

HEAD COACH KELLIE HARPER QUOTES:

General Comments about the team:

“We are very excited and finally feel like we have a veteran team. We only have two freshmen and one transfer and they are picking things up very quickly. The returning players have done a great job of teaching them and leading them and sometimes taking them by the jersey and dragging them along to make sure they can keep up with our fast-paced veteran team.”

Progress of the freshmen:

“I think we have one freshman on the squad that is in a position to contribute to the team early in the season. Emily Clarke is a very solid player and intelligent on the court. She has a pose about her that makes you very excited. Our other freshman Kendra Carroll defensively is a little behind. Offensively the kid can score. We are really excited about that and throughout the season I think you are going to see Kendra progress and become a fan favorite before it is said and done. The hardest worker we have ever had her.”

How are the returning players in terms of readiness for the season?:

“Our veterans are looking very sharp. We have three senior guards that are tremendously athletic: Chevon Keith, Monique Dawson and Ashley Pellom. The post players, Jessika Johnson, Kendra Eaton and Brook Johnson, are all playing very well. Our execution offensively hasn't been where I would like it but they seem to find a way to score. They are being a little more aggressive than they were last year.”

Talk about playing the exhibition game with Carson-Newman on Thursday:

“Brooke Johnson transferred from Carson-Newman. We play Carson-Newman tomorrow night. I have not had a chance to sit down and talk to her about it but I believe it will be pretty emotional for her. Anytime that happens you know the other team is going to have a little more motivation to beat you. Brooke is just such a cool player its probably not going to phase her. She is always even keel and doesn't get too high or too low.”

Can you touch on the preseason rankings that came out on Tuesday?:

“We came out ranked second and that is what I thought was going to happen. We actually got a few first place votes. Basically those polls are a way to give the fans and the media something to talk about. And to get people excited about basketball. We won't even discuss the preseason poll with our team unless we need some motivation when playing Chattanooga. The polls are based on what you did last year and it is a compliment to our team last year but it doesn't take into account your newcomers or how your team changes. Also with the preseason poll there is a preseason all-conference list and we had three players on that – Brooke Johnson, Monique Dawson and Chevon Keith. All-Conference performer, from last year, Lauren Powell was not included on the list. They

probably can't put four of our players on the 10-person list however Chattanooga and Western Carolina made up six of the 10 all-conference performers listed."

Can you talk about your pre-season conference opponents?:

"In our preseason conference games we are having a little bout with the ACC as we play Clemson, North Carolina State and Wake Forest. North Carolina State is ranked 25th in the ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll that was released today. We also play Louisville which is ranked 23rd. In addition to those games we have Middle Tennessee and Minnesota on our schedule who are receiving votes. Once again we did not give them a cup cake schedule. This is the year to really challenge our veterans. We are telling them here is that tough schedule if you win it is going to help you in the long run."

Talk about your style of play this year:

"The first thing we worked on this year was transitioning quicker offensively. Pushing the ball faster than last year, but some people have been saying wow you were pretty fast last year. We are hoping we can push the ball and make good decisions this year. In a half court set we are probably not going to look very different. I like the way we looked last year and how it played do our strengths. Defensively I think our zone defense is going to be a little better than it was last year. You may see us pick up some zone a bit more than I did last year. I am a man-to-man coach and its hard sometimes for me to pull the trigger and go to that zone but I think our players are going to be pretty good at it this year. Hopefully I can talk myself into doing it."