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Tammy Gibson comes back from 1993's season-ending injury

Our 75th Year, Number 36a

Jennifer Howard: young leader and a spark plug for the team



# Team faces a season with few certainties, but few limits

The 1994-95 women's team has darkhorse potential in the ACC title chase, and could be better than most people, even coach Kay Yow, think.

> BY TED NEWMAN Assistant Sports Editor

The youth movement continues on the women's basketball team as Kay Yow brought in her second-straight outstanding freshman class. Now, it's how soon and how well the rookies mesh with rest of the squad that will dictate how well the season will go. The team is already loaded with young talent thanks to loaded with young talent thanks to loaded with young talent thanks to the trial-by-fret they had to endure. The Pack returns everyone from a team that went 13-14, 6-10 in the ACC, a team that started three freshmen most of the version.

"This is a very young team, so it's difficult to get a valid feeling of how well they will play," head coach Kay Yow said, "We have eight sophomores and freshmen to go with only five upperclassmen. They are blending well.

"Because of out lack of depth last year, the sophomores are more experienced than most."

State welcomes the return of Tammy Gibson. Gibson, a finh-year senior, missed most of last year with a torn anterior cruciate ligament. A medical redshirt ensured her final season in Wolfpack ged. Gibson was averaging over 17 points per game at the time of her injury and had been a pre-season all-ACC first teamer.

Now she returns to lead the young squad along with fellow seniors Kollen Kreul, Quicha Floyd and Sarah McCleod.

"I think that our seniors will be good leaders for us," Yow said. "I also think that Jennifer Howard, because of starting at the point gaurd, that that position is a type of leadership in itself."

Howard is clearly the leader of the sophomore class. Last year, she led the team in scoring after the fall of Gibson with a 15 point average. She also led the nation in free throw percentage at 92.9 percent.

Umeki Webb and Nicole Mitchell also saw starting roles as freshmen last year, Webb enpited for 35 points in a comeback win over UCLA. Mitchell was best on the defensive end of the court, although she too had a career high against UCLA. But the biggest sophomore, 6-3 Peace Shepherd, will miss the season with a torn ACL of her own.

"The injury to Peace is key," Yow said. "She would of had a real chance to start. She played so well last year and she could have provided a lot of assurance for our inside game."

Stepping up to provide that assurance could be 6-3 freshman Chastity Melvin. She scored 37 points and collected 21 rebounds in the state 1A championship game last spring to lead her team to victory. She was named state player of the year by several newspapers.

"She has the potential to make an outstanding contribution here," Yow said. "It's just a matter of getting in top condition and becoming more fundamentally sound. But she has a lot of natural ability and a lot of athleticism. At times I have seen flashes of greatness."

The Wolfpack begins the year with a brutal nonconference schedule. Home games against national powers Stanford and Connecticut should provide early indications of the capabilities of this squad. A Christmas tournament at University of Florida is the last nonconference test before the ACC begins.

"Our early schedule will help guide and direct our focus to help prepare and get us ready for our conference games," Yow said. "It will help us really see our strengths and weaknesses, the direction we want to take and the plan we will need in order to compete well in the ACC."

# Gibson is back

■ Tammy Gibson will return from a career-threatening knee-injury to lead the Wolfpack this year.

#### BY TED NEWMAN ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

One more shot.

Tammy Gibson returns to the Wolfpack after missing the better part of last season with a torn anterior cruciate ligament. She went down in the fifth game of the year and was granted a medical redshirt, allowing her one more shot at her senior season.

A three-point specialist, Gibson adds another weapon to the arsenal of Wolfpack shooters. But her mission is not necessarily to lead the league in scoring, just be a team leader.

"We had no leadership last year, that's the main thing I learned while watching," Gibson said. "That's one of my personal goals, we have to have a leader."

As a junior, Gibson led the Pack in scoring at 20.3 clip. She was a second team all-ACC member and was fourth in the nation for three-pointers per game at a shade over three. That performance led to last year's pre-season first team all-ACC selection. And she was on a pace to not disappoint, averaging 17.2 points per game through those five games.

Her absence left not only no proven scorer, but it left the team without a returning starter. It also limited the team to essentially eight players for the remainder of the season.

Gibson feels like she's joining a much deeper and experienced squad. "We definitely have more depth." Gibson said. "The people coming off the bench are as good as the starters, that helps a lot. And the freshmen last year have a lot of experience, so

Also playing much better is glibson herself. The result of a cateer-threatening injury such as an ACL tear usually manifests itself in one of two ways. The player never quite makes it back to the level they were playing at when they went down. Or they come back stronger than ever. Gibson appears to be the latter.

"She's getting better and better every practice," head coach Kay Yow said. "If it weren't for the brace, you wouldn't even know she had been injured. She's playing stronger and with more confidence every day." "My knee feels great, 100 per-

cent. whatever you want to call it," Gibson said.

Watching last year's dismal season was difficult but not impossible to watch for Gibson. It was as much a learning experience for her as it was the rest of the young team. But she was able to endure and make it back because she knew that she had one more chance.

"Just being a part of them kept me going," Gibson said. "I know that they struggled but I travelled with hem, but I also supported them even though I was on the bench.

"Of course I wanted to play, but I knew that being able to redshirt that I'd be back. It's not a hard as people say."

say." So she returns to a battle-tested group of veterans, albeit young, to provide the leadership and scoring punch that State so frequently missed last year. But Gibson has other goals for herself and the team.

"I just want us to win 20 games this year and get an NCAA bid," Gibson added.

Gibson figures large in coach Yow's offense this year. A 5-8 swing player, her defense and rebounding will be as important as her scoring. She was averaging nearly 10 rebounds per game when she injured her knee.

Yow sees a different Tammy Gibson from years past.

"Having been out for a year and having lost the opportunity to play, he values this opportunity much more," Yow said. "I think she's really hungry and eager to play."

Gibson feels the same way.

"I'm anxious to get back into it," Gibson said. "I feel more confident than ever, especially now that my knee is back to where I want it to be. I'll probably get better as the season goes on."

The Pack is just thankful to have her back, whether or not she is as strong as before. Her leadership, scoring and intensity on the floor was missed a last year and will only make an improving team much better in a hurry.

If she returns to her game form of two years ago, let alone improves, State will get yet another shot-inthe-arm for this once-dominant program. Gibson is a proven all-ACC candidate and having her on the

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# **Vow is focused**

Kay Yow hopes to restore a winning tradition to the basketball team this season.

#### By MICHAEL PRESTON CTATE MIN

She is as much a part of N.C. State basketball as Everett Case, Norm Sloan and Jim Valvano. For 19 years, the sidelines at Reynolds Coliseum have been fortunate enough to be graced by this coach's presense

And for 19 years, Kay Yow has not let the Wolfpack faithful down.

"I've always been grateful for the opportunity and the challenge of coaching at a great university like North Carolina State," Yow said. "I grew up here so it is a real privilege and honor for me to be at a major university."

Yow began coaching at N.C. State during the 1976-76 season, the very year the women's basketball pro-gram was started. By being named to the position, she was the first female head coach at a major college in the state. And right away, she led the team to a 19-7 mark.

However, seeing as how there weren't many women coaches at the time to derive a style from. Yow took some things from a coach in men's basketball accustomed to winning.

"I sort of came in with women's basketball, so most of my role models in coaching were men, because there simply weren't any women in sport," Yow said. "But the person I



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most admired in the coaching ranks was John Wooden, because of the way he coached and recruited, but mostly the way he was with people."

So, Yow took what she knew and turned it into one of the most successful women's basketball programs in the country. And over the past 20 years, the game has taken on changes that Yow was struggling to achieve

We've come a long way." Yow said, "I don't really even stop to reflect on it because I'm still in the midst of it, and striving for more opportunities in women's sports.

It's tremendous to see so many changes. There's a difference, like day and night, its changed so drasti cally. You wouldn't recognize it. My players never knew the time when women didn't receive scholarships. and now they expect it. But we still have a long way to go."

The way State has expected so many big things from Yow, and she has delivered every year. It would be impossible to list all the accolades she has received during her tenure at this university. She was inducted into the Women's Sports Hall of Fame, as well as the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame. But Yow still has one more goal. "It comes right down to N.C. State

University. This is a program that I still have a dream and a vision of taking to a Final Four and a national championship," Yow said. "For as long as I'm here I will strive toward that goal

But for now, fans can take a look in the record books to see how hard Yow has worked to achieve that goal. She has over 400 wins at State. she has brought the Pack to the postseason 15 times, won four ACC titles and produced eight All-Americans. And that is just at State

Yow was an assistant coach on the 1984 Olympic team that brought home the gold. She guided the 1986 USA National Team to a gold in the Goodwill Games. In 1988, she was the head coach of the Olympic team. that also won it all. She has worked with seven U.S. select teams

But, with all the wins and thrilling games Yow has been involved in. one of her proudest moments in coaching was a loss. It came in 1991, a 123-120 loss to Virginia.

"The day we had over 11,000 people in the arena when we played Virginia in the triple-overtime. That was the most exciting time in a game for me because of the crowd that was there.

"To walk into Reynolds and see it packed and then to have a game like we had, it was absolutely the biggest, single game thrill for me.

The task at hand for this year is for Yow to bring the Pack back to the days when making the finals in the ACC Tournament was common place. But Yow feels that she has the tools to do it.

This season, a girl who was going to bide for the starting position. Peace Shepard, tore her ACL and will be out for the season Regardless of her starting or not, she would have played a major role in our inside game," Yow said. "But we still have eight freshman and sophomores out of thirteen players, so we're going to put a young team on the floor.

### Sports

## Webb shows the ropes

After a year learning the ropes, Umeki Webb can expect to show them to younger players.

BY OWEN S. GOOD SPORTS EDITOR

Umeki Webb is sure glad her sophomore season's here.

Not because last year's freshmen were underplayed and disrespected, or anything like that. Quite the con-trary, in fact Webb played in all 27 games last year, started 20, and was a driving force on a young team.

The arrival of her sophomore year means two things: more confidence and more depth.

"I'm more confident than I was last year," Webb said. "Coming in from high school I didn't think I was going to play, but now I feel better.

Webb, a versatile 5-10 guard/forward averaged 10.1 points - thirdbest on the team - and blocked 20 Umeki Webb

shots and made 57 steals, both team highs.

She thinks that she can be more of a contributor, even after remarkable first-year totals like that, this year.

"I'll probably be more of an out-side threat, rather than penetrating because we have such solid posts, Webb said. Still, with a season like that to build on, Webb said she didn't need

to do much tinkering with her game in the off-season. Rather, she had to build her stamina. "I had to work on the track," Webb said. "Last year I didn't make my

mile time, but I still had to play. I know that am in better condition this Still Webb should have some depth

behind her. "Last year we had to play a lot, but

this year we can play hard, and then we know that we have subs on the bench." Webb said.

Sophomore

An ankle injury may slow Nicole Mitchell at the start of this season, but it won't sideline her. By OWEN S. GOOD

SPORTS EDITOR

Nicole Mitchell may miss a few games with an ankle sprain, but the sophomore says if her injury took place the same time last year she'd niss a lot more

"If I had gotten hurt last year. I would have been through," Mitchell said. "It would have had a huge impact on the rest of the season for me. This year I have the confidence that I will be okay.

Mitchell sprained her right ankle Oct. 28 — four weeks before the team's exhibition opener against Athletes in Action. She re-sprained it in practice trying to get back into

playing condition three weeks after the first injury. Mitchell is question-able for the AIA exhibition.

Injury not a problem this year

Sophomore

102 61

Still, once Mitchell gets in gear for the season, she should be looked to as a main contributor in a strong sophomore class. A 5-7 guard, Mitchell's best work was on defense last year, and Mitchell says she is ready to raise her offensive game and balance out her play. But that will take mental, not phys-

ical, practice.

"I've just got to play my game and be relaxed," Mitchell said. "A lot of it is mental. I know I can shoot, dribble and pass, just a matter of my head. My goal is to relax, kind of go and flow with the game.

Mitchell said her challenging freshman season was good for her development.

"I was thrown into the situation,

but I'm glad that I was," Mitchell said. "Most freshmen coming into the ACC don't have the opportunity to gain experience like I did last year

3

"I think I'm better off this year because of last year. It was hard last year because of great juniors and seniors on other teams playing against you last year. They smoke you and you have to be able to adapt," Mitchell said.

Mitchell adapted well enough scoring a career-high 15 points and taking an emotional leadership role in a comeback win over UCLA last December. She averaged 6.3 points and 3.9 rebounds a game and started 24 of the team's 27 games.

Her ankle providing, Mitchell should see comparable time this year

### G-GS EG Pot 3PT Pot. FT Pot. 27-20 .367 .270 .735 A 10 5 B5 TP Avg 67 78 20 57 274 10.1 103 New players a solid group to build on

Four incoming freshman and four seniors are the key to success for the Wolfpack women's basketball program.

## BY RICH O'KEEFE

A major part of putting together a competitive college basketball program is recruiting. Recruiting largely goes unnoticed other than the fact that rumors fly and players eventually sign.

Coach Kay Yow, now entering her 20th season at the helm of the women's basketball team, has been recruiting for a long time. She knows continuity in a program is important. A team which has strong senior leadership is an ideal situation for an influx of young talent.

As a result, it is not surprising that a team which will rely heavily on four seniors has four freshman new comers to tutor and mold before

their departure at the end of the year Seniors Tammy Gibson, Quicha Floyd, Kolleen Kreul and Sarah McLeod, meet your future replace-ments: Chasity Melvin, Rosalyn McLendon, Constance Poteat and Erin Young. The N.C. State women's program

has received honorable mention in various pre-season top 25 polls. The impact of these players could just propel the Pack back to national prominence, or maybe the NCAA tournament.

Melvin, a 6'3" forward/center from Roseboro, NC, is heralded as an out-standing post player who could see significant playing time this season. She led Lakewood High to a state championship, averaging 23.5 points and 13.5 rebounds her senior year Melvin was ranked as the 25th best high school prospect in America by Blue Star Scouting Index, and was named Player of the Year by the Greensboro News and Record and the Favetteville Observer-Times

Melvin is said to have the ability to core out on the floor as well as in the post, which could make her a versatile performer and a tough

match-up for opponents. McLendon, a 6' 2" forward out of Rockingham, NC, led Richmond Senior High with 19.5 points and 11.7 rebounds per game. Those numbers earned her the Conference Player of the Year award. Another talented. athletic forward McLendon hopes to impact at both forward spots.

Poteat, a 5' 8" guard out of Cedar Grove, NC, led Orange High to two consecutive PAC-6 regular and tournament season titles. During her senior year, she averaged 20.1 points and 13.1 rebounds, earning her second team all-state status. Known for her leadership and hustle on the floor, Poteat also had major accomplishments off the floor. A four-time Academic All-Conference selection

including Student Athlete of the Year her senior year, Poteat is able and ready to handle the demands expected of the student athlete.

Young, a 5' 11" forward from Oak Ridge, Tenn., gives the Wolfpack still another great athlete with an allaround game. She shot 56 percent from the three-point in high school, and averaged 19 points, four rebounds, four assists and four steals per game her senior year. Those numbers led Oak Ridge to the dis trict, regional and state championship titles.

With the strong senior class, this is one of the most important recruiting classes in a while for the women's program. Their development will determine both the present - and most definitely the future - at N. C. State. Whether their impact is felt today, tomorrow, or a year or two down the road, they make for a bright future for the Wolfpack.





November 18, 1994

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Nicole Mitchel

## Floyd will have fun

A game is something you play for fun, and Quicha Floyd plans to keep sight of that all through this year.

#### BY MICHAEL TODD STAFF WO

For Quicha Floyd, there is one goal for the upcoming season: Enjoy the whole thing

Floyd said in the 1994 womens's media guide, "Whatever you do, do it with all your heart and enjoy it."

For someone who enjoys playing as much as Floyd does, that shouldn't be too much of a problem.

A senior forward on the women's basketball team, Floyd was one of only two players to start every game last year. This opportunity allowed Floyd to enjoy her best season so far at State.

Floyd averaged 7.2 points and 5.9 rebounds a game. She scored in double figures six times, pulled down 10 or more rebounds four times, and had two double-doubles. Also, she had 20 steals and blocked 11 shots.

As one of four seniors, Floyd will be looked upon to provide leadership for the team.

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Throughout her career, Floyd has come up big in one or more cate gories to help the Wolfpack achieve

Last year. Floyd led State to an vertime win against Wake Forest She scored a career-high 20 points. pulled down eight rebounds, and had three assists in that game

Against Georgia Tech, Floyd hauled down a career-high in rebounds, 13, to help State post a 71-53 victroy

Also, Floyd had nine assists in the second game verus Wake Forest last year. She led the team in assists in seven games last year

Floyd is one the best athletes on the women's team. Her great quickness is seen in the Wolfpack transition game. Floyd's tremendous leap ing ability makes her a threat on the boards. The most memorable sports moment for Floyd was when she touched the rim in a game last year.

Majoring in mechanical engineer ing. Floyd came to State become of the engineering program. After graduation, she plans to enter graduate school for a master's in mechanica engineering

floor changes the complexion of the

"She's going to help us a lot with our scoring from the perimeter," Yow said. "She is also strong

rebounding and defensively. She can be a real catalyst for us, that extra

punch that we just didn't have last

Gibson

Continued from Page W2

team

vear.

she's not sure why.

"That Larry Johnson thing," junior Muriel Davis said. "It just keeps

coming up." Crazy as that talk may be, there are some similarities between the Wolfpack power forward and the NBA Charlotte Hornets' all-star. They include

. The position. Both play inside despite frequent height disadvantages, making up for missing inches with extra musc

"I'm 6-foot-1, and I'm going up against people who are 6-foot-5, 6

seven boards a game. She recorded a career high in points at Georgia Tech with 25

Kreul factors in after big season

But her most impressive contributions came during the last two games of the season. After starting the entire season, she broke her thumb on her left, non-shooting hand. She sat out only two games before returing to the lineup.

Playing with a thick, soft cast, she scored 16 points to lead the State to a victory over Wake Forest

In the classroom, Kreul exmplifies the type of student athlete in Kay Yows basketball program. She is majoring in Biological Sciences and still earned a spot on the ACC honor roll. After her career with the Pack, she plans to attend graduate school.

Her outstanding achievement has carned her several accolades from both her team and the student body.

The team voted her the most improved player award for her increased statistics to go along with her incresed playing time. Her work ethic has never been questioned, continuing to improve her game every year.

Off the court, she was named an Outstandintg NCSU Woman by the Panhellenic Assiciation for her allaround contibutions to the team as well as the community

Kreul helps to form a strong nucle-us of seniors for the Pack, something they were lacking last year.

## Davis looking for breakthrough . The hometown. Both hail from

"There aren't too many people from there in North Carolina," Davis

. The gold teeth. Each has one

right up front, with Davis' sporting a

foot-7," Davis said

One of the Pack's top returning inside players expects more this year from herself and her team.

Kollen Kreul had her best

her more valuable to the

Wolfpack.

women's team this season.

season ever last year, making

SPORIS STAFF REPORT

Entering her senior season,

Kolleen Kreul is expected to be a

leader on and off the floor for the

The 6-1 forward is comming off

her best year with the Pack. It was

her first year as a starter and the first

time she saw substantial playing

She averaged 13.2 points per

game, a 10 point jump from her sophomore camapign. She led the

team in rebounding, pulling down

time. And her numbers reflect that.

By KEITH JORDAN

The comparisons won't stop and

"Everyone's got these in Dallas," she said. "I didn't lose a tooth in a game or anything. I just got the gold tooth when I was 14."

Dallas

admitted.

"M" carved in:

• Fun with dresses. "For Halloween I dressed up as Grandmama," Johnson's shoe-promoting alter ego, she said.

The two aren't clones, of course. Davis' 7.9 ppg and 7.1 rpg last season are solid and point to bigger things to come, but she hasn't reached stardom. This could be the season, she said

"I spent the summer getting in better shape, working out and trying to get better," she said, "I played a lot of pick-up ball with my teammates and with guys at the gym, and I feel like I'm going to have a much better season

That extra work was in the low post. Davis said she has no plans to extend her game in an effort to avoid height mismatches

That may not be necessary anyway. After being named team rookie of the year in 1992-93, she led the team in shooting accuracy last year at 54.7 percent and collected 16 rebounds in two separate games

She's been able to work more against taller players after growing used to being the largest on the court during her high school career.

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### Sports

# Howard's role will expand in her second year

Jennifer Howard was quite a leader as a freshman, and she will be looked to more often as a sophomore.

> BY ANNA MARSHALL STAFF WRITER

Jennifer Howard, a 1994 freshman

all-ACC honoree, is back for anoth season of Wolfpack basketball. A team leader last year, Howard says

she's ready for more action this year. "I want to see an improvement in my shooting percentages," said Howard. I was disappointed in that especially the first part of last year. It went up towards the last part of the year, but still not as high as I think it

Howard averaged 38 minutes of playing time and started at guard every game. She hit 110 of 294 field goal attempts. She grabbed 101 rebounds and was led the Pack with 15 points per game. Howard also handed out 84 assists.

Howard earned recognition as the nation's best free-throw shooter last season.

"I'm going to just start over thinking each shot counts and we need the shot so we can win the game not so I can do all of this other stuff."

Still, she had some superior stuff. Howard sunk 40 straight free throws for a new school record and earned a 92.9 percentage from 118 of 127 shooting at the stripe.

think I'll be OK." Howard explained. "If I start thinking about all the stuff from last year, I'll probably miss more than I make.

Howard can also contribute her share behind the arc. Targeting 66 three-point shots made her the first rookie with such an outstanding number in school history.

But being a freshman is not easy. and it is even more demanding for a student-athlete. Howard stacked up well on and off the court, but still awaits the advantages of experience.

"All of last year was a challenge, not knowing the norm," said Jennifer.

Despite enormous individual accomplishments Howard remains

NNER-TAKE

level-headed and team oriented "Our first goal is to win an ACC Championship, and for an NCAA bid to get that and to do as well as we can is a team goal," Jennifer said putting her team first as always. 'Personally there's quite a few things I want to see, like the turnover ratio go down.

"I hope to see some maturity, just having a year under my belt and knowing what to expect. I need to play with more confidence.

With a year in the background Jennifer looks to take her game to the next plateau. "I worked a lot over the summer with ball handling and playing better defense." Howard said. "And I hope it shows."



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