

PANTHERS PREVIEW



Seniors Antonio Graves and Levon Kendall both return for their final season at Pitt. A six-foot-three-inch combination guard, Graves was a productive scorer and defender off the bench last year. His 10.8 points per game and outstanding performances in the Big East Tournament enabled Pitt to make its fifth title game appearance over the last six years. Graves has seen action in 93 games with 31 starts. Kendall, a good shooter and passer who contributes many important intangibles, returns to the Pitt frontcourt after completing his fifth summer stint with the Canadian National Basketball Program. Last year, Kendall ranked second on the team in rebounding (5.4 rpg.) and averaged 7.0 points per game while starting 30 contests.

SEASON PREVIEW

Pitt returns eight of its top 10 players from 25-8 NCAA Tournament squad; experience, depth and teamwork all remain Pitt strengths in 2006-07

The excitement continues for Pitt Basketball in 2006-07. Pitt's 2006-07 campaign features an outstanding schedule including a school record 15 nationally televised games. Pitt enters the year as a preseason top-10 team that most experts consider a Big East favorite. And for the fifth consecutive season, Pitt will play in front of a sold out Petersen Events Center.

Fans have come to expect that type of excitement from the Pitt basketball program. Those expectations are the result of a successful five-year span that has seen the Panthers burst onto the national scene with a 133-33 record, five consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances, three NCAA Sweet Sixteen appearances, five straight 20-win seasons, three Big East regular season titles, one Big East Tournament title and a 59-21 league record.

Pitt enters its 2006-07 season with an experienced team as eight of its top 10 players return from a squad that finished 25-8 overall, appeared in its fifth straight NCAA Tournament and advanced to its fifth Big East Tournament title game over the last six seasons.

Experience, depth and teamwork all remain team strengths as Pitt returns players who accumulated 80 percent of its minutes played, 75 percent of its scoring and 85 percent of its rebounding last year. Pitt's depth is a key ingredient since 10 players averaged over 8.2 minutes per game and eight players averaged more than 4.6 points per game last year. Expect more of the same in 2006-07.

The Panthers must find a way to replace Carl Krauser's production. A three-year starter who led Pitt in scoring in each of the last three seasons, Krauser averaged 15.0 points, 4.3 rebounds and led the squad with 160 assists last season. He also provided leadership, and served as a go-to scorer in clutch situations.

Pitt returns its entire frontcourt intact. All-Big East First Team selection and the reigning 2005-06 Big East Most Improved Player Aaron Gray returns to Pitt for his senior season after pulling his name from the NBA Draft. In his first season starting at center, the seven-foot Gray led the Big East in both rebounding (10.5 rpg.) and double-doubles (18) and was the league's



Consensus preseason All-America selection Aaron Gray is also a candidate for Big East Player of the Year honors. A 2005-06 All-Big East First Team selection and 2005-06 Big East Most Improved Player Award winner, Gray was the only Big East player to average a double-double as he averaged 13.9 points and 10.5 rebounds per game.

PITT'S PRESEASON STORYLINES

- Pitt begins its quest for a sixth consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance and sixth straight season with 20 or more wins.
- Pitt enters the 2006-07 season as a consensus preseason top 10 team.
- Pitt returns four starters and eight of its top 10 players from a team that finished 25-8 overall, advanced to its fifth straight NCAA Tournament and appeared in a fifth Big East Championship title game in the last six years.
- All-America and Big East Player of the Year candidate Aaron Gray returns for his senior season after earning the 2005-06 Big East Most Improved Player Award. After receiving NBA First Round Draft pick consideration, Gray decided to return to Pitt.
- Pitt is an experienced team as eight letterwinners return who played in at least 8.0 minutes per game last year.
- Two key players depart the program: Carl Krauser and John DeGroat. A three time All-Big East selection, Krauser is the first player in school history to surpass 1,500 points, 500 assists and 500 rebounds in a career.
- Head Coach Jamie Dixon begins his fourth season at Pitt with a 76-22 overall record. The 76-22 record ranks tied for fourth among all-time best NCAA Division I coaching starts after three seasons.
- Pitt begins its second season in the 16-team Big East Conference. The Big East is the most competitive NCAA Division I basketball league in the nation. Five new schools joined the Big East in 2005-06. They include Cincinnati, DePaul, Louisville, Marquette and South Florida.
- Pitt will play its most difficult schedule. The Panthers play 12 games against 2005-06 NCAA Tournament teams, 18 contests against teams advancing to postseason play in 2005-06, 14 games against teams that won 20-plus games in 2005-06 and 17 games against opponents that won at least 18 games last year. Opponents highlighting Pitt's non-conference schedule include Auburn, Oklahoma State, Wisconsin and Washington.
- Pitt will play a school record 15 games on national television in 2006-07.

only player to average a double-double (13.9 ppg./10.5 rpg.). Pitt's two other top rebounders—senior Levon Kendall and sophomore Sam Young—both return at forward. Kendall (7.0 ppg./5.4 rpg.) provides stellar post-defense, leadership and experience while Young (7.9 ppg./4.4 rpg.) is an incredible athlete who plays above the rim. Sophomore Tyrell Biggs (31 GP) and senior Doyle Hudson (12 GP) both return to add depth.

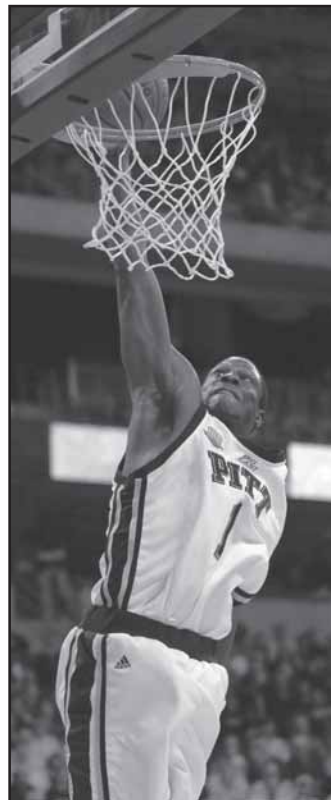
Four backcourt players return to the Panthers, each providing

different strengths and intangibles to the squad. Junior Ronald Ramon (8.0 ppg./2.15 assist:turnover ratio) provides a dangerous 3-point threat, efficient ball handling and clutch shots. Senior Antonio Graves (5.0 ppg./2.3 rpg.) is an outstanding on-ball defender who contributes instant offense off the bench. Junior Keith Benjamin (4.6 ppg./2.9 rpg.) is a physical, streaky scorer who can cover an opponents' physical guard and small forwards. Sophomore Levance Fields (6.8 ppg./2.2 apg.) is a quick



WHAT PITT RETURNS IN 2006-07

Category	Percent Returning
Last year's starters:	80.0% (4 of 5)
Last year's total starts:	63.6% (105 of 165)
Team's top-10 in minutes played:	80.0% (8 of 10)
Total minutes played:	79.1% (5263 of 6650)
Points scored:	75.7% (1811 of 2391)
Field goals made:	77.1% (648 of 840)
Field goal attempts:	73.6% (1356 of 1842)
3-point FG made:	61.2% (126 of 206)
3-point FG attempts:	61.0% (357 of 585)
Offensive rebounds:	90.3% (381 of 422)
Defensive rebounds:	83.1% (714 of 859)
Total rebounds:	85.2% (1091 of 1281)
Personal fouls:	78.1% (441 of 565)
Assists:	67.8% (367 of 541)
Turnovers:	70.4% (318 of 452)
Blocked shots:	95.3% (122 of 128)
Steals:	67.9% (138 of 203)



point guard who can handle the ball and operate an offense.

In addition, Pitt adds three newcomers to the mix including East Carolina transfer Mike Cook and freshmen Gilbert Brown and Austin Wallace. A junior, Cook sat out last season due to NCAA transfer rules. He is eligible for competition in 2006-07 and will make an immediate impact at either the off-guard position or small forward position. Brown is an athletic wing player from Harrisburg, Pa. who concluded his career as the all-time leading scorer at South Kent Academy (Conn.). Wallace is an athletic rebounder and shot blocker from Bronx, N.Y.

FORWARDS

Senior **Levon Kendall** returns to the squad as the most experienced forward. A six-foot-10-inch combination forward, Kendall started 30 of 33 games last season, averaged 7.0 points, ranked second on the squad in rebounding (5.4 rpg.) and played 23.8 minutes per game last season. He has proved to be a hard working, versatile, consistent player who contributes intangibles, floor sense, good shooting and solid passing and ball handling. Kendall, who has played in the Canadian National Program for the past five summers, earned a promotion to the Canadian Senior National Team after guiding the squad to its first-ever Bronze Medal in 2005.

High flying sophomore **Sam Young** returns to the Pitt frontcourt after a superb freshman season. Standing only six-feet-six inches tall, the dynamic Young plays taller than his size. Last year he amazed fans with his athletic ability, hustle plays, slashing ability and high flying acrobatic dunks. A 2005-06 Big East All-Rookie team selection, Young averaged 7.9 points, 4.4 rebounds per game and shot .521

UPPER LEFT: Doyle Hudson made significant progress last year after transferring to Pitt from Roane State Junior College (Tenn.). A senior in 2006-07, Hudson appeared in 12 games including a four-rebound performance in Pitt's NCAA Tournament contest against Bradley.

UPPER RIGHT: Tyrell Biggs averaged 8.2 minutes per game as the backup center as a freshman. He should see action at both center and power forward in 2006-07.

ABOVE: Keith Benjamin enters his junior season at Pitt. In his previous two seasons, Benjamin has provided Pitt an offensive and defensive spark off the bench.

LEFT: Senior Antonio Graves is an experienced backcourt player who will play a key role in 2006-07. A versatile combination guard, Graves has the ability to provide instant offensive either in a starting role or off the bench.

from the floor in 20.4 minutes per contest.

Sophomore **Tyrell Biggs** also returns at power forward. The six-foot-eight-inch Biggs, who also saw action at center, scored 56 points in 31 games while averaging 8.2 minutes per game last season. Biggs is a talented, versatile performer who has a stellar outside jumper. He will see action at both center and power forward.

Junior transfer **Mike Cook** along with freshman **Gilbert Brown** will both see time at small forward. Junior walk-on **Maurice Polen** provides depth.

CENTER

Pitt received excellent news in July when seven-foot, 270-pound center **Aaron Gray** made a decision to pull his name from the NBA Draft and return to Pitt for his senior season. A powerful, unselfish, hard-working and ever improving player with great hands, Gray has made himself a better player with outstanding work ethic. Over his first three seasons at Pitt, Gray's career has gone from seeing limited action off the bench while backing up current Golden State Warrior Chris Taft to starting all 33 games last season and earning 2005-06 All-Big East First Team and Big East Most Improved Player honors. Gray, who led the Big East in rebounding (10.5 rpg.) and double-doubles (18), was the only Big East player to average a double-double (13.9 ppg./10.5 rpg.) last season. Now, he enters the 2006-07 season as a consensus preseason All-America and Big East Player of the Year candidate.

Backing up Gray at center will be senior **Doyle Hudson** and freshman **Austin Wallace**. A Bahamas native, the six-foot-eight-inch Hudson appeared in 12 games last season. A quick leaper and an athletic, powerful player, Hudson owns international experience with the Bahamas National Team before transferring to Pitt from Roane State Junior College. Hudson has shown

ABOVE RIGHT: *Levance Fields averaged 6.8 points, 2.2 assists, hit 43.2 percent of his 3-point attempts and registered 11 double figure scoring games in 2005-06. With the loss of Carl Krauser, Fields will see more action in 2006-07.*

FAR RIGHT: *Ronald Ramon emerged as the starting point guard in 2005-06. He finished the season with an 8.0 points per game average, contributed 73 assists and only 34 turnovers.*

RIGHT: *Mike Cook sat out the 2005-06 season due to NCAA transfer rules. At East Carolina in 2004-05, Cook led the Pirates in scoring (15.0 ppg.) and averaged 4.0 rebounds and 3.4 assists per game. He will see action at either small forward or shooting guard.*

dramatic improvement over the following season. Wallace joins the Pitt squad after graduating from LaSalle Academy in Bronx, N.Y. The six-foot-nine-inch Wallace averaged 19.6 points and 17.4 rebounds per game while guiding LaSalle to a 26-5 record last season. He has proved to be an extremely coachable team player who has a bright future.

GUARDS

Even though Pitt's backcourt will be challenged to replace Krauser's production, the Panthers return four individuals who played key roles last season and adds a transfer and a freshman to the backcourt.

Senior **Antonio Graves** returns as Pitt's most experienced guard. The versatile Graves can play either the point or off-guard position and has proven to be an aggressive on-ball defender, effective ball handler and efficient shooter. Last year, Graves provided a scoring and defensive spark off the bench as he averaged 5.0 points, 2.3 rebounds and dished out 49 assists in close to 19 minutes per game. In Pitt's four

Big East Championship games, Graves rose to the challenge as he averaged 10.8 points per game and hit eight 3-pointers.

Combination guard **Ronald Ramon** enters his junior season at Pitt. A heady, efficient ball handler, long-range shooter and courageous leader, Ramon handled the majority of the ball handling and point guard duties last year. Ramon contributes streaky shooting, effective ball-handling and leadership to the backcourt. He has led the Panthers in assist:turnover ratio and free throw shooting in each of his first two seasons at Pitt. Last year, he started 29 games and averaged 8.0 points, hit 49 of his 118 3-point field goal attempts and dished out 73 assists. As a freshman, Ramon was named to the Big East All-Rookie Team while suffering through several nagging injuries.

Junior **Keith Benjamin** also returns at the off guard position. A strong, rugged, quick and athletic competitor, Benjamin saw action in 18 contests last year off the bench. A streaky scorer, Benjamin has displayed streaky scoring including a two-game spurt against both

Cincinnati and Providence where he averaged 15.5 points, and hit 11-15 3-pointers. Benjamin has seen action in 49 career games and averaged 3.7 points and 2.5 rebounds per game. He should play a significant role in the backcourt this year.

Sophomore point guard **Levance Fields** returns to Pitt's backcourt after completing an impressive freshman season. Fields contributed 6.8 points, 2.1 rebounds and 2.2 assists per game in 33 games last year. A quick, talented and skilled leader and ball handler who can operate an offense, Fields' best outings came at the conclusion of the 2005-06 season when he reached double figure scoring in four of Pitt's last five contests. Fields has an opportunity to move into the starting point guard role.

Junior transfer **Mike Cook** will also see time at the off-guard position after sitting out due to NCAA transfer rules. In his two seasons at East Carolina (2003-05), Cook averaged 12.8 points per game and reached double figures in 41 contests. He also averaged 15.0 points, 4.0 rebounds, 3.4 assists



2006-07 ROSTER

NUMERICAL ROSTER

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Exp.	Hometown/Previous School
0	Austin Wallace	C	6-9	230	FR	HS	Bronx, N.Y./LaSalle Academy
1	Keith Benjamin	G	6-2	190	JR	2L	Mount Vernon, N.Y./Mount Vernon
2	Levance Fields	G	5-10	195	SO	1L	Brooklyn, N.Y./Xaverian
4	Ronald Ramon	G	6-1	180	JR	2L	Bronx, N.Y./All Hallows
5	Tyrell Biggs	F	6-8	245	SO	1L	Nanuet, N.Y./Don Bosco Prep (N.J.)
11	Gilbert Brown	G/F	6-6	190	FR	HS	Harrisburg, Pa./South Kent Prep (Conn.)
14	Levon Kendall	F	6-10	225	SR*	3L	Vancouver, British Columbia/Kitsilano
21	Doyle Hudson	F/C	6-8	230	SR	1L	Eleuthera, Bahamas/Roane State J.C./North Eleuthera
22	Antonio Graves	G	6-3	190	SR	3L	Mansfield, Ohio/Mansfield Senior
23	Sam Young	F	6-6	215	SO	1L	Clinton, Md./Hargrave Military Academy/Friendly
31	Mike Cook	G/F	6-4	220	JR*	TR	Philadelphia, Pa./East Carolina/Friends Central
33	Aaron Gray	C	7-0	270	SR	3L	Emmaus, Pa./Emmaus
35	Geoff Rizk	G	6-0	185	FR	HS	Franklin Lakes, N.J./The Hun School of Princeton
40	Maurice Polen	F	6-5	245	JR	RS	Philadelphia, Pa./West Philadelphia

* By class denotes redshirt year

Head Coach: Jamie Dixon (TCU, 1987), Fourth Year, 76-22 overall; **Assistant Coach:** Mike Rice (Fordham, 1991); **Assistant Coach:** Pat Sandle (San Francisco State, 1987); **Assistant Coach:** Orlando Antigua (Pittsburgh, 1995); **Director of Operations:** David Cox (William & Mary, 1995); **Program Assistant/Video Coordinator:** Brandin Knight (Pittsburgh, 2005); **Athletic Trainer:** Tony Salesi; **Strength & Conditioning Coach:** Tim Beltz; **Academic Coordinator:** Mike Farabaugh; **Equipment Manager:** Dan Trbovich; **Team Managers:** Menachem Brodie, Jared Friedman, Kevin Funston, Jeremy Grubbs, Jordan Marks, Matt Steinbrink; **Student Trainers:** Pam MacNett, Jamie Voelker, Kevin Westrick; **Administrative Assistant:** Beth Schoedel.

ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Exp.	Hometown/Previous School
1	Keith Benjamin	G	6-2	190	JR	2L	Mount Vernon, N.Y./Mount Vernon
5	Tyrell Biggs	F	6-8	245	SO	1L	Nanuet, N.Y./Don Bosco Prep (N.J.)
11	Gilbert Brown	G/F	6-6	190	FR	HS	Harrisburg, Pa./South Kent Prep (Conn.)
31	Mike Cook	G/F	6-4	220	JR*	TR	Philadelphia, Pa./East Carolina/Friends Central
2	Levance Fields	G	5-10	195	SO	1L	Brooklyn, N.Y./Xaverian
22	Antonio Graves	G	6-3	190	SR	3L	Mansfield, Ohio/Mansfield Senior
33	Aaron Gray	C	7-0	270	SR	3L	Emmaus, Pa./Emmaus
21	Doyle Hudson	F/C	6-8	230	SR	1L	Eleuthera, Bahamas/Roane State J.C./North Eleuthera
14	Levon Kendall	F	6-10	225	SR*	3L	Vancouver, British Columbia/Kitsilano
40	Maurice Polen	F	6-5	245	JR	RS	Philadelphia, Pa./West Philadelphia
4	Ronald Ramon	G	6-1	180	JR	2L	Bronx, N.Y./All Hallows
35	Geoff Rizk	G	6-0	185	FR	HS	Franklin Lakes, N.J./The Hun School of Princeton
0	Austin Wallace	C	6-9	230	FR	HS	Bronx, N.Y./LaSalle Academy
23	Sam Young	F	6-6	215	SO	1L	Clinton, Md./Hargrave Military Academy/Friendly

* By class denotes redshirt year

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Tyrell Biggs Ty-REL
 Levance Fields Le-VANTZ
 Levon Kendall LEE-von
 Maurice Polin POE-lynn
 Ronald Ramon Ra-MONE
 Geoff Rizk Jeff Risk

CLASS BREAKDOWN

Total Players: 14
Seniors: 4 (Antonio Graves, Aaron Gray, Doyle Hudson, Levon Kendall)
Juniors: 4 (Mike Cook, Keith Benjamin, Maurice Polen, Ronald Ramon)
Sophomores: 3 (Tyrell Biggs, Levance Fields, Sam Young)
Freshmen: 3 (Gilbert Brown, Geoff Rizk, Austin Wallace)

GEOGRAPHICAL ROSTER

Bahamas: 1 (Doyle Hudson, Eleuthera)
British Columbia, Canada: 1 (Levon Kendall, Vancouver)
Maryland: 1 (Sam Young, Clinton)
New Jersey: 1 (Geoff Rizk, Franklin Lakes)
Ohio: 1 (Antonio Graves, Mansfield)
Pennsylvania: 4 (Gilbert Brown, Harrisburg; Mike Cook, Philadelphia; Aaron Gray, Emmaus; Maurice Polen, Philadelphia)
New York: 5 (Keith Benjamin, Mount Vernon; Tyrell Biggs, Nanuet; Levance Fields, Brooklyn; Ronald Ramon, Bronx; Austin Wallace, Bronx)