Marketing. Yet when Mr. Rutherford came to USAir, Ms. Henderson was more than receptive. "Why not take on another project," she said. "If I don't, who's going to do it? Reggie presented a good case."

Rutherford envisions the Robinson Trophy becoming just as prestigious as the Heisman Trophy. The corporate sponsors share his vision.

"I see no reason why it can't when you look at the people who would have won this award in the past had there been one and how they have gone on to have such a great impact professionally and in the world," says Slaughter of Herff Jones. "Also, our society is much more aware of the impact of Coach Robinson as opposed to the gentleman John Heisman, the Heisman is named after."

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