

Introduction

Table of Contents

Media Information	2
2007-08 Season Preview	
2007-08 Outlook.....	4-5
Roster.....	6
The Players	
Brook Buck.....	8-10
Bailey Louderback.....	11
Katie Potts.....	12-13
Kelcy Tefft.....	14-16
Cosmina Ciobanu.....	17
Kali Krisik.....	18
Colleen Rielley.....	19
Kristen Rafael/Denise Ellison.....	20
The Coaches	
Head Coach Jay Louderback.....	22-24
Assistant Coach Elizabeth Schmidt.....	25
Support Staff.....	26
2006-07 Season In Review	
2006-07 Season in Results.....	28
2006-07 Statistics.....	29
2006-07 Match-by-Match.....	30-31
Graduated Seniors.....	32-36
2007-08 Opponents	
On the Road With the Irish.....	38
2007-08 Tournaments.....	39
All-Time vs. 2008 Opponents.....	40-41
2008 Opponents.....	42-45
Rockne Heritage.....	46
Tennis Tradition	
Tennis Tradition.....	48-50
History and Records	
All-Time Results/Team Ranking History.....	52
Irish in the ITA Rankings.....	53
Irish All-Americans.....	54-55
Irish Records.....	56-57
Honors and Awards.....	58
Irish Honors.....	59
NCAA Team Championship History.....	60-61
NCAA Singles/Doubles Championship History.....	62
Collegiate Grand Slam History.....	63
BIG EAST Championship History.....	64-65
Facilities.....	66-67
All-Time Series.....	68
All-Time Roster.....	69-71
Year-by-Year Results.....	72-78
The University	
The University.....	80-81
Director of Athletics Kevin White.....	82-83
Notre Dame Leaders.....	84
Academic Services.....	85
NCAA Compliance.....	86
Student Development.....	87
Statement of Principles.....	88-89
Noteworthy Alumni.....	90
Alumni Organizations.....	91
Sports Medicine/Strength & Conditioning.....	92
NACDA.....	93
Athletic Heritage.....	94
BIG EAST.....	95

Women's Tennis Quick Facts

Notre Dame Quick Facts

LocationNotre Dame, IN 46556
 Founded.....1842
 Enrollment.....8,332 (undergraduate), 11,479 (total)
 Nickname.....Fighting Irish
 Colors.....Gold and Blue
 Conference.....BIG EAST
 Home Courts (Outdoor).....Courtney Tennis Center
 Home Courts (Indoor).....Eck Tennis Pavilion
 President.....Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C.
 Director of Athletics.....Kevin White
 Deputy A.D./Women's Tennis.....Missy Conboy
 Athletic Department Phone.....(574) 631-6107

Coaching Staff

Head Coach.....Jay Louderback
 (Wichita State '76)
 Office Phone.....(574) 631-5149
 E-mail.....louderback.1@nd.edu
 Record at Notre Dame.....337-152 (.689)/18 years
 Career Record.....541-330 (.621)/28 years
 Assistant Coach.....Elizabeth Schmidt (UCLA '00)
 Office Phone.....(574) 631-3730
 E-mail.....eschmid2@nd.edu
 Volunteer Asst. Coach.....Liz Balanis (Wake Forest '94)
 Coaches' Fax.....(574) 631-8728
 Eck Tennis Pavilion Phone.....(574) 631-6929

Sports Information

Address.....Sports Information
 112 Joyce Center
 Notre Dame, IN 46556-5678
 Sr. Assoc. A.D./Media Relations.....John Heisler
 Sports Information Director.....Bernie Cafarelli
 SID Intern/Women's Tennis.....Sara Wonderlich
 Sports Information Office.....(574) 631-7516
 Wonderlich's Office Phone.....(574) 631-1762
 Wonderlich's Cell Phone.....(574) 340-8251
 Wonderlich's E-mail.....swonderl@nd.edu
 Sports Information Fax.....(574) 631-7941
 Irish Sports Hotline.....(574) 631-3000
 Website.....www.und.com

Notre Dame Sports Hotline:

(574) 631-3000

Media Information

The Notre Dame Sports Information Office is always interested in assisting members of the media in their coverage of Irish tennis. Publicity and media information for Notre Dame tennis is coordinated by sports information intern Sara Wonderlich.

- **Statistics, Match Notes, Recaps, Releases** - See und.com.
- **Credentials, Photographs, Interview Requests, Feature Ideas, Questions** - Contact Wonderlich.
- **Live Statistics** - Available free for all home matches and selected road contests, via und.com.
- **Wireless Internet** - Available free to all visiting media and SIDs visiting the Eck Tennis Pavilion. See Wonderlich for details.
- **Television Footage** - Contact local stations (WHME, WSBT, WNDU, WSJV). See page 2 for contact information.

BIG EAST Conference

The BIG EAST Conference maintains its presence on the World Wide Web at www.bigeast.org. The site contains current information on all facets of the BIG EAST Conference. Please contact Shannon McNamara in the BIG EAST media relations department (smcnamara@bigeast.org) for more information on BIG EAST tennis.

Credits

The Notre Dame Women's Tennis Guide was written and edited by assistant sports information director Michael Bertsch with editorial assistance from student assistant Ryan Kiefer and assistant sports information director Pete LeFleur.

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The Notre Dame women's tennis team was honored for its accomplishments during the 2006-07 season – which included 28 victories and its second consecutive berth into the NCAA quarterfinals – at the 2007 Irish football game against Michigan State in front of a crowd of 80,795.

Print Media

The Observer

(Katelyn Grabarek)
www.ndsmcobserver.com
LaFortune Student Center
Notre Dame, IN 46556
(574) 631-7471
Fax (574) 631-6927

South Bend Tribune

(Bill Bilinski)
www.southbendtribune.com
225 West Colfax Avenue
South Bend, IN 46626
(574) 235-6316
Fax (574) 235-6091

Notre Dame Scholastic

(Nicole Dorner)
www.nd.edu/~scholast
LaFortune Student Center
Notre Dame, IN 46556
(574) 631-7569
Fax (574) 631-9648

Irish Sports Report

(Bob Wieneke)
www.irishsports.com
225 West Colfax Avenue
South Bend, IN 46626
(574) 235-6161
Fax (574) 239-2646

Blue & Gold Illustrated

(Lou Somogyi)
www.blueandgold.com
1605 North Home
Mishawaka, IN 46545
(574) 255-9800
Fax (574) 255-9700

College Tennis Online

www.collegetenisonline.com

College And Junior Tennis

(Marcia Frost)
www.collegeandjunortennis.com
100 Harbor Road
Port Washington, NY 11050
(516) 883-6601
Fax (516) 883-5241

Bob Larson Tennis

(Bob Larson)
czanone@aol.com
170 Spring Ridge Trace
Roswell, GA 30076
(770) 641-1231
Fax (770) 641-6679

Associated Press

(Tom Coyne)
South Bend Tribune Building
225 West Colfax Avenue
South Bend, IN 46626
(574) 288-1649
Fax (574) 236-1765

USA Today/USA Today Online

www.usatoday.com
1000 Wilson Boulevard
22nd Floor
Arlington, VA 22229
1-800-872-3410 ext. 7103
Online Fax (703) 907-4465

Television

WHME TV/Radio

(Bob Nagle/Chuck Freeby)
61300 Ironwood Road
South Bend, IN 46625
(574) 291-8200
Fax (574) 291-9043

WNDU-TV - NBC

(Jeff Jeffers)
P.O. Box 1616
South Bend, IN 46634
(574) 631-1616/1239
Fax (574) 631-2916

WSBT-TV/Radio - CBS

(Greg Carroll/Pete Byrne/
Carolyn Manno)
300 West Jefferson
South Bend, IN 46601
(574) 472-8124
Fax (574) 288-6630

WSJV-TV - FOX

(Dean Huppert/Allison Hayes)
59096 County Road 7 South
Elkhart, IN 46514
(574) 679-4545 or 293-9227
Fax (574) 294-1324

College Sports Television

Chelsea Piers, Pier 62
New York, NY 10011
(212) 342-8700
Fax (212) 342-8899

Radio

WVND-ESPN Radio 1000

(Sean Stires)
3371 Cleveland Rd. Ext.
Ste. 310
South Bend, IN 46628
(574) 273-9300
Fax (574) 273-9090
Radio Tennis
www.radiotennis.com
309 Calle De Andalucia
Redondo Beach, CA 90277
(866) 729-9008
Fax: (310) 381-4391

WVFI-AM Radio

University of Notre Dame
P.O. Box 532
Notre Dame, IN 46556
(574) 631-5379

Organizations

Notre Dame Sports Information

(Sara Wonderlich)
www.und.com
112 Joyce Center
Notre Dame, IN 46556-5678
(574) 631-7516
Fax (574) 631-7941

BIG EAST Conference

(Shannon McNamara)
www.bigeast.org
222 Richmond Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 272-9108
Fax (401) 751-8540

CSTV Online

(Alan Wasielewski)
www.collegesports.com
112 Joyce Center
Notre Dame, IN 46556
(574) 631-3397
(760) 431-8221 (Carlsbad, Calif.)

Intercollegiate Tennis Association

(Casey Angle)
www.itatennis.com
PO Box 71
Princeton, NJ 08544
(609) 258-2935
Fax (609) 258-2935

United States Tennis Association

www.usta.org
70 West Red Oak Lane
White Plains, NY 10604
(914) 696-7289
Fax (914) 696-7167



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NOTRE DAME SEASON PREVIEW



*Notre Dame senior
and team-captain
Brook Buck, who
battled injuries
throughout much of
the 2006-07 season,
is healthy and will
play at or near the
top of the lineup for
the Irish this season.*



Irish Women's Tennis Looks to Take Next Step in 2007-08

Notre Dame has reached the NCAA quarterfinals each of the last two seasons

Notre Dame will celebrate its 32nd season of tennis this spring. How the 2007-08 version of the Irish stacks up against the previous 31 Notre Dame squads is up in the air.

While much of the talk might focus on what or who the Irish lost from last year's 28-4 team that reached the NCAA quarterfinals for the second consecutive season, the talent cupboard is far from bare.

Three All-BIG EAST performers – senior Brook Buck (Yukon, OK), junior Kelcy Tefft (Enid, OK) and sophomore Colleen Rielley (Overland Park, KS) – are back. That trio posted a combined singles record of 73-25, including 54-15 in dual matches. Buck and Tefft, who reached the NCAA doubles championship each of the past two years, captured this past fall's ITA National Indoor Championship – the program's second-ever grand slam championship.

Buck was saddled with injuries over most of last season, but still managed to record a tremendous campaign. She finished the year with a 17-5 mark overall and 14-1 in dual action. Buck, who missed nearly two months due to a foot injury, captured her final 13 dual matches of the year. She enters her final year with a career record of 64-27 overall and 45-17 in duals.

Tefft is as consistent a player as Notre Dame has featured under head coach Jay Louderback (entering his 19th season). She closed the season with an overall record of 26-9 and 21-6 in dual matches. Tefft, who went 16-6 at No. 4 singles, was also perfect 5-0 at No. 3 singles. She



Sophomore Colleen Rielley, an All-BIG EAST selection, went 30-11 in her first year with the Irish in 2006-07. She closed last season with 17 victories over her final 19 matches.

owns a gaudy 54-14 record over her first two years overall, and an even more impressive 41-10 mark in dual action.

Rielley, the first Irish recruit to ever garner the top ranking in junior tennis, posted a 30-11 record overall and 19-8 in duals. She put together an incredible Fall, recording an 11-3 mark and captured the ITA Midwest Regional title. Rielley opened the spring season ranked #31 in the country, but struggled out of the gate in dual action. After dropping six of her first eight dual matches, Rielley moved from No. 2 to No. 3 and regained her fall form. Rielley closed the year with 17 victories over her final 19 matches.

Sophomore Cosmina Ciobanu (Brea, CA) exploded onto the college scene in 2006-07. She finished the year with a sparkling 36-5 record overall and a 26-1 mark in dual action. Ciobanu won her first 24 matches of the spring before suffering her first and only dual-match loss in the BIG EAST final against USF. After each of her matches in the opening two rounds of the NCAA Tournament were abandoned, she rebounded

with a pair of dominating victories over two ranked players in round of 16 and quarterfinals.

Sophomore Kali Krisik (Arkansas City, KS) went 16-5 overall in singles and 9-1 in dual action, mostly filling in at No. 6 for an injured Buck. She provided most of her assistance in doubles. Krisik led Notre Dame in overall doubles' victories with 37 and dual-match doubles' wins with 25.

Junior Katie Potts (Brookfield, WI) appears to have overcome a beset of injuries that significantly hampered her 2006-07 season as she reached the quarterfinals of this fall's ITA Midwest Regional Championships. After a record-setting freshman campaign (29-5 overall and 23-2 in dual action), Potts slipped to 16-9 overall and 9-5 in dual action a year ago.

That veteran leadership and experience will be critical to the success of this Notre Dame squad.

Gone are three-time All-American twins' Catrina and Christian Thompson. The Thompsons helped the Irish to an 82-28 record over the past four seasons. During that time, the Irish won a pair of BIG EAST championships, finished among the top 30 in the national rankings each year and advanced to the quarterfinal round of the NCAA tournament in 2006 and 2007.

Their leadership helped Notre Dame put together consecutive seasons that ranked as the two best in program history, as the Irish won 55 of those 61 matches and ascended to an all-time high national ranking of #2.

They are littered throughout the Notre Dame record book. The twins competed in each of the last four NCAA doubles championships, reached the round of 16 twice, quarterfinals once and garnered a #1 national ranking two years ago. They also delivered Notre Dame's first-ever ITA grand-slam title, winning the doubles draw in the 2005 Riviera ITA All-American Championships.

The nucleus of Buck, Tefft and Rielley, along with Ciobanu, Krisik and Potts give the Irish six players with immeasurable experience.

Toss in a pair of freshmen, Kristen Rafael (Grand Prairie, TX) and Denise Ellison (Bakersfield, CA), and the Irish could make the 32nd season of Notre Dame women's tennis one for the ages.

Team Information

2006-07 Record: 28-4

2006-07 Final ITA National Ranking: 7th

2007 BIG EAST Championship:

2-1, runnerup

Notre Dame 4, Connecticut 0

Notre Dame 4, Marquette 0

USF 4, Notre Dame 3

2007 NCAA Championship:

3-1, quarterfinals

Notre Dame 4, UIC 0

Notre Dame 4, Michigan 0

Notre Dame 4, North Carolina 3

Georgia Tech 4, Notre Dame 2

All-Americans Returning:

Catrina Thompson (Sr.) – Doubles

Christian Thompson (Sr.) – Doubles

Starters Returning:

Brook Buck (Sr.)

Kelcy Tefft (Jr.)

Cosmina Ciobanu (So.)

Colleen Rielley (So.)

Starters Lost:

Catrina Thompson (Sr.)

Christian Thompson (Sr.)

Monogram Winners Returning/Lost: 6/2

2007-08 Team Captains:

Brook Buck

A Deeper Look with Notre Dame Head Coach Jay Louderback



Q: Just how strange was it this fall with the team together and not seeing either of the Thompsons?

"It is going to be quite strange. The first couple practices in the fall were a little weird. You are always going to miss kids that graduate. You are happy that they have graduated and are ready to move on in their life, but it did seem like something was missing at that first practice. It just really didn't hit me until that time. They have not only played for us the past four years, but have played so high for us. The kids never had a poor practice. Those two wanted to win so badly. They worked hard. They were not vocal leaders, but they led by example. They never took a day off. Even if we had a day off, they were almost always out hitting on their own. That is something that a kid either has or not. It is something we will definitely miss with them."

Q: What is the on-court/off-court affects of their graduation?

"That I think is the biggest key we have this year is replacing those guys, mainly because they were at the top of the lineup. They played No. 1 and No. 2 singles and No. 1 doubles last year. We didn't get much experience for anyone else at the top of the lineup, but we do have kids coming back. Brook Buck's one that we're hoping can come in and play higher for us this year after playing a little lower last year. She went through some injuries, but she's played some [No. 2 singles] and played in the top three in the past. Colleen Rielley is one that should be able to play higher. She played at No. 2 and No. 3 last year. And Cosmina Ciobanu, even though she played No. 5 last year, she was probably a little lower than she should have been. She nearly went the entire season without losing a match. I think we'll be OK."

I really think that the doubles will be fine. Buck and Kelcy Tefft winning the National Indoor in the fall showed that they can play at the top and when they played No. 1 last year were fine. And Kali Krisik, with whomever she plays with, I think can play No. 2 doubles. She's definitely one of our top doubles players and she plays really well with anyone. She also is good with either side, she can play the forehand or the backhand side, which is good, and so she's pretty versatile. When you lose your top two players, you've got a lot to replace, but the two kids that were No. 7 and No. 8 for us last year got into the quarterfinals of this fall's ITA Midwest regional (Krisik and Katie Potts). We were so deep last year that we had eight kids that could play. Even though we lost those two, with Kristin Raphael and Denise Ellison coming in as a freshmen, I feel like we should be fine. Our depth is very good this year again."

Q: Who do you look to this spring as your team leader?

"I think leadership's going to be a big key for us this year. Not just the senior leadership, but getting some leadership from those players in our junior and sophomore classes. We've got to get some leadership out of them as well. Brook Buck's our senior and she will be great, but we've got to get some help for her as a leader. We have kids that I think will be able to step

into that position."

Q: How do you keep your players competitive with each other but still playing for the same goal?

"This group will fit in with a number of the other groups I have coached. They compete strongly against each other, but once decisions are made about who is playing these kids do not take it personally against one another. If one player is at No. 6 and another is at No. 7, the No. 7 player has always been great about helping the No. 6 player to become better. They might not be happy or like the decision, but they realize that they need to practice harder or play better. Our kids have always been really good about that. It really speaks to the type of kids we have on this team. Plus, college tennis can be a long season, then you toss in injuries and illness, and everyone ends up contributing at one time or another."

Q: You have gotten so close to a national championship of the last two years, what do you have to do to take that next step?

"The next step for us is to basically win the national championship. I think we are in position with good enough athletes that have gained experience to put ourselves in that caliber. It really just comes down to getting a couple breaks, playing well at the right time and hoping that the team is healthy coming down toward the end of the year. Health is such a huge factor. We went through a couple years, before the last two, where we were ranked 15-20, but we're able to make that leap because our top player was hindered by injuries. At the end of the year, it is just so crucial to be healthy. The biggest thing that has helped us the past two years has been our depth. We have been so deep that even when we were hit with injuries and sickness we have been able to hold on."

Q: How much confidence can the team take from last year (pushing eventual national champion Georgia Tech to the brink in the quarterfinals)?

"Absolutely, that experience of playing in the NCAA quarterfinals each of the last two years along with playing in the finals of the National Indoors last season made a difference. You could see that confidence and experience after we dropped the doubles point to North Carolina in the round of 16 and came back to win. We did the same thing against Georgia Tech and almost won. You can tell that they are far more comfortable in those big-time, type situations. I think it is something that will continue to help us in the biggest matches of the year. It does not seem to intimidate them as it might have in the past. It is really what can help a team take that next step."

Q: How beneficent is a great fall season in relation to a successful spring?

"There is so much time between the two. If you gather some momentum in the fall, it seems to fade by the time the spring rolls around, but you can take a number of things from the fall. With a good fall, your kids get ranked higher, which helps get them into the NCAAs and other national tournaments. It helps your team start higher in the rankings and gain entry into the national indoors. It does not guarantee you are going to have a good spring, but it does give you a push and confidence early in the spring. It is important to have a good spring and if you look back at the last couple years, we have had very productive fall seasons. It gives the kids just that little bit more confidence that they can play with or even beat the best in the country."

Q: How are the freshman sizing up - talent, strength, adapting to collegiate play?

"Kristen Rafael is not a very big kid, but plays a big game. She hits the ball hard and is not afraid to attack. She plays very aggressive. She just needs to get more consistent with hitting the ball and when that comes around, she is going to be very, very good. She is a good doubles player and volleys exceptionally well. She has every shot available with a good slice, backhand and service motion. As is the case with so many freshmen, her case is consistency. She will be a great player, in both singles and doubles, for us over her career."

"Denise was a surprise walk-on for us this season. She is working extremely hard and improves everyday. She owns a big serve, plays aggressive and will develop into a solid college tennis player."

Q: What are your or the team's goals for this season?

"We start with the BIG EAST. We want to win it, especially this season. We lost the finals in a tight match at South Florida last year and it did not leave a very good taste in our kids' mouths. We had some injuries, but we still should have won the match yet did not. USF played extremely well and were very tough at home. That is our first goal. Next, we are shooting for a national championship, but first thing we are aiming at is winning the BIG EAST Tournament."

"This year is a little different. It somewhat has the feel as it did when Miami was still in the BIG EAST. We had some battles with Miami every year and I could see it happening with USF Plus, there are a number of other teams that continue to get better. Marquette's depth is much, much improved. DePaul, if they can stay healthy, is very good."

Q: Once again, your schedule is not for the faint of heart. What is your philosophy with scheduling?

"We have very few 'easy' matches. It helps us tremendously. We have a couple of streaks this year where we play one ranked team after another. The one weekend that comes is when we play at Wake Forest, North Carolina and Duke over a four-day stretch - all on the road. That's going to be a tremendous challenge. Our rivalry with Northwestern continues to grow and might be one of the fiercer in the country. We have each been ranked among the top 10 and it seems something huge is on the line every time we play. A quality scheduled really starts to show its benefit once the NCAA Tournament begins."

2007-08 Notre Dame Women's Tennis Roster

No.	Player	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown/High School
7	Brook Buck*** c	5-7	Sr.	Yukon, OK/Oklahoma Christian School
21	Cosmina Ciobanu*	5-3	So.	Brea, CA/Troy H.S.
55	Denise Ellison	5-10	Fr.	Bakersfield, CA/Stockdale H.S.
33	Kali Krisik*	5-9	So.	Arkansas City, KS/Arkansas City H.S.
5	Bailey Louderback*** §	5-6	Sr.	South Bend, IN/Penn H.S.
9	Katie Potts**	5-10	Jr.	Brookfield, WI/Divine Savior Holy Angels H.S.
1	Kristen Rafael	5-4	Fr.	Grand Prairie, TX/Nolan Catholic H.S.
4	Colleen Rielley*	5-9	So.	Overland Park, KS/Bishop Miege H.S.
23	Kelcy Tefft**	5-6	Jr.	Enid, OK/Chisholm H.S.

Head Coach: Jay Louderback (19th season, Wichita State '76)

Assistant Coach: Elizabeth Schmidt (2nd season, UCLA '00)

Volunteer Assistant Coach: Liz Balanis (12th season, Wake Forest '94)

* – denotes monograms earned

c – denotes captain § – indicates left-handed player

Pronunciation Guide

Kelcy Tefft KELL-see teft
 Kali Krisik KAY-lee
 Cosmina Ciobanu KAHZ-mina CHEE-uh-bahn-u

Roster Breakdown By Class

Seniors (2): Buck, Louderback
Juniors (2): Potts, Tefft
Sophomores (3): Ciobanu, Krisik, Rielley
Freshmen (2): Rafael, Ellison



2007-08 Fighting Irish Tennis

Front Row: Jay Louderback (head coach), Elizabeth Schmidt (assistant coach), Katie Potts, Denise Ellison, Colleen Rielley, Kali Krisik, Stephen Springfield (senior manager). Back Row: Kristen Rafael, Bailey Louderback, Brook Buck, Kelcy Tefft, Cosmina Ciobanu.