

Thomas Looks to Boost UNC's Low Post Offense

By GAVIN OFF
Staff Writer

Jennifer Thomas is as comfortable on the basketball court as she is in front of the camera.

North Carolina's 6-foot-2 forward might one day be broadcasting the very game she now plays. "I could definitely be on ESPN or NBC, one of those," said Thomas, a junior journalism and mass communication and African-American studies double major. "I like to talk and I like people. I think I'm pretty easy to talk to."

But for now, Thomas is concerned with helping the Tar Heels capture the ACC crown and an NCAA Tournament bid.

Thomas averaged 4.8 points and 2.4 rebounds per game off the bench last season.

But with the departure of LaQuanda Barksdale, Thomas will be competing with several teammates for extended

playing time.

"They have me and Chrystal (Baptist) playing the four now, and I'm pretty confident in both of our abilities to play that position," Thomas said.

"I think I'm going to be called upon to be a leader this year, more so than I've been in the past few years. We have a lot of freshmen, so I have to be a role model for them."

Because of her new leadership role, Thomas spent the summer on campus, working on her stamina and perimeter shooting. She lifted weights four times a week, shot baskets and sweated through drills on the court.



Junior forward Jennifer Thomas averaged 4.8 points and 2.4 rebounds off the bench for UNC last season.

The result? Thomas is quicker and 15 pounds lighter than last season.

"I've gotten a lot faster, and I've worked on my perimeter game, so that will help the team," she said. "As far as endurance and being in shape, I'm a lot better."

But Thomas said that she doesn't feel that she has to be the go-to player on a guard-oriented UNC team.

UNC plays a 4-1 offense, with four perimeter players and one post player. Thomas will be able to either dish it to the middle or drive past her opponent to the basket.

But Thomas will have to contribute more than she did last year.

There were 12 games last season in which she played but scored two points or less and three games in which she didn't make it off the bench.

"It's really not any pressure," she said. "This year we have so many people that are capable of scoring that I think scoring is not really a big priority."

Duke Still on Top at Season's Start

Despite the loss of 2000-01 National Player of the Year Shane Battier, the Blue Devils return a plethora of talent.

By AARON FITT
Staff Writer

For a team that lost the 2000-01 national player of the year, Duke sure is confident.

Winning five consecutive ACC championships and the national title tends to breed optimism.

Although Naismith Award winner Shane Battier and defensive stalwart Nate James have graduated, Duke (35-4, 13-3 in the ACC last season) returns four starters.

Everything starts with junior point guard Jason Williams. One of the most explosive players in the nation, Williams led the ACC in scoring and 3-pointers per game last season. Duke will go as far this year as Williams takes it.

Williams' supporting cast may not be deep, but it is experienced and athletic. Versatile forward Mike Dunleavy and center Carlos Boozer will be counted on to take some pressure off Williams.

Boozer is the only significant inside presence that the undersized Blue Devils have, so his role is critical. Duke will shoot a lot of 3-pointers and will make more of them if the 6-foot-9 Boozer can draw an occasional double

team in the post, leaving a shooter open on the perimeter.

"We have a lot of shooters, so we definitely take a lot of 3s, and we're definitely quick," Boozer said. "I think teams are relying more on the perimeter. It's exciting basketball."

Dunleavy, a 6-9 junior, is a good shooter with solid ball handling skills and a quick first step. His versatility on the offensive end creates matchup problems for opponents.

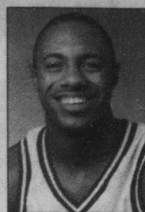
But Dunleavy is too light to be a power forward and has difficulty ending larger, more physical players. He gained 20 pounds since the end of last season, but he still weighs just 220.

Sophomore guard Chris Duhon is the fourth returning starter from last year's squad. Like Williams and Dunleavy, Duhon doesn't shy away from launching 3-pointers during any stage of the game.

Last season, Duhon was named the ACC Rookie of the Year, averaging 7.2 points and 4.5 assists per game.

But Duhon will also have to fill the defensive void left by the departure of James.

The Blue Devils will rely on their



Duke guard Jason Williams was the nation's only player to rank among the top 20 in scoring and assists.

speed and outside shooting, so junior transfer Dahntay Jones should fit in nicely. The 6-6 Jones led Rutgers in scoring his sophomore year and should become a solid fifth scoring option for Duke.

"Dahntay's easily one of the premier athletes in the country this year," Dunleavy said. "He's going to add a lot of excitement to our game. He's going to add a lot of depth. He can play defense. He's athletic. He can jump, he can score. He can do what you need to do."

Those five starters figure to get the vast bulk of playing time for Duke, but freshman guard Daniel Ewing and forwards Nick Horvath and Matt Christensen will spell them from time to time.

The biggest question about this year's Duke team is who will replace Battier as the team's leader.

"The leadership on our team will be more like it usually is, and that's plural, not singular," Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said.

"It was a little bit more singular last year with Shane. Dunleavy has tried to step up real big, and I can see (Williams) doing more. Boozer's trying to do it. I think it can help all of them."

Metcalf Stands Out Early

By KELLY LUSK
Assistant Sports Editor

When Nikki Teasley announced she was returning to the North Carolina women's basketball team, she was expected to revamp a team that didn't attend the NCAA Tournament last season for the first time since 1996.

Teasley was back, and things were sure to be different.

Meanwhile, nobody knew freshman Leah Metcalf even existed.

But after her standout performances in UNC's first two exhibition games, Metcalf is the player people are talking about.

"Leah Metcalf is doing a great job," UNC coach Sylvia Hatchell said. "I don't know how anyone in the league is going to guard her."

Hatchell isn't the only one who noticed Metcalf's breakout performance. She was voted as the media's preseason ACC Rookie of the Year.

"My shot and ball-handling skills have definitely improved since practice started," said Metcalf, who scored 39 points combined in last weekend's two games. "I've got to just keep playing through my mistakes."

Even if she commits a few errors, Metcalf's addition to UNC's three-guard combination of her, Teasley and Corretta Brown will make the Tar Heels unpredictable and difficult to defend.

The freshmen will alleviate pressure on other areas of the court as well. Six-foot-5 Tiffany Tucker, better known as "Baby Shaq," will add another inside presence to complement center

Candace Sutton down low this season.

Another freshman expected to make early contributions is 20-year-old freshman forward Jenni Laaksonen from Finland.

If traveling across the ocean to play basketball seemed like a challenging task, it was compounded by the death of her father last March. But Laaksonen found fast friends in her UNC teammates.

"It's kind of like I want to (play) not only for myself but also for my dad because he used to be with us a lot for the basketball stuff," Laaksonen said.

Freshmen Kenya McBee and Nikita Bell will both see time at the three and four positions.

"This group of freshmen is incredible," Teasley said. "Watching them has kept me on my toes."

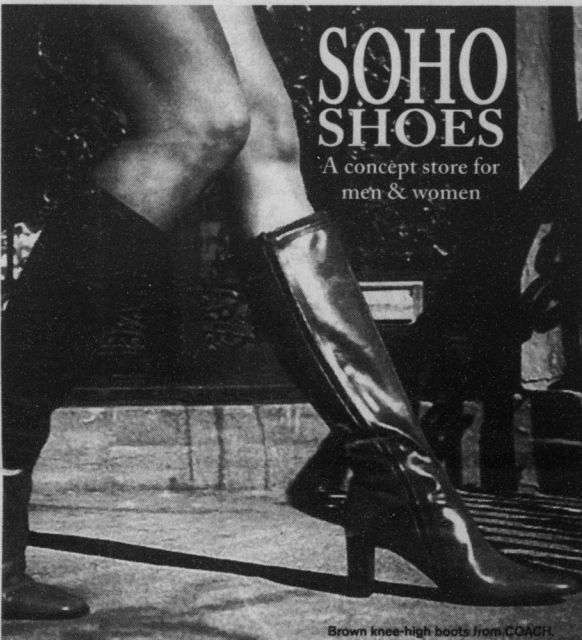


BUB O'MALLEY'S

157 E. ROSEMARY ST. (UPSTAIRS) 942-6903

MONDAY	\$1. ⁵⁰ Domestic Longnecks
TUESDAY	\$2 Pints, 80's Night - Live DJ
WEDNESDAY	\$2.50 Micro & Import Bottles
THURSDAY	\$3. ⁵⁰ Pitchers Karaoke Night
FRIDAY	\$2. ⁵⁰ 22oz. Bottles
SATURDAY	\$2. ⁵⁰ 22oz. Bottles

30 Taps! 100 Different Bottled Beers!
JOIN BUB'S BEER CLUB!



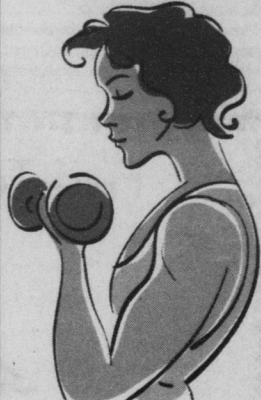
SOHO SHOES

A concept store for men & women

Brown knee-high boots from COACH

<p>SOHO SHOES</p> <p>Northgate Mall Durham 416-3963 www.sohoshoes.com</p>	<p>Donald J. Pliner Camper Charles David Kenneth Cole Nine West DKNY</p>	<p>BCBG Coach bebe Via Spiga Diesel and more...</p>
--	--	---

Power Crunches




Power Snack

the YOGURT pump

Downtown Chapel Hill
106 W. Franklin St.
(next to He's Not Here)

North Durham Northgate mall
(next to Carousel)



1500 N. Portham Blvd., Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Tar Heel Thursdays

Every Thursday **20% off** with UNC ID
Employees, staff & students
5pm-9pm

Hours
Tues-Thurs 7am-9pm
Fri-Sat 7am-10pm
919.933.3505

Voted Best Diner in the Triangle,
2 years in a row!



Domino's

The Pizza Delivery Experts

UNC Student's Pizza Headquarters
929.0246
Lunch, Dinner, Late Night

\$6.99 Student Value Menu

- #1 Large 1-Topping Pizza
- #2 Medium 1-Topping Pizza & 1 Coke
- #3 Small 2-Topping Pizza & 1 Coke
- #4 10 Wings, Breadstix & 1 Coke
- #5 Cheesybread & Cinnastix's & 1 Coke
- #6 Cheesybread & 10 Wings
- #7 Small Cheese Pizza & Cheesybread

Roommate's Special
3 Medium
1 Topping Pizzas
\$13.99



Sun-Thurs 11am-1am • Fri & Sat 11am-2am
We accept Master Card, Visa, American Express and UNC One Card

Experience the Tradition of

CHAPEL HILL

AT THE

Holiday Inn

"Where We Take Pride In Serving You!"
Free Shuttle to UNC Hospitals & downtown

135 Comfortable Guest rooms
Great In Room Amenities
Teddy's Restaurant - Open for Breakfast & Dinner
Teddy's Lounge - Experience Fun, Food & Spirits
Meeting & Banquet Facilities
Fitness Center / Outdoor Pool
Great Location! Close to UNC & Area Attractions!
Only 1 1/2 miles from campus!

919-929-2171 or 1-888-452-5765

Located on 15/501 Bypass across from Eastgate Shopping Center
www.holidayinnchapelhill.com

Special University Rate

Only \$69/night

Standard Rooms (Rate normally \$89.95)
Not valid on football weekends or with other discounts.
Offer expires 12/30/01. Present coupon at time of check in.

3 DTH