Women's Preview

by Kieith Christensen '96

In-your-face defense.
Three pointers ripping the nylon. Up and down, fast break offense. If this is your idea of basketball, then the Lady Friars are exactly what you have been waiting for. The Providence College Women's Basketball team averaged 76 points a game last season, finishing 13-5 (8-1 in the Big East). Coach Bob Foley returns ten players from that team, including three starters.

The Lady Friars are thought to be among the top 3 team in the conference, and Coach Foley believes that "we [the Lady Friars] have the potential to beat anybody. We have a legitimate shot at the conference title," he said, "and the NCAA tournament."

Leading the charge for the black and white will be the sophomore back court duo of Mandy Saunders and Jen Davis. Saunders started 24 of 28 games at point guard last year and led the Big East in assists and free throw shooting to earn a berth on the Big East All-Rookie team. At 15.2 points per game (ppg), Saunders is the leading returning scorer, and Foley expects her to "be the heart and soul of our team." Saunders is a tireless student of the game, and worked hard all summer to improve her play. Coach Foley calls Saunders "the hardest working player I've ever coached."

Jen Davis started 26 of 27 games last season, and led the Big East in three point shooting. Davis knocked down over 34% of her three-pointers last season, helping her to a 12.9 ppg average. Coach Foley hopes to past the 5'10" Davis up a little more this year in order to utilize her height advantage against other guards.

The Lady Friars' Inside game will be spearheaded by captains Sarah Miller and Lori Penrod, and sophomore Nadine Malcolm. Miller, a 5'10" junior stepped up her game at the end of last season, scoring in double figures in five of the final seven games. Coach Foley is hopeful that Miller, a strong, aggressive player, "has come to the level where she can be a go-to player inside."

The first concern with the 6'2" Lori Penrod is her health. She is recovering from a broken leg, and suffered a set-back in her rehabilitation. If healthy, Penrod will be the Lady Friars' post player. The best PC defender in the paint, Penrod will also be asked to provide some inside scoring.

Nadine Malcolm will also be looking to contribute down low. Slowed last year by a stress fracture, Malcolm still put in 12.5 ppg and pulled down 5.4 rebounds a game in her first year. According to Coach Foley, Malcolm "has the potential to be one of the best players in the Big East."

She has "all the tools," as highlighted by a 50% shooting percentage, including almost 49% from three point range.

Defensively, the Lady Friars look to juniors Ayanna Walden and Jen Malone, and senior Heide Moyano, for assistance. Walden was a part-time starter at guard and plays great defense. She has improved her offense, and Coach Foley is "looking for her to help on both ends of the floor."

Three freshmen join the team this year: Shannon Brennanah, Kerri Chatten, and Julie Wheeler, all three of whom are expected "to contribute right away." Brennanah, a 5'9" guard, will see some time at both guard spots. Chatten, at 6'1", will play inside a lot for PC this year. Wheeler, a 5'7" guard, comes to PC after twice being named Player of the Year for West Virginia.

If the Lady Friars can avoid injuries, their up-tempo game should compensate for their lack of height. Regardless of the result, the Lady Friars will keep the scoreboard turning, Coach Foley exclaims; "They're just exciting. We're going to be scoring a lot of points. It's women's basketball, not girls', and it's exciting."

The Friars will be counting on some more high-flying antics from senior, Eric Williams.

Men's Preview

by Justin Macione '95

Upon entering the Alumni Hall basketball gym at midnight on Saturday, the PC Friar basketball team will experience an entirely different atmosphere. The most obvious change will be when Pete Gillen enters center stage instead of Rick Barnes. Michael Smith and Dickie Simpkins will be sweating out their futures at NBA camps in Sacramento and Chicago. Along with the thought of six different faces on the court. Along with the changes comes the pressure for a repeat of last spring's Big East Tournament victory, NCAA Tournament appearance, and 20-10 record. Nobody in the PC community had a busier summer than Pete Gillen. "I was very busy recruiting. I also had to help coach the Dream Team 2, going back and forth recruiting trips. It also took a while to move my family in," stated coach Gillen. The continuing international commute between the U.S. and his practice in Toronto and recruiting sites this summer helped attract two new faces for the PC campus; guards Adam Benton, and Spanish import Borja Larraign. The Friars will also benefit from the addition of their first seven footer this winter, Pittsburgh native Jason Evans. Guards Jason Williams and Michael Spruell decided not to enter PC this summer, after previously signing letters of intent.

Friar fans will also need to get acquainted with 2 familiar faces entering a game: senior power forward Troy Brown and sophomore center Piotr Szybikis, both redshirts last season. Brown, a key reserve in the 1992-93 season, will be counted on for both leadership and replacing the rebounding void left by Simpkins and Smith. "I'll be doing a lot of the dirty work under the basket," added Brown, describing his primary role. Coach Gillen also expects some help from Szybikis, Austin Croshere's probable backup at center. "I'd like to get some decent minutes from Piotr."

The backbone of the frontcourt will be senior small forward Eric Williams, the 1995 All-Big East candidate who led the Friars in scoring last season, averaging 15.7 points per game. Croshere will step into the starting center slot for his sophomore year. Senior Maciej Zielinski, marred by inconsistency his first two years, could improve team depth with his shooting touch.
Meet the 1994 - 1995 Friars!

Troy Brown '95, Forward
Franklin Western '95, Guard
Eric Williams '95, Forward
Maciej Zielinski '95, Forward
Michael Brown '96, Guard
Austin Croshere '97, Center
Jason Murdock '97, Guard
Piotr Szybilski '97, Center
Jason Evans '98, Center
Borja Larragan '98, Guard
Adam Benton '98, Guard
Coach Pete Gillen

* Photo by Amy Cacciola
Meet the 1994 - 1995 Lady Friars!

Heide Moyano '95, Guard
Sarah Miller, '96, Forward
Collette Cavallo '96, Guard
Lori Penrod, '96, Center
Jen Malone '96, Guard
Ayanna Walden '96, Guard
Jennifer Davis '97, Guard
Nadine Malcolm '97, Forward
Mandy Saunders '97, Guard
Shannon Bresnahan '98, Guard
Kerri Chattan '98, Forward
Julie Wheeler '98, Guard
Coach Bob Foley

* Photo by Amy Cacciola
by Pieter J. Keteleer '97

Sports Writer

It's out with the old, and in with the bold for men's basketball at Providence College this year as Head Coach Pete Gillen's team brings in three highly-regarded recruits.

For Providence, this could be a fresh start for hoopsters presenting an interesting mix of styles and diversity that should further enhance the overall competitiveness and skill of the team, not only for this season but for those to come.

Adam Benton, 19, halls from Massena, New York where he attended Seaway High School. A versatile, two-sport athlete, many schools also pursued Adam for football.

He is one of the four point guards on this team, along with fellow freshman Borja Larragan, that will attempt to fill the void left by the departed Abdel Abdulla.

When asked if he expected himself to be able to play to the same competitive level that Abdel did, Benton said, "I can't expect myself, or Borja, or anyone else to fill "Ab's" shoes right away. He was a great player for this team and one of the reasons they one the Big East Tournament. A goal of mine is to eventually be the kind of player that he was."

The 6'2" Benton hopes to serve a back-up role to Mike Brown and Jason Mundock and see plenty of playing time in Coach Gillen's hallmark, up tempo game.

Although regarded by some news media group as having only played basketball for two and a half years, he was highly recruited by many eastern schools but chose Providence because of the overall positive attitude he got from the school.

"I learned so much since I've been here," said Evans. "The coaches have said that I'll do pretty good in the Big East. I'll learn more during the course of the year and that'll only make me better. We have so many good players like Eric (Williams) and Troy (Brown) that we will surprise many who don't think we'll do much this year. We couldn't fill every gap from last year's team, but we filled a lot.

Evans will serve as a back-up to start but hopes to one day be a Big East scoring threat in the Big East. He acknowledges that it will be a long time before high school to college level play, but thinks he'll make the transition smoothly.

All three freshmen will need to step up and get the job done if Providence is to break down the Big East this year. They all agree that this team will shock many in the basketball world and be right there at the end with the best due to Coach Gillen's gritty, aggressive style of play.