

2007-08

# Season Preview



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## 2007-08 Outlook

**T**he time is now. The preparation and the foundation of the East Carolina women's basketball have been built. It is now time for the Lady Pirates to step up to the next level and achieve heights never reached by the ECU program.

Last year was a landmark season for the Lady Pirates; one to be proud of, but one that was expected, according to the 2006-07 team. This is a team that won the first-ever Conference USA Championship in program history and enjoyed a 10-game winning streak through the months of February and March. However, that season was only a beginning of what is yet to come for the Lady Pirates.

"Last season was an exciting time for our basketball program," head coach Sharon Baldwin-Tener said. "It had been 25 years since ECU had been to the NCAA tournament and that was our goal at the beginning of the season. We got off to a rocky start but I was extremely proud of the way our team came together down the stretch and played their best basketball in February and March. Our team was able to get a taste of what it is like to go to the NCAA tournament and understand what it takes every game to reach that goal. I am looking forward to this season and anticipating the returnees wanting to go back to the tournament again."

Under fifth year head coach Baldwin-Tener, the East Carolina women's basketball program not only won the first C-USA title in program history, their 10-game winning streak was fourth in the country. Baldwin-Tener was the first coach to take the Lady Pirates to the NCAA Tournament in 25 years. With seven players returning, including four starters, the Lady Pirates have set a solid foundation for a successful season this year.

The 2006-07 Lady Pirates' 19 wins was the most in the program since the 1991-92 season, while the team's 11 league wins was a program



**Impris Manning is one of four juniors this season.**

best, allowing ECU to earn a bye in the C-USA Tournament for the first time. In typical Baldwin-Tener tradition, the Lady Pirates, who were picked 7th in the league in the preseason poll, exceeded expectations and finished third, marking the programs best finish since joining C-USA. If the past is any indication, the Lady Pirates should have a very successful season, but they will have a lot to live up to this season, as they were tabbed 3rd in this year's preseason poll, receiving two first place votes.

ECU has the tools necessary for another winning season this year, returning all-conference player Jasmine Young and C-USA Tournament MVP LaCoya Terry. Also returning for the Lady

Pirates are fellow juniors Gabriela Husarova and Impris Manning, both of whom saw a lot of playing time last season, and each started a handful of games. This year's lone senior, Nicole Days, will look to fill the void of departed senior Cherie Mills, but will have sophomore Lauren Cochran and three incoming freshmen to help her out. With the bulk of last season's championship team back, the Lady Pirates are hoping to repeat as Conference USA champs.

"I think the leadership the returning players can give is going to be a plus for our team this season," Baldwin-Tener said. "They have all gained some valuable experience in the last couple of years and hopefully can convey that to the newcomers."

### The Backcourt

The Pirates return three starters in the backcourt once again this season, including Preseason All-Conference USA guard Jasmine Young. In her sophomore season, Young moved into fifth all-time in three-point field goals made (94), sixth in assists (316), and 10th in steals (156). Young also finished the season ranked third in assists (5.75) and seventh in steals (2.25) in C-USA action. She racked up on post-season honors in C-USA as she was named to the second-team, All-Defensive team, and the All-Tournament team. Joining her again this season will be the reigning C-USA Tournament MVP, LaCoya Terry, who also begins her junior season with the Lady Pirates. In addition to her MVP honors, Terry finished the year ranked eighth in field goal percentage (.465) and in assists (3.94) in league play. She also became just the 16th Lady Pirate to tally 30 points in a single game. Add to the mix Impris Manning and you have three veteran starters for ECU this fall.

"Jasmine Young, LaCoya Terry and Impris Manning have started most of their career



and have gained some very valuable experience," Baldwin-Tener explained. "In the fall, their leadership has already been apparent and they take a lot of pride in continuing to build this program.

"Jasmine and LaCoya are the leaders on this team and have become more mature and tougher mentally and physically. Impris has been our best defensive player and has worked on her shooting in the off season. With Gabriela Husarova, she has the size and shooting ability to compliment the other players well. Shana Franks is a sophomore who seems to be stronger and more mature this season and could give us some valuable minutes from either of the guard spots. Allison Spivey is a player who will fit in perfectly with our style of play."

Junior Gabriela Husarova and sophomore Shana Franks also return for the Lady Pirates. Husarova, who started in 10 contests last season, is a valuable guard/forward combo for the Lady Pirates off the bench. Franks comes back for her second season at ECU a much more mature player than a year ago. Franks is quickly becoming the top backup for Young in the point guard role.

Entering into the mix this season is freshman Allison Spivey, from Asheboro, N.C. With so many veteran players ahead of her, Spivey will have a good year to learn the program and see some good playing time in the shooting guard position. She averaged 17 points, eight rebounds, six assists and five steals in her senior season at High Point Central High School, earning her team MVP honors.

"Allison Spivey is a great shooter who will blend in well with our veteran backcourt," Baldwin-Tener added. "She has the ability to shoot, put the ball on the floor and is a good passer."

#### The Front Court

With Cherie Mills, last seasons' top scorer and rebounder, gone, the Lady Pirates will look to senior Nicole Days to anchor the frontcourt this season. She enters her final season as the teams top returning rebounder, pulling down 7.1 a game a year ago. Days finished last season averaging 5.1 points, playing in all 33 contests and starting in 32 games, averaging 25.0 minutes per contest.

Also returning for ECU is Lauren Cochran. Cochran showed sparks last season of how great of a player she can be as a Lady Pirate. She notched her first career double-double against Rice, with a career-high 14 points and 10

rebounds. She returns as the teams top shot blocker, swatting 17 last season.

Coach Baldwin-Tener added some much needed size to the frontcourt with her freshmen signees. Shuanda Ashford (6-1), Tiahana Bowens (6-0) and Kim Gay (6-2), will bring some much needed depth to the forward position this year.

"The frontcourt is the biggest question," Baldwin-Tener explained. "We only have one player coming back with much playing experience in Nicole Days. We lost our leading scorer and leading rebounder and that is a huge loss for a team. We have some young players that will be thrown into the fire early and will be given opportunities to be competitive. Lauren Cochran has worked hard in the off season and is in better shape and stronger than she was a year ago. Kim Gay, Shuanda Ashford and Tiahana Bowens are all going to have to give us some minutes and will have to grow up fast."

#### The Schedule

Nine games against 2007 post-season participants, including a visit from in-state rival North Carolina State highlight the 2007-08 East Carolina University women's basketball schedule.

The Lady Pirates begin their sixth season under the guidance of Baldwin-Tener on Sunday, Nov. 11 when they host Presbyterian at Minges Coliseum. ECU will welcome NCAA participant Old Dominion to Greenville on Nov. 13 before traveling to New York for a contest against WNIT participant Long Island on Nov. 16. Coach Baldwin-Tener's squad will return home Nov. 19 to face High Point before hosting the Lady Pirate Invitational Nov. 23-24. ECU will play Winthrop in the first game, while Massachusetts and Jacksonville square off in the second game. The team will round out the month of November with a trip to Boone, N.C. on the 28th for a tilt against Appalachian State.

The Lady Pirates open up the month of December with two home games as Virginia Commonwealth comes to Greenville on Dec. 1, while in-state rival and 2007 NCAA Sweet 16 participant North Carolina State will be making its first trip to Minges Coliseum since 2002. The match up, scheduled for Dec. 9, will mark the 37th time the two teams have squared off. After a week off for final exams, ECU will travel to Presbyterian on Dec. 18 and to UNC Wilmington on Dec. 20 before heading home for the holidays. The Lady Pirates will resume play on Dec. 29-30, participating in the Virginia Tech Tournament in Blacksburg, Va. East Carolina will face Georgetown in the opening game and will play either the host Hokies or Furman in the

second contest.

"I am very excited about this year's schedule and the teams we have coming to play in Williams Arena at Minges Coliseum," Baldwin-Tener said. "We have some local rivals coming to Greenville that will be great for the fans. Our team will be challenged early in the season so we can get better as a basketball team. With this tough non-conference schedule, combined with our conference opponents we hope to prepare ourselves for post-season play."

The Lady Pirates officially begin their quest for a second-straight Conference USA title as they travel to Huntington, W.Va. on Jan 5 to face Marshall. ECU will remain on the road for the next two contests, visiting UAB on Jan. 10 and Memphis on Jan. 12. The Lady Pirates return to the friendly confines of Minges Coliseum for a three-game homestand beginning with SMU on Jan. 18 before Tulsa and Marshall follow on Jan. 20 and Jan. 27, respectively.

The Lady Pirates will close out the regular season with a trip to Houston to face the Cougars before battling Rice March 1 which will serve as a rematch of the 2007 C-USA Championship game.

The 2008 Conference USA Women's Basketball Championship Tournament will be March 6-9 at UCF Arena, in Orlando, Florida.



The Lady Pirates look to repeat as Conference USA champions.



# 2007-08 Pirate Schedule

Date	Day	Opponent	Site	Arena	Time	TV
Nov. 11	Sun.	Presbyterian	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	2pm	
Nov. 13	Tues.	Old Dominion	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	6pm (DH)	
Nov. 16	Fri.	Long Island	Long Island, N.Y.	Wellness Center	7pm	
Nov. 19	Mon.	High Point	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	7pm	
Nov. 23	Fri.	#Winthrop	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	5pm	
Nov. 24	Sat.	#UMASS/Jacksonville	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	TBA	
Nov. 28	Wed.	Appalachian State	Boone, N.C.	Holmes Convocation Center	7pm	
Dec. 1	Sat.	Virginia Commonwealth	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	2pm	
Dec. 9	Sun.	North Carolina State	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	2pm	
Dec. 18	Tues.	Presbyterian	Clinton, S.C.	Templeton Center	7pm	
Dec. 20	Thurs.	UNC Wilmington	Wilmington, N.C.	Trask Coliseum	Noon	
Dec. 29	Sat.	^Georgetown	Blacksburg, Va.	Cassell Coliseum	3:30 pm	
Dec. 30	Sun.	^Furman/Va. Tech	Blacksburg, Va.	Cassell Coliseum	TBA	
Jan. 5	Sat.	Marshall	Huntington, W.Va.	Cam Henderson Center	2pm	
Jan. 10	Thurs.	UAB	Birmingham, Ala.	Bartow Arena	8pm	
Jan. 12	Sat.	Memphis	Memphis, Tenn.	Elma Roane Fieldhouse	3pm	
Jan. 18	Fri.	SMU	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	7pm	
Jan. 20	Sun.	Tulsa	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	2pm	
Jan. 27	Sun.	Marshall	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	2pm	
Jan. 31	Thurs.	Southern Miss	Hattiesburg, Miss.	Reed Green Coliseum	8pm	
Feb. 2	Sat.	UCF	Orlando, Fla.	UCF Arena	2pm	
Feb. 7	Thurs.	Tulane	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	7pm	
Feb. 10	Sun.	UTEP	El Paso, Texas	Don Haskins Center	5pm	ESPN2
Feb. 15	Fri.	Southern Miss	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	7pm	
Feb. 17	Sun.	UCF	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	2pm	
Feb. 21	Thurs.	UAB	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	7pm	CSTV
Feb. 23	Sat.	Memphis	Greenville, N.C.	Minges Coliseum	2pm	
Feb. 28	Thurs.	Houston	Houston, Texas	Hofheinz Pavilion	8pm	
March 1	Sat.	Rice	Houston, Texas	Autry Court	3pm	
Mar. 6-9	Thurs.-Sat.	C-USA Championships	Orlando, Fla.	UCF Arena	TBA	

## Conference USA Tournament (Hosted by UCF; Orlando, Fla.)

Date	Day	Opponent	Site	Arena (Capacity)	Time	TV
Mar. 6	Thurs.	First Round	Orlando, Fla.	UCF Arena (10,000)	TBA	
Mar. 7	Fri.	Quarterfinals	Orlando, Fla.	UCF Arena (10,000)	TBA	
Mar. 8	Sat.	Semifinals	Orlando, Fla.	UCF Arena (10,000)	TBA	CSTV
Mar. 9	Sun.	Championship	Orlando, Fla.	UCF Arena (10,000)	TBA	ESPN2

# = Lady Pirate Invitational (Greenville, N.C.)

^ = Virginia Tech Classic (Blacksburg, Va.)

! = Conference USA Championships (Orlando, Fla.)