

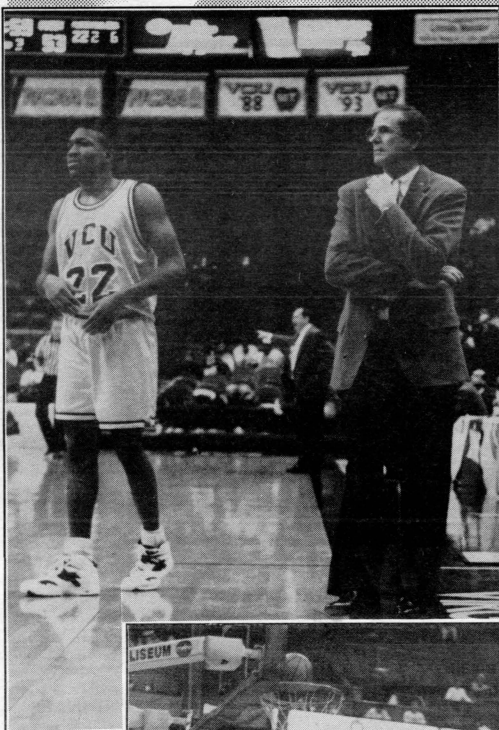
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## Metro 1994-'95: Will the anniversary party turn into a funeral procession?

*The Metro Collegiate Athletic Conference, commonly known as the Metro, is celebrating its 25th anniversary as an NCAA-sanctioned league. The celebration, however, has been muted with talk of the Metro's demise. Louisville, Southern Mississippi and Tulane have agreed to join a new conference with many of the Great Midwest Conference members and Southwest Conference member Houston. Barring a push for expansion in the coming months, this will likely be the final season for the Metro. But, as the saying goes, the show must go on ...*

**Brian J. French**  
CT SPORTS EDITOR

For years, it seemed the Metro Conference was living on borrowed time.

When VCU, South Florida and UNC Charlotte first joined the Metro for the 1991-92 season, critics from all around collectively scoffed, saying that, with the loss of the likes of Florida State, Cincinnati and Memphis State (now University of Memphis), the "new" Metro would suffer.

So what happened? Without an automatic NCAA Tournament bid, the Metro produces four teams for the "Big Dance."

The critics were unmoved. They insisted it was a fluke. They may have been right — with the automatic bid restored, the Metro had only two tournament teams in 1992-93 and only Louisville this past year.

About this time, rumors began floating that teams were looking to move to higher ground.

Tulane supposedly was looking to the SWC. Louisville was expected to bolt for the GMC or beg the Southeastern Conference for entry into their spot of heaven.

The strongest rumor centered on Virginia Tech, which was all but guaranteed a spot in the expanding Big East.

On the night before the Metro Tournament in Biloxi, Miss., the Big East announced that Rutgers and West Virginia were granted admittance. The Hokies were out in the cold, and it appeared the Metro would remain intact for a while.

However, a new rumor, the one that would turn out to be true, began. This time, it was Louisville, Southern Mississippi and Tulane starting a new Division I conference involving GMC holdovers Cincinnati and Memphis, as well as Houston of the soon-to-be-defunct SWC.

After that was confirmed, a Louisville representative announced that DePaul, Alabama-Birmingham, Saint Louis and Marquette would join the new conference.

That leaves the Metro with four teams. Will the Metro survive with a core of VCU, Tech, USF and UNCC? Nobody knows for sure. They may expand, or try to merge with another conference (Atlantic 10?).

One thing is certain: The four teams will make their move together.

Of course, Virginia Tech still harbors hope of joining the Big East for all sports and would be interested on SEC membership, as well.

But that's neither here nor there.

The Metro, for one last year, will continue with the same seven members.

Of those seven teams, Tulane, UNC Charlotte and Louisville are tri-favorites for the Metro crown. Virginia Tech is a possibility for a dark horse pick, and South Florida seems to be the most improved of the lot.

But for the first time in recent memory, the Metro does not have a member school in either the writers' or coaches' preseason poll. Louisville and Tulane received a good deal of votes, while UNCC garnered modest support.

The Metro may go out with a bang yet — Louisville once again has a good recruiting class, Tulane has superb sophomores and Jarvis Lang of UNCC is the best player in the Metro, by far.

Maybe, unbeknownst to the national media, the Metro has one last pop in its gun. Or maybe it'll go quietly.

Following is a team-by-team synopsis the Metro, from soup to nuts:

### TULANE GREEN WAVE

**1993-94 record:** 18-11, 7-5 Metro (tied for second)

**Postseason:** NIT second round (beat Evansville 76-63, lost to Siena 89-79)

#### Projected starting lineup:

SF Rayshard Allen (6-7, So.)  
PF Jerald Honeycutt (6-9, So.)  
C Vershawn Eley (6-9, Jr.)  
SG LeVeldro Simmons (6-4, Jr.)  
PG Kim Lewis (6-4, Sr.)

First, the good news:

• The sophomore frontcourt. Honeycutt should have gotten Metro Conference Freshman of the Year last year. As it was, he averaged 15.3 points and 6.7 rebounds during his first season with the Green Wave. Those numbers, barring major injury, should increase markedly. Not to be outdone, Allen likely will improve on his 8.8 points and 5.1 rebounds from last season. This has the makings of an awesome frontcourt. Look for these two forwards to terrorize the Metro this year and the new conference the following two years.

• Simmons. The junior guard came into his own late last year. Averaging 12.3 points per game last season, he scored at a

19-point clip for the Wave's final nine games and likely will improve on those figures. An explosive guard, Simmons could be the key to Tulane's fortunes.

• Perry Clark. Voted national coach of the year by most organizations after the 1991-92 season during which the Wave went from a team struggling to recover from a point-shaving scandal that forced their resignation from the Metro to an NCAA bid two years later. Clark knows how to get the most out of his players. If Tulane doesn't do what's expected of them, it probably won't be Clark's fault. He could be a major college or NBA coach in the next five years.

Now, the bad news:

• The pivot. The weakest link in the Wave's chain, Clark will probably give the starting job to seldom-used junior Eley, who averaged a mere 1.7 points per game last year. If Eley can't take advantage, look for freshman Lawrence Nelson to get a chance. Major production from this spot isn't likely.

• Backcourt stability. Tulane is looking at Lewis to recover from a broken leg from the 1992-93 season. He struggled early last year but got hot at the end, averaging 15 points in the Wave's last three games. Depth will have to come from the two sophomores (Corey Childs and Chris Cameron) who didn't catch the Metro spotlight.

**Schedule:** For once, the Wave isn't a finalist for Dick Vitale's "Cupcake of the Year" award. Early tilts with Old Dominion and Alabama at home, Cincinnati on the road, as well as entry into the Maui Invitational (with Michigan, Utah, Maryland and Indiana as possible opponents) will give Tulane problems. Prairie View's still there, though.

**Outlook:** If the Wave finds a center for the entire year, if Lewis makes a full recovery and if Cameron rebounds from a disappointing freshman season, they could be looking at a spot in the Top 20. As is, they should win the Metro.

**Prediction:** 25-8, a Metro title and a trip to the NCAAs.

### LOUISVILLE CARDINALS

**1993-94 record:** 28-6; 10-2 Metro (1st)  
**Postseason:** NCAA Regional semifinals (beat Boise State 67-58, beat Minnesota 60-55, lost to Arizona 82-70)

#### Projected starting lineup:

SF Jason Osborne (6-8, So.)  
PF Samaki Walker (6-9, Fr.)  
C Matt Simons (6-11, Fr.)  
SG Tick Rogers (6-5, Jr.)  
PG DeJuan Wheat (6-0, So.)

First, the good news:

• The sophomores. Wheat, the Metro Freshman of the Year, has a bright future in the Metro (and the new conference). Sure to score more than the 12.6 he averaged last year, Wheat is the best player on the team. A surer hand at the point will make him a superstar by the time he gets out of Cardinal land. Osborne, meanwhile, can play anywhere on the court. That's pretty much what Denny Crum looks for in a recruit.

• Walker. Leading yet another rich recruiting class, the big man from Columbus, Ohio, could give the Cardinals their second-straight Freshman of the Year award. Walker gives the Cards some badly needed strength at the forward spot and will help to make up the rebounds Cliff Rozier took



to Golden State with him.

• **Crum.** He's in the College Basketball Hall of Fame for good reason: He wins. Achieving archangel status in Louisville, Crum has been consistent, winning 20 or more games in all but four of his 23 years at the Cardinals' helm. Typical Crum: On media day, Crum mentioned that he had a bad year in 1986-87. "We only won 18 games that year," Nuff said.

Now, the bad news:

• **Lack of experience.** The Cards lost three starters to the NBA last season, and they're going to be tough to replace. Who will provide the moral leadership for this team? There are no, repeat no, seniors in Louisville. That could be detrimental in the clutch if nobody steps up and assumes the role of court leader.

• **The center position.** As with Tulane, the Cards are a team with no established center. Rozier was the latest in a line of distinguished (at least in college) centers, including Felton Spencer and Pervis Ellison. Now the Cardinals turn to ... Matt Simons. Either that, or Crum turns to Walker or even Osborne and plays with a small lineup.

**Schedule:** Let's see here — Kentucky, Notre Dame, Temple and UCLA at home; Georgia Tech, Michigan State, Massachusetts and DePaul on the road and a trip to the Great Alaska Shootout with Arizona and Oklahoma State — enough? The L.A. Clippers couldn't break even with this schedule.

**Outlook:** They look a lot like Tulane, actually, which means they also could win the Metro. But Crum always finds a way to win. And the Cardinals always find a way to get 20 wins, even if they had to play a team of Roman gods 25 times. Never, ever sleep on a Louisville team.

**Prediction:** 22-10, a close second in the Metro and an NCAA bid. Again.

#### UNC CHARLOTTE 49ers

**1993-94 record:** 16-13, 7-5 Metro (tied for second)

**Postseason:** NIT first round (lost to Duquesne 75-73)

##### Projected starting lineup:

SF Bobby Kummer (6-6, Jr.)  
PF Jarvis Lang (6-7, Sr.)  
C Jermain Parker (7-0, Sr.)  
SG Shanderic Downs (6-4, So.)  
PG Ponce James (6-2, Jr.)

First, the good news:

• **Lang.** The 49ers' sports information office is giving Lang a major push, sending a poster of the potential All-American and hyping him up as one of the best players to don a UNCC uniform since Cedric "Cornbread" Maxwell. There's a reason. Far and away the best player in the Metro, Lang, who has added 50 pounds of muscle since his freshman year, is a dynamicscorer who can leap through the roof. He can carry this team to the NCAAs.

• **Recruiting class:** Davis is leaving the 49ers program. This would be a mortal blow for UNCC, but with their recruits, the impact is softened. James, late of Central Arizona CC, will step as at the point guard for the departed Delano Johnson. DeMarco Johnson could muscle his way (figuratively and literally) into playing time. Three other transfers also could make an impact.

Now, the bad news:

• **The loss of Davis.** Unless the 49ers were to recruit Allen Iverson or Michael Jordan, losing Davis means dropping in production from the two-guard. Downs showed prodigal potential near the end of last season, but losing the top three-point shooter always hurts.

• **Size.** It's funny, but the only Metro team with a seven-footer (Parker) may have trouble. Lang once again will have to

play at the power forward position, even though he's a small forward by nature. Downs and Bruce Patterson, another transfer, are both listed as a guard/forward (even though they're both 6-4). And Parker's a pencil (7-0, but only 240 pounds) The point will be a prison for the 49ers.

**Schedule:** Blah. Like last year, the 49ers schedule a lot of regional teams (James Madison, East Carolina, UNC-Wilmington and a home-and-home with crosstown-rival Davidson). Duquesne and New Mexico are the only teams of note. The 49ers win the Metro "Hostess Cupcake of the Year" award.

**Outlook:** Before the preseason, some publications had the 49ers pegged as the Metro winner. The still may get there, but they'll have to do it without Davis, a former Freshman of the Year award winner. At any rate, they will be competitive and a postseason bid is likely. Where, nobody knows.

**Prediction:** 19-11, third place and a win in the NIT, although the NCAAs aren't out of the question.

#### VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES

**1993-94 record:** 18-10, 6-6 Metro (4th)

**Postseason:** None

##### Projected starting lineup:

SF Jim Jackson (6-5, Jr.)  
PF Ace Custis (6-7, So.)  
C Shawn Smith (6-6, Jr.)  
SG Damon Watlington (6-2, Jr.)  
PG Shawn Good (6-3, Jr.)

First, the good news:

• **Custis.** After redshirting his first season, Custis exploded in his freshman season, averaging 9.1 rebounds per game (fourth in the Metro and far away tops among first-year players). Custis gives this Hokie team needed muscle. He may be one of only three players (UNCC's Lang and Southern Mississippi's Glen Whisby being the others) to average double digits in both scoring and rebounding.

• **Bill Foster.** The man knows how to rebuild a program. He brought the basketball programs at Miami, UNC Charlotte and Clemson from the brink of virtual extinction. And, sure enough, he's saved the Hokies, who were cellar-dwellers just two years ago. This team isn't supremely talented (except for Custis and Smith), but they equal more than the sum of their parts.

Now, the bad news:

• **Size.** These Gobblers are small, indeed. Their starting center is 6-6 (that *wasn't* a misprint). Their tallest player is rarely used sophomore Brandon Price (6-10; 1.2 ppg in 9 games). The shooting guard is 6-2. They aren't going to push anyone out of the paint.

• **Guard depth.** The Hokies are listed as having four guards and only Good and Watlington were on the team last year. David Jackson and Myron Guillory probably won't be major players this year. An injury to one of the starters could knock the Hokies out of the Metro chase.

• **Jim Jackson's back.** Speaking of which, is he back? If he's back 100 percent, then the Hokies will breathe a sigh of relief. If he isn't all the way back, they'll have to use his twin brother David, who transferred from UNC-Ashville.

**Schedule:** Highlights include a neutral-site game with North Carolina, a home game with Xavier (Ohio) and road games with Marquette and West Virginia. They also will play in the San Juan Shootout with Illinois and Nebraska. Gimmes include home tilts with VMI, Delaware State and Florida Atlantic.

**Outlook:** It's fashionable to say that the Hokies will take the next step and contend for the Metro crown. However,

problems abound. Jackson must make a full comeback, and they must overcome their lack of size. They might do that but not with enough consistency to break into the top three.

**Prediction:** 15-16, fourth (barely) in the Metro and an outside shot at the NIT.

#### VCU RAMS

For the VCU preview, see page 8 in the basketball supplement.

**Schedule:** See page 4 for a synopsis of the non-conference schedule.

**Outlook:** The Rams are Factor X. With new faces everywhere, it will be tough to get a feel for how good or bad this team will be. That probably won't be made at least until the Metro schedule begins. The Rams conceivably could pass Virginia Tech or conceivably fall into the cellar. Nobody knows.

**Prediction:** 19-13 and fifth in the Metro. Due to ease of schedule, however, there won't be much of a postseason shot, although the NIT may be an outside possibility if the chips fall.

#### SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI GOLDEN EAGLES

**1993-94 record:** 15-15, 5-7 Metro (tied for fifth)

**Postseason:** NIT first round (lost to Clemson 96-85)

##### Projected starting lineup:

SF Maurice Morris (6-4, Jr.)  
PF Fred Williams (6-7, Sr.)  
C Glen Whisby (6-9, Sr.)  
SG Avery Thomas (6-1, Sr.)  
PG Damien Smith (5-10, So.)

First, the good news:

• **Whisby.** Averaging 14.2 ppg and 8.3 rpg, the most-heralded Golden Eagle this side of Clarence Weatherspoon will lead this team to whatever success they'll have. Expect Whisby to average a double-double in points and rebounds. Also expect him to be All-Metro at center.

• **Smith.** Hometown boy at the point guard, Smith is an underrated talent who really could begot with time. Betters shooting from the field (42.2 percent) would be nice.

Now, the bad news:

• **Who replaces Bernard Haslett?** Haslett led the Metro last year in scoring with 19.8 ppg and shot a sterling 39 percent from the three-point arc. That's something Thomas probably won't do.

• **Soft on the inside.** Their power forward averaged 4.1 rebounds per game. If Whisby is forced to do all the scoring and all the rebounds, he'll get tired quickly, and the Eagles will start losing.

**Schedule:** Auburn, Mississippi and Mississippi State are the highlights of the home slate. The Eagles hit the road to play Alabama and Memphis. A reasonable schedule.

**Outlook:** They could be better than this. With as many seniors in the starting lineup as they have, jitters won't be a problem. If Whisby gets help from his teammates, especially on the rebounding end, then the Eagles could actually be pretty good. But they just don't have consistent talent to contend.

**Prediction:** 12-15 and sixth in the Metro

#### SOUTH FLORIDA BULLS

**1993-94 record:** 10-17, 2-10 Metro (7th)

**Postseason:** None

##### Projected starting lineup:

SF Jesse Salters (6-6, Sr.)  
PF Jerome Robinson (6-7, Jr.)  
C Donzel Rush (6-9, Jr.)  
SG Greg Summers (6-4, Sr.)

PG Chucky Atkins (5-10, Jr.)

First, the good news:

• **Salters.** He's good enough to play for any team in the Metro. He's certainly the best player on this team. Salters gives the Bulls a steady shooting hand from the field, hitting 56 percent of his shots last year while averaging 13 ppg. He rebounds well, averaging 7.2 rpg last year. South Florida fans will miss him after this season, but they should enjoy his last tour of duty.

• **Experience.** The starting rotation consists of three seniors and two juniors. That doesn't show up in the stats, but it could result in a couple of losses being turned into wins. No guarantees, of course, but an experienced team is less likely to blow a late lead or falter on a comeback than a younger team.

Now, the bad news:

• **Size.** A common problem in the Metro, the Bulls are struggling with height problems. Atkins is the smallest starter in the league at 5-10, making it easier for opposing guards to post up on him. In the Metro media guide, Rush is the only listed center, meaning that a natural forward will take over at the pivot when Rush sits.

• **Depth.** There are names, yes, but of the returning non-starters, the highest ppg average is 2.0. Freshmen will have to step up quickly as reserves. An injury makes South Florida quite vulnerable.

• **Shooting.** Shooting at 41.7 percent from the field. That won't win often. They must improve on their shooting to have any shot at a good season this year. If they can't, they have to cut the opponents field-goal percentage to below 46.5 percent where they were last year.

**Schedule:** Florida State is the only big-time program on the non-conference schedule. Hartford and Florida Atlantic do the cupcake portion of the schedule. Don't look for any NCAA teams on this schedule.

**Outlook:** South Florida, like Virginia Tech, is a fashionable pick as an up-and-coming program. But in reality, things won't get too much better for the Bulls. If this is the best a three-senior starting lineup can do, things will get tough again in Tampa. The freshmen must make an impact. A weak schedule will inflate the Bulls' record.

**Prediction:** 13-14 and seventh in the Metro.

## Predicted All-Metro honors

### 1st Team

F Jarvis Lang  
F Jerald Honeycutt  
C Glen Whisby  
G DeJuan Wheat  
G LeVeldro Simmons

**Player of the Year:**  
Jarvis Lang

**Freshman of the Year:**  
Samaki Walker

**Coach of the Year:**  
Perry Clark



# RAM PAGE



## SCHEDULE

### MEN'S BASKETBALL

Nov. 25-27	at Big Isle Classic# (Illinois State, Iowa State, New Orleans, Hawaii-Hilo)
Nov. 30	LIBERTY
Dec. 3	ALABAMA
Dec. 5	at Tennessee-Martin
Dec. 10	at Florida International
Dec. 18	at Illinois State
Dec. 21	TENNESSEE STATE
Dec. 28	MOUNT ST. MARY'S
Dec. 31	RHODE ISLAND
Jan. 3	GEORGE MASON
Jan. 5	LOUISVILLE*
Jan. 7	SOUTH FLORIDA*
Jan. 11	at Richmond
Jan. 14	at Virginia Tech*
Jan. 18	at James Madison
Jan. 21	VIRGINIA UNION
Jan. 26	UNC CHARLOTTE*
Jan. 28	at South Florida*
Feb. 1	RADFORD
Feb. 4	SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI*
Feb. 6	vs. Old Dominion@
Feb. 11	at Tulane*
Feb. 15	vs. Old Dominion@
Feb. 18	at UNC Charlotte*
Feb. 23	VIRGINIA TECH*
Feb. 25	TULANE*
March 2	at Louisville*
March 10-12	at Metro Conference Tournament%

\* - Metro Conference game

# - Hilo, Hawaii

@ - Hampton, Va.

% - Louisville, Ky.

## MEN'S BASKETBALL

### STANDINGS

TEAM	METRO	OVERALL
	W L	W L
LOUISVILLE	10 2	28 6
UNC CHARLOTTE	7 5	16 13
TULANE	7 5	18 11
VIRGINIA TECH	6 6	18 10
VCU	5 7	14 13
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI	5 7	15 15
SOUTH FLORIDA	2 10	10 17

### 1993-94 INDIVIDUAL STATS

#### SCORING

PLAYER, TEAM	GP	FG	3P	FT	PTS	AVG
BERNARD HASLET, USM	30	203	112	75	593	19.8
CLIFFORD ROZIER, UL	34	247	0	122	616	18.1
KENDRICK WARREN, VCU	27	195	2	93	485	18.0
JARVIS LANG, UNCC	28	167	0	125	459	16.4
TYRON McCOY, VCU	27	137	39	111	424	15.7
JERALD HONEYCUTT, TU	29	161	37	85	444	15.3
DWAYNE MORTON, UL	34	182	47	108	519	15.3
KENNY HARRIS, VCU	27	130	90	62	412	15.3
GLEN WHISKEY, USM	30	162	0	100	424	14.1
GREG MINOR, UL	34	179	42	70	470	13.8

#### REBOUNDS

PLAYER, TEAM	GP	NO	AVG
KENDRICK WARREN, VCU	27	336	12.4
CLIFFORD ROZIER, UL	34	377	11.1
JARVIS LANG, UNCC	28	283	10.1
ACE GUSTIS, VPI	26	285	10.9
GLEN WHISKEY, USM	30	251	8.4
HERMAN MYERS, USM	30	241	8.0
JESSE SALTERS, USF	27	194	7.2
ROONEY ODOM, UNCC	29	202	7.0
JEROME ROBINSON, USF	27	182	6.7
JERALD HONEYCUTT, TU	29	194	6.7

#### ASSISTS

PLAYER, TEAM	GP	NO	AVG
KENNY HARRIS, VCU	27	164	6.1
DELANO JOHNSON, UNCC	29	166	5.7
JASON OSBORNE, UL	34	141	4.1
CHUCKY ATKINS, USF	26	105	4.0
PONTER WILLIAMS, TU	28	105	3.8
JAY PURCELL, VPI	28	91	3.3
DEJUAN WHEAT, UL	34	109	3.2
AVERY THOMAS, USM	30	87	2.9
TERENCE GIBSON, VCU	27	73	2.7
GREG MINOR, UL	34	85	2.5

## TOP 25

### CT POLL

Team	Rec.	Votes
1. Arkansas (8)	31-3	224
2. North Carolina (1)	28-7	208
3. UMass	28-7	207
4. Kentucky	27-7	186
5. UCLA	21-7	177
6. Arizona	29-6	165
7. Indiana	21-9	161
7a. Maryland	18-12	161
9. Kansas	27-8	138
10. Duke	28-6	131
11. Georgetown	19-12	128
12. Cincinnati	22-10	113
13. Michigan	24-8	109
14. Wisconsin	18-11	104
15. Virginia	18-13	103
16. Syracuse	23-7	95
17. Florida	29-8	92
18. Michigan State	20-12	74
19. UConn	29-5	62
20. Georgia Tech	16-13	46
20t. Oklahoma State	24-10	46
22. Memphis	13-16	44
23. Alabama	20-10	37
24. Villanova	20-12	27
25. Tulane	18-11	17

### Others receiving votes:

George Washington 13, Illinois 11, Wake Forest 8, New Mexico State 8, Louisville 7, Saint Louis 4, Minnesota 4, Penn 4, Purdue 3, St. Joseph's 2, Temple 2, Ohio 2, Mississippi State 1, Old Dominion 1.

### ATLANTIC COAST CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Duke	12 4 28 6
North Carolina	11 5 28 7
Wake Forest	9 7 21 12
Maryland	8 8 18 12
Virginia	8 8 18 13
Georgia Tech	7 9 16 13
Clemson	6 10 18 16
Florida State	6 10 13 17
N.C. State	5 11 11 19

### ATLANTIC 10 CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
UMass	14 2 28 7
Temple	12 4 23 8
GWU	8 8 18 12
West Virginia	8 8 17 12
Duquesne	8 8 17 12
Rhode Island	7 9 11 16
Rutgers	6 10 11 16
St. Joseph's (Pa.)	5 11 14 14
St. Bonaventure	4 12 10 17

### BIG EAST CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Connecticut	16 2 29 5
Syracuse	13 5 23 7
Boston College	11 7 23 11
Providence	10 8 20 10
Villanova	10 8 20 12
Georgetown	10 8 19 12
Seton Hall	8 10 17 13
Pittsburgh	7 11 13 14
St. John's	5 13 12 17
Miami	0 18 7 20

### BIG EIGHT CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Missouri	14 0 28 4
Oklahoma St.	10 4 24 10
Kansas	9 5 27 12
Nebraska	7 7 20 10
Oklahoma	6 8 15 13
Kansas St.	4 10 20 14
Iowa St.	4 10 14 13
Colorado	2 12 10 17

### BIG SKY CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Weber St.	10 4 20 10
Idaho St.	9 5 27 12
Idaho	5 9 18 10
Montana St.	8 6 16 11
Borg St.	7 7 17 13
Montana	6 8 19 13
Northern Arizona	6 8 13 13
E. Washington	0 14 5 21

### BIG SOUTH CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Towson St.	16 2 21 9
Campbell	14 4 20 9
Radford	13 5 20 8
Liberty	13 5 18 12
UNC-Greensboro	11 7 15 12
Charleston So.	8 10 9 18
Marshall-B.C.	6 12 6 21
Winthrop	5 13 4 23
UNC-Asheville	3 15 3 24
Coastal Carolina	1 17 15 11

### BIG TEN CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Purdue	14 4 29 5
Michigan	13 5 24 8
Indiana	12 6 21 9
Illinois	10 8 17 11
Minnesota	10 8 21 12
Michigan St.	10 8 20 12
Wisconsin	8 10 18 11
Ohio St.	6 12 13 14
Penn St.	6 12 13 14
Northwestern	5 13 15 14
Iowa	5 13 11 16

### BIG WEST CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
New Mexico St.	12 6 23 8
Utah St.	11 7 14 13
Long Beach St.	11 7 17 10
San Jose St.	11 7 15 12
UNLV	10 8 15 13
Pacific	10 8 17 14
UC Santa Barbara	9 9 13 17
Cal St. Fullerton	6 12 8 19
Nevada	6 12 11 17
UC Irvine	4 14 10 20

### COLONIAL CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Old Dominion	10 4 21 10
James Madison	10 4 20 10
UNC-Wilmington	9 5 18 10
Richmond	8 6 14 14
East Carolina	7 7 15 12
George Mason	5 9 10 17
American	5 9 8 19
William & Mary	2 12 4 23

### 1994 NCAA CHAMPION

#### UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

#### RAZORBACKS

## 1993-94 NCAA Division I CONFERENCE

### STANDINGS

#### GREAT MIDWEST CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Marquette	10 2 24 9
St. Louis	8 4 23 6
ALA-Birmingham	8 4 22 8
Cincinnati	7 5 22 10
DePaul	4 8 16 12
Memphis St.	4 8 13 16
Dayton	1 11 6 21

#### IVY LEAGUE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Pennsylvania	14 0 25 3
Princeton	11 3 18 8
Yale	7 7 10 16
Brown	6 8 12 14
Dartmouth	6 8 10 16
Harvard	5 9 9 17
Columbia	4 10 12 16
Cornell	3 11 8 18

#### METRO CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Louisville	10 2 28 8
UNC Charlotte	7 5 16 13
Tulane	8 6 14 13
Virginia Tech	6 6 18 10
VCU	5 7 14 13
Southern Miss.	5 7 15 15
South Florida	2 10 10 17

#### METRO ATLANTIC CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Cansius	12 2 22 7
Siena	10 4 25 8
Manhattan	10 4 19 11
St. Peter's	8 6 14 13
Loyola (Mo.)	6 8 17 13
Fairfield	4 10 8 19
Johns	3 11 20 8
Nagarsa	3 11 6 21

### 1994 FINAL FOUR

#### UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS

#### DUKE UNIVERSITY BLUE DEVILS

#### UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA WILDCATS

#### UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA GATORS

#### MID-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Ohio Univ.	14 4 25 8
Bowling Green	12 6 18 10
Miami (Ohio)	12 6 18 10
Ball St.	11 7 16 12
Toledo	10 8 15 12
Eastern Michigan	10 8 15 12
Kent	8 10 13 14
W. Michigan	7 11 14 14
Central Michigan	4 14 5 21
Akron	2 16 8 18

#### MID-CONTINENT CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Wichita State	15 3 27 7
Valparaiso	14 4 20 8
Illinois-Chicago	14 4 20 8
Cleveland St.	9 9 14 16
Wright St.	9 9 14 16
Eastern Illinois	7 11 12 15
Northern Illinois	7 11 10 17
Wisc.-Milwaukee	7 11 10 17
Western Illinois	5 13 7 20
Youngstown St.	3 15 5 21

#### MID-EASTERN CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Coppin St.	16 0 22 8
Mo.-East Shore	10 6 16 12
N. Carolina A&T	10 6 16 14
S. Carolina St.	10 6 16 13
Bethune-Cookman	8 8 9 17
Howard	9 9 10 17
Delaware St.	5 11 8 19
Morgan St.	4 12 8 21
Florida A&M	2 14 4 23

#### MIDWESTERN COLLEGIATE CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Xavier (Ohio)	8 2 22 8
Evansville	6 4 21 11
Butler	6 4 16 13
Detroit-Mercy	5 5 16 13
LaSalle	4 6 11 16
Loyola (Ill.)	1 9 8 19

### MISSOURI VALLEY CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Southern Illinois	16 4 23 7
Tulsa	16 4 23 8
Bradley	15 5 23 8
Illinois St.	12 7 16 11
Northern Iowa	12 8 16 13
SW Missouri St.	7 12 12 15
Wichita St.	6 13 9 18
Drake	6 13 11 16
Oregon	3 15 7 22
Indiana St.	3 15 4 22

### NORTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE

CONF.	OVERALL
W L	W L
Drexel	12 2 25 5
Maine	11 3 20 9
Hartford	9 5 16 12
New Hampshire	8 6 15 13
Delaware	7 7 14 13
Boston Univ.	4 10 11 16
Vermont	3 11 12 15
Northeastern	2 12 5 22

### OHIO VALLEY CONFERENCE

	CONF.		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
MURRAY ST.	15	1	23	6
TENNESSEE ST.	12	4	19	12
AUSTIN PEAY	10	6	11	16
E. KENTUCKY	9	7	13	14
MOREHEAD ST.	8	8	14	14
SE MISSOURI ST.	5	11	10	17
TENNESSEE TECH	5	11	10	21
MIDDLE TENN. ST.	5	11	8	19
UT-MARTIN	3	13	5	22



## Profiles

*After three years, Tyron McCoy enters his senior season with the VCU Rams as the sole returning starter. In this profile, McCoy reflects on his past, the state of the current team, his responsibilities as a morale leader and a possible future in professional basketball.*

### Tyron McCoy

**Forward. Guard, 6-5, 215 pounds,  
Senior, Bethune, S.C.**

**Brian J. French**  
CT SPORTS EDITOR

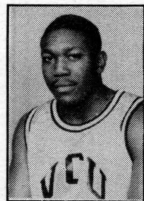
He's remained the safe harbor in the turbulent sea that has been VCU basketball.

He's remained the constant, the identified factor and maybe the whole of the program in microcosm.

In short, he is Tyron McCoy.

From a fresh-faced backup to Eric Atkins when joining the Rams in 1991, to a consistent performer in 1992, a prolific scorer last year and, as this season draws near, a team leader, McCoy has stayed the same person.

As most seniors tend to do, McCoy has thought about his past, as well as his future.



#### Real season begins Friday

But the here and now begins Friday in Hilo, Hawaii. And the here and now, McCoy said, is better than many have been led to believe.

"I feel pretty good about this team," said McCoy, who likely will start the season as the starting shooting guard after being moved from his small-forward position of the previous three years.

"This team's been working hard all preseason," he said. McCoy was a key witness to the collapse of last year's Rams team.

That squad, projected as a top 30 team by some publications, struggled to stay above .500 at the end and failed to make the NIT, much less the NCAAAs as many had dared to dream.

"The problem with last year's team is that we took a lot for granted," McCoy said.

And this year's squad, picked by those same prognosticators to finish at the bottom of the soon-to-be-defunct Metro?

"This year (unlike last year), we're working hard all the time," McCoy said. "Everyone out here is giving 110 percent."

"Can this team compete? I think so. I feel that we have the talent to compete. What we need to work on the most is execution."

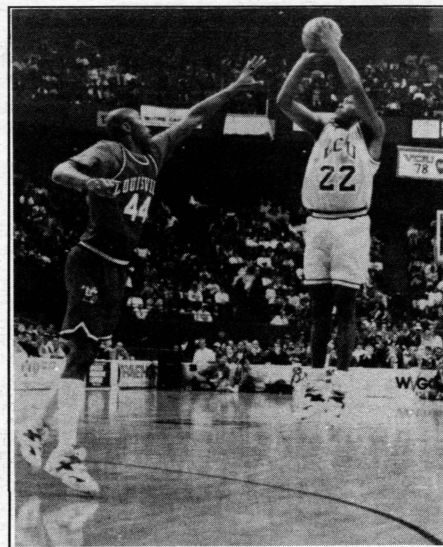
"When we start playing together and get comfortable with one another, we'll get better. And that's the key to competing."

#### McCoy pegged as morale leader

Whether he will admit to it or not, McCoy will be counted on heavily by the coaching staff for emotional leadership during the course of the season.

VCU head coach Sonny Smith said in the VCU media guide: "Tyron is going to have to be a leader because he is the only returning player with some experience and the only one to know what it is like to be thrown into the fire in a league as tough as the Metro."

But for the soft-spoken McCoy, actions speak louder than words.



**SHOOTER'S ROLL** — VCU's Tyron McCoy puts up a three-point shot against Louisville last season.

"I don't see myself as someone who would be a vocal leader, but rather as a person who leads by example," McCoy said.

"I want to do things that, in turn, will make other people want to do something."

McCoy noted that his greatest personal achievement was, in actuality, a team effort.

"For me, my greatest personal moment was when we went to the NIT (in the 1992-93 season)," McCoy said.

"Everyone always wants to go to the postseason."

#### Doesn't think about the pros

Regardless of what happens during the upcoming season, McCoy will likely have fond memories of his stay in Richmond.

But would he also have a vision of a future in pro basketball?

"It's a goal," McCoy admitted, "but I know my standing. And right now, I don't think I'm quite there yet. One day, it might be possible, but I don't think about it very often."

### Keith Davis

**Guard, 6-4, 185 lbs.,  
Sophomore, Washington, D.C.**

**Brian W. Whitson**  
CT SPORTS EDITOR

Some players want to be the star of every game. Some players want to take the majority of the shots during the course of a season. Sophomore point guard Keith Davis wants to be the utility man for this year's VCU Rams basketball team.

Davis, 6-4, 185 pounds, learned that a player doesn't need to carry the scoring load to be an effective point guard.

"I want to step it up and be a leader on defense, make sure everybody is in the right place and get a number of assists," Davis said. "I don't want to push and try to do the scoring. Sherman and those guys can handle that."

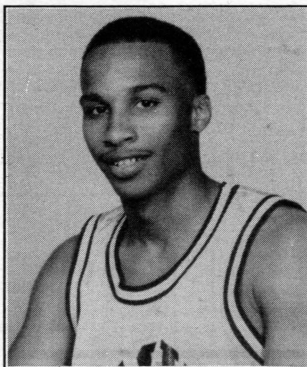
He looks to compete for the the starting one-guard position with teammate Sherman Hamilton, but said there is no hostility between the two players.

"He (head coach Sonny Smith) is just trying to bring out the best in both of us," Davis said. "It doesn't matter who starts because we know we have someone solid coming in off the bench."

"We leave any competition on the court and it doesn't effect us as friends."

Davis, who spent last season on the bench observing Kenny Harris break the season record for most three pointers, said that this year's squad is trying to get a since of unity.

"There is no argument that we're together," Davis said. "It's no longer a senior-junior thing. We're like a family."



"When we win we're together and when we lose we're together. Last year most of the scoring was left up to Kendrick (Warren) and Kenny (Harris). We're more enthused on the court."

He added that the team doesn't look at the preseason predictions as valid opinion, and that they're excited to prove the critics wrong.

"We're young and people don't know what to expect," he said. "They picked us last, and I look forward to prove everybody wrong."

And what are Davis' goals for the season?

"To lead the league in assists and just be the spark on the team," he said. "I want the team to finish in the top three of the conference and have a chance at postseason play."

### David Chaney

**Guard, 6-5, 210 pounds  
Sophomore, Temple Hills, Md.**

As a freshman Chaney saw limited playing time.

Agood athlete he spent most of last season adapting to the college game.

Chaney is an excellent leaper who runs the floor well. He worked hard during the off-season to make his jumpshot more consistent. Chaney hopes to compete for more playing time this season.

Last season he appeared in six games as a reserve.

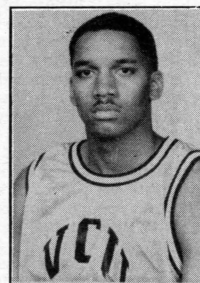
He scored four points, pulled down two rebounds and had an assist in seven minutes on the year. Chaney scored all four of his points in two minutes vs. Buffalo, connecting on both of his field goal attempts, while pulling down an offensive rebound.

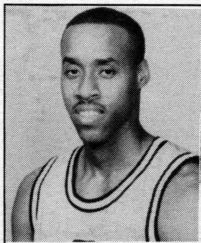
His only assist came against UTEP.

As a senior in high school he averaged 21.6 points, 10 rebounds and 4 assists, while shooting 56 percent from the field, 83 percent from the foul line and 40 percent from three-point range.

While at Canturbury Prep in Accokeek, Md., he enjoyed career highs of 33 points, 15 rebounds and 8 assists.

This past summer he played on the same team as Johnny Newman of the New Jersey Nets in the Richmond Metropolitan Summer League.





## Sherman Hamilton

Guard, 6-1, 180 pounds  
Sophomore-T, Malton, Ontario

**Brian W. Whitson**  
CT SPORTS EDITOR

With the role players from last year's squad gone, who will be the surprise of this season's VCU men's basketball team? One name comes to mind — Sherman Hamilton.

Hamilton, 6-1, 180 pounds, is competing with Keith Davis for the point guard spot vacated by Kenny Harris. A transfer from Florida Tech, where he earned Sunshine State Conference Freshman of the Year and second team All-Conference honors, Hamilton sat out last season.

He said the point-guard competition is making both players work harder.

"Time is being split between Keith and myself," Hamilton said. "It makes you want to work harder during practice."

Hamilton, counted on to fill the scoring gap left behind by Harris, said that other aspects concern him the most.

"I think I bring a defensive spark, leadership and I want to try and run things from a point-guard position," he said.

At Florida Tech, Hamilton was the second-leading scorer for the Panthers at 14.8 points per game, while adding 5.8 rebounds, 3 steals, 2.8 assists and 35 blocked shots.

He said this year's team will provide a different look than Rams' teams of the past.

"I think we have more depth," he said. "We're a little more athletic, and we have more defensive intensity. As a whole, we're more consistent."

A native of Malton, Canada, where he attended Westwood Secondary School, Hamilton decided to work on basketball from an early age.

"I started playing basketball around grade six, but during my sophomore year in high school I decided to focus on it," he said.

And how is head coach Sonny Smith different from coaches he's experienced in the past?

"He's much more vocal and up front about what he wants," Hamilton said. "The biggest thing he gives is honesty, you know exactly where you stand and what you need to improve on. He's more of a player coach."

What does Hamilton expect from this year's squad?

"My goal as a team is to win the Metro Conference and improve on last year's record," he said. "Individually, I want to keep my defensive intensity up, keep my turnovers down and get my assists up. Pretty much keep a consistency about the team."

## George Byrd

Forward/Center, 6-8, 265 pounds  
Sophomore, Gainesville, Fla.

**Brian W. Whitson**  
CT SPORTS EDITOR

If your thinking of driving through the paint this season against the VCU men's basketball team, expect to meet up with George Byrd along the way.

The sophomore center from Gainesville, Fla., is penciled in as the starter when VCU kicks off its season against Hawaii in the Big Isle Invitational.

The second-year player is coming back from a broken foot suffered against Tulane last season.

In the nine games prior to his injury, Byrd averaged 6.6 points and 5.9 rebounds in 19.2 minutes per game.

"My foot is fine, but I've been having problems with my knees. They've been buckling on me when I go up for a rebound," he said.

This season he will be counted on to anchor the defense, grab down as many

rebounds as he can and get some garbage shots if he can.

"The pressure is going to be on me to play solid defense and rebound effectively," Byrd said. "I'm going to be the garbage man. I'll get most most of my points from fighting and little short passes when I'm open."

With the loss of last year's star Kendrick Warren, who led the conference with 12.4 rebounds a game, this year's team will be looking for Byrd to pick up the slack.

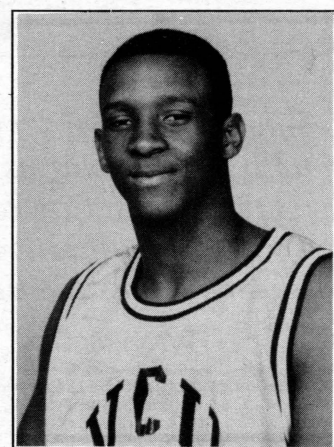
"We're real pleased with the way George has come along this year," said head coach Sonny Smith.

"Last year we had Kendrick Warren and Kenny Harris carry most of the load," Byrd said.

"This year we're going to spread it out a little." Among the big men VCU will be facing, Byrd has a few he's looking forward to battling.

"I'm looking forward to playing Jarvis Lang from UNC Charlotte," he said, adding that Lang is a great competitor. "I'm also looking forward to playing South Florida and Tulane because I know a lot of people there."

Byrd will get some breathing room at center when Wichita State transfer John Smith is allowed to play. Because of NCAA



regulations, Smith is ineligible until 24 hours after the last exam of this semester.

"John is a pure scorer," Byrd said. "I'm not, so he will be able to pick up my scoring when starts to play."

## Ivan Chappell

Forward/Guard, 6-6, 215 pounds  
Junior-T, Chesapeake

**Bill Buckman**  
CT STAFF WRITER

Last year VCU's basketball program was expected to win 20 games and compete in postseason play.

Instead they finished 14-13 and didn't make it out of the first round of the Metro Conference Tournament.

This year one needs a score card to tell the players apart, and many preseason publications are picking the team to finish last in the Metro Conference.

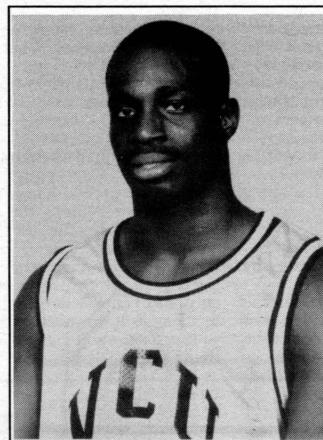
Tell that to Ivan Chappell.

Starting at small forward for the Rams, he's ready to prove the critics wrong.

"I don't think we're going to finish last like people predict us to be," Chappell said. "We'll just have to wait and see."

The transfer student from Otero Junior College knows how to win. He led Otero to a 22-7 record and its first-ever South Sub-Region Conference title last year.

He averaged 18.1 points, 4.4 rebounds,



2.2 assists and earned All-Region and team MVP honors.

But now he has a new challenge — the Metro Conference.

"I didn't want to go to the WAC (West-

ern Athletic Conference) because I think there is better play in this league," Chappell said.

The Chesapeake native also liked the idea of playing in a conference close to home.

"It's closer to home and I want my mom to check out my games," he added.

Head coach Sonny Smith describes Chappell as a "go-to guy" and a "big-time" scorer.

"When you deal with junior college transfers some can move in right away and others need a year to adjust," Smith said. "Ivan was able to move in right away."

Chappell started every game for Otero the past two years, which will help his transition to his starting role at VCU.

"I bring an extra pair of shoes and about 210 pounds so Tyron won't have to carry the load," Chappell said. "I'm going to try to help him on rebounding and defense."

In addition to his defensive skills, the 6-6 junior possesses a fine jump shot and good all-around offensive skills. At Otero he posted a high-scoring game of 38 points as a sophomore and 40 points as a freshman.

He finished his career there as the third leading scorer in school history.

## Marlow Talley

Forward, 6-8, 230 pounds  
Junior-T, Sterling

**Matthew Dobias**  
CT SENIOR WRITER

When you watch Marlow Talley play the forward position one thing comes to mind — star potential.

He has the ability to make an impact during the next two years.

The 6-7, 230-pound junior transfer from Cleveland State College in Tennessee runs the court with the type of confidence that was most closely associated with the likes of Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson.

And as for the skills, well — he's got them as well.

A big man that runs the floor well and plays a strong defense, Talley also can take you apart offensively.

He'll provide depth at both power for-

ward positions.

Not only a capable three-point shooter, but he also has the skills to play underneath.

Last year at Cleveland State Talley posted averages of 18.2 points, 8.4 rebounds and 1.5 assists.

His play on the court earned All-Eastern Division honors in the Tennessee Junior College Athletic Association.

The junior also earned him a spot on the First Team All-State and First Team All-Region lists.

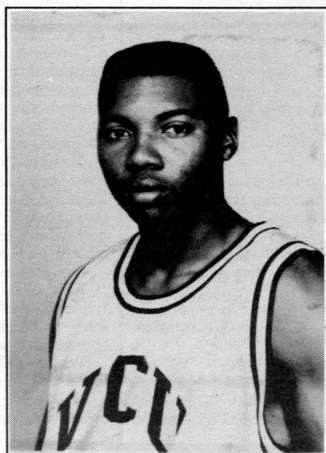
Talley shot 63.8 percent from the field and 59.3 percent from the free-throw line.

"We are just tickled to death with Talley," VCU head coach Sonny Smith said.

"We think his game is totally ahead of him. He's going to be a good player."

The Sterling native and criminal justice major played prep ball at Broad Run High School.

Talley played for head coach L.J. Kilby, who lettered for VCU during the 1969-70 season under Benny Does.





## Bernard Hopkins

Forward, 6-7, 250 pounds  
Junior-T, Baltimore

**Gage Harter**  
CT EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Sometimes Bernard Hopkins thinks he's a point guard. He pulls down rebounds and off he goes — leading the break. Funny though because Hopkins stands 6-7 and weighs 250 pounds.

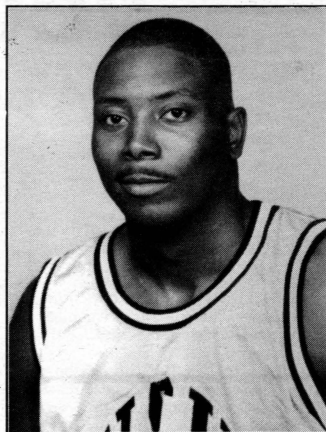
In the Metro Conference, players with Hopkins' size are a necessity. The conference has gained a reputation for bangers and has produced some of the best. Clarence Weatherspoon and Clifford Rozier are first-rounders who earned player of the year awards more because of bulk and strength than quickness or finesse.

For VCU, Hopkins plays like a typical Metro wide-body but his teammates are astounded by his smooth ball-handling skills.

"Yeah, he can handle the ball," said junior John Smith, also another banger at 6-8 and 270 pounds. "He's the only big man with permission to run with it anytime he sees an opening."

Assistant coach Eddie Webb agreed with Smith and said, "Our guards know when he gets a rebound to go out and run the break. They know he can bring the ball up court."

Hopkins demonstrated those all-around abilities against JUCO competition. At Hagerstown (Md.) Junior College he led the team to a 29-6 record. He was ranked second best JUCO power forward by "The Sporting News" entering last season. The 21 year old also set school records by averaging 23.3 points, 12.3 rebounds and shot 65.8 percent from the field. If that wasn't



enough, he added 2.2 steals, 1.9 assists and 1.1 blocked shots all in just 28.4 minutes per game.

And make no mistake, Hopkins said he's ready to face Division I competition, and he expects to play at the same level.

"I've played basketball all my life," Hopkins said. "I've played against the Corliss Williamsons, the Dante Brights, the Keith Booths. Coming out of Baltimore, I've played against the best."

This season, Hopkins just wants to win. He said there's no pressure on him or his teammates because the team is predicted last in many major polls.

"Hey, if our five executives and the other team doesn't, I don't care if it's VCU vs. Michigan, we're going to win," Hopkins said. "I don't care if I score, as long as we win."

## Joe Martin

Guard, 6-2, 185 pounds  
Freshman, Hamilton, Ontario

**Coveh Solaimani**  
CT STAFF WRITER

Freshman Joe Martin has ventured away from the "Land of Hockey" to come to Richmond to play basketball for VCU. Martin left his family and friends behind in Hamilton, Ontario, to play for the Rams.

Martin chose VCU for a number of reasons, however, the kindness of the coaching staff and the Rams players was key to his decision, he said.

"When I visited VCU, the coaches and the players were real nice to me," Martin said, adding that he felt this was the best situation for him.

In high school he led his team, Cathedral High, to a 38-4 record and a No. 1 ranking in Canada. He averaged 21.5 points, 7 assists and 6.5 rebounds a game last season. He also led his team in blocked shots.

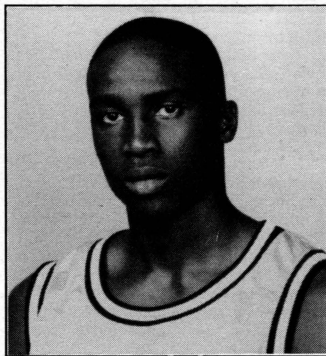
Dickerson was the recipient of several awards — Golden Horseshoe Athletic Conference MVP, Tournament MVP at the Waterloo Classic and at the All-Ontario Catholic Schools Tournament.

Martin believes that his seasoning at Cathedral will aid him here.

"I feel that my experiences will help me a lot," he said, noting that his coach's intensity and the level of competition he faced has helped prepare him for VCU.

Martin is considered an excellent leaper with a good jump shot and quality ball handling skills.

With Tyron McCoy manning the shoot-



ing-guard spot for the Rams, Martin realizes that playing time could be scarce this season.

"As a freshman I have a lot to learn," he said. "I just want to contribute any way I can."

Even though Hamilton and Richmond are in two separate countries, the 6-2 guard has adjusted well to his new surroundings.

"I haven't seen a lot of Richmond because I've been so busy with basketball, but it's a big city just like home," he said.

Although he currently is undecided on his major, Martin lists teaching as a possible occupation for himself after graduation because he would have the opportunity to work with an abundance of people.

Martin has high hopes for himself and the VCU team during the next four years.

He would like to become a starter and help the Rams win the Metro Conference title.

Yet, he has even bigger dreams for the Rams.

"I'd like to win the NCAA title!" he said.

## John Smith

Center, 6-8, 270 pounds,  
Junior-T, Norman, Okla.

**Brian J. French**  
CT SPORTS EDITOR

Flannery O'Connor wrote the widely-known short story "A Good Man is Hard to Find."

Sonny Smith rewrote the classic to read "A Good Big Man is Hard to Find."

Ever since he first took the VCU helm, Smith has been on the lookout for a wide-body center, someone to clear the lane for the scorers.

On Dec. 21, one of the fruits of his labor will make his debut in a Rams uniform. John Smith, enter stage right.

Smith, a 6-8 center who weighs in at 270 pounds, will make his first VCU appearance against Tennessee State.

And for a Rams team that always needs another big presence, it isn't a moment too soon.

Of course, Smith won't be given the starting center job on a silver platter. But then, he doesn't want the job in the fashion.

"I wouldn't want that to happen that way," Smith said. "George (Byrd) has been playing very well, and he deserves to be the starting center right now."

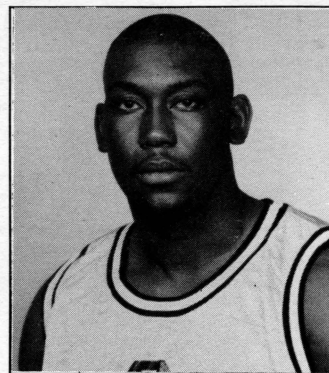
For Smith, the road to Richmond has been paved with anything but gold.

He began his collegiate career at Utah State, but stayed there only briefly.

"I didn't like it very much out there," Smith said.

From there, he transferred to Wichita State, where he averaged 12.8 points per game and 7.4 rebounds per game, placing him on the All-Missouri Valley Conference Newcomer team.

But then the clouds began to roll in. Smith was accused of taking money and



a car from Shockers boosters. He left the Wichita State program after the first semester of the 1993-94 season.

Regardless of whether there were NCAA rules infractions committed, Smith admits that there will be a stigma attached to him because of the incident.

"I know that when they talk about me, they'll always say something about Wichita State in the same sentence," Smith said. "But I never let it bother me. And I won't let it bother me now."

So why did Smith choose VCU? Apparently, his connections with Tyron McCoy and Terrence Gibson had a great deal to do with his decision.

"I knew both Tyron and Terrence," Smith said. "I've played with Tyron and against Terrence."

Which brings Smith to VCU. After starting at the center with Wichita State, would Smith really be content playing the part of second-string center?

Replied Smith: "Right now, the way the team is (doing), I wouldn't mind backing him (Byrd) up."

## Will Dickerson

Forward, 6-5, 215 pounds  
Sophomore, Richmond

**Coveh Solaimani**  
CT STAFF WRITER

Sophomore walk-on Will Dickerson finally has found a home at VCU after playing the role of traveling man during his high school years.

During high school, Dickerson went to four different schools before winding up at Henrico High. He averaged 9 points per game that at Henrico.

Although his high school stats aren't the numbers of a star player, Dickerson believed that he could play basketball here.

"My freshman year I came to summer school and there were three other freshman who were on the team there," he said. "We got to know each other real good over the summer and I felt that I could play with them."

Dickerson's friends on the team were convinced he could play.

"They told coach about me and he told

me to come on out," Dickerson said.

After watching from the bench all last season, Dickerson thought about transferring to a junior college so he could gain some experience.

"Last year I wanted to transfer to a junior college because they (VCU coaching staff) were telling me that would help my game more," he said, adding that the two colleges he looked at didn't fit his style.

On the strength of a 10-point, three-rebound night against the Converse All-Stars, Dickerson has made the travel squad this season and will fly to Hawaii for the Big Isle Invitational.

Smith said that he expects Dickerson to see some playing time in the middle.

"Being a forward and a center I can get in and give the other guys a break or a quick breather," Dickerson said.

Dickerson is an athlete with tremendous leaping ability. Anonymous sources talked of a time when they saw him leap over a guy standing vertical.

During his remaining three years at VCU, Dickerson has his sights on improving his game so he can contribute to the team on a regular basis.

"I just want to get better so I can become a player," Dickerson said.

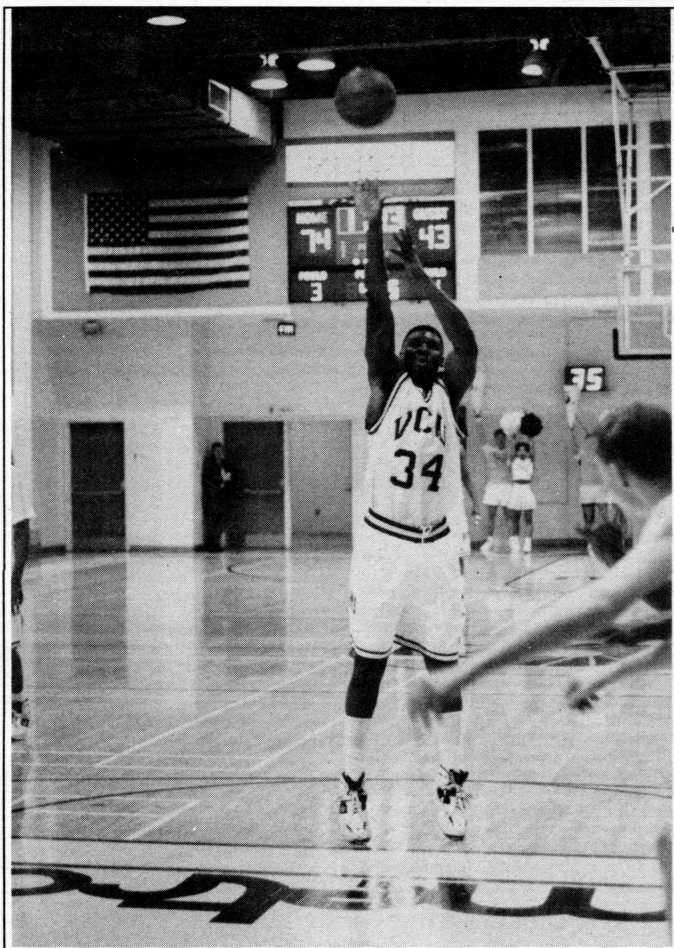
## Jamal Gladden

Guard, 6-4, 205 pounds  
Freshman, Lorain, Ohio

The Rams scored big when they signed Jamal Gladden, the 6-4, 205-pound guard out of Lorain, Ohio.

Gladden has been groomed to be the "next big thing" for VCU, bringing to the Rams a high school resume that suggests great things to come.

As a senior at Lorain Admiral King High School, Gladden was named the Ohio High School Coaches Player of the Year. His team posted a 19-6 record and was sectional and district champions. During this run, Gladden averaged 22.0 points, 9.0 rebounds and 4.0 assists and steals on his way to garnering All-District and team MVP honors. When he closed his high school career, he was the school's all-time leading scorer and rebounder.



Bill Buckman/Commonwealth Times

**NEWCOMER** — Marlow Talley, 6-7 and 230 pounds, hopes to provide depth for the Rams at both forward positions.

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Sonny Smith	Head Coach
Eddie Webb	Asst. Coach
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Tyrone Beaman	Asst. Coach

### Team Managers

Ryan Barnes
Bryan DelCorso
Jay Harris
Blanda Wolfe

# VCU RAMS:

## A preview of the 1

**Brian W. Whitson**  
CT SPORTS EDITOR

### 1993-94 Season Review

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Some of the other highlights of the season:

- Kenny Harris set a school record with 90 three-point field goals in one season, which included a string of 17 consecutive games with at least three or more treys.

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- Warren again left his mark on VCU when he led the Metro and placed fifth in the nation with 12.4 rebounds per game.

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Losing seven of its last 10 games, VCU was all but out of contention for the NCAA Tournament, but consecutive wins could have propelled the team into the National Invitational Tournament. Not exactly the dance Smith envisioned at the start of the season, VCU fans would accept any tourney beyond the Metro.

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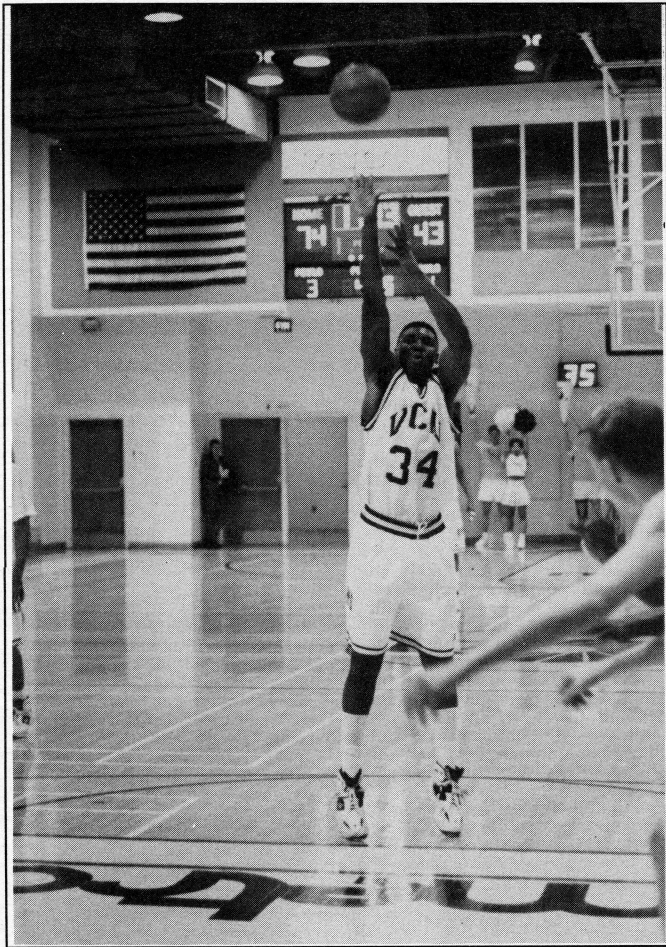
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He's a good shooter with long range and has the ability to take the ball strong to the basket.

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### Coaches Box

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To understand the full range of experience that VCU head coach Charles "Sonny" Smith brings to the Rams, you need to see him during the team's practices.

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Entering his 19th season as a head coach and his sixth season at VCU, Smith has recruited a team that is big on skills but short on experience.

"Well, we got these players so we can try to dish out some of the physical play we weren't able to do a year ago," Smith said about this season's recruiting class. "People pushed us around all over the place last year and I don't think they'll be able to do that this year."

But Smith is in his element, both as an educator and as a head coach, when it comes to developing the talents of young players. The coach has surrounded himself with the game of basketball since his early days as a player at Holmes Junior College and Milligan College and later through his six seasons in the semipro circuit. He took his experience to East Tennessee State in 1976 as head coach, and it was there that his reputation began to grow.

Smith has the ability to turn slumping programs around and point them in a winning direction. He did it at East Tennessee State and later at Auburn and, most recently, he has done it at VCU.

Smith said he is not ready to dismiss this season as a rebuilding year.

"I would like to have the luxury to say this is a rebuilding year," he said. "But the disappointment of last year, even though it was a winning season, put the pressure on us to win."

Returning to the Rams are a tested veteran staff of assistant coaches.

Eddie Webb enters his 10th season with VCU and his 20th overall as an assistant. With a resume that boasts winning seasons at Randolph-Macon, Wyoming and Old Dominion, Webb has been able to concentrate on recruiting and game coaching.

A fixture on the Rams bench since 1988, Mike Ellis learned the game from North Carolina's Dean Smith, but his honed his skills under Sonny Smith. Ellis, known as an excellent basketball strategist, also is responsible for scouting the Rams' opponents and developing individual game plans.

Helping Ellis with VCU's recruiting duties is Tyrone Beaman, an assistant coach with the Ram's since 1992. The former Tennessee Volunteer brings with him the reputation for being a relentless worker and a top-notch recruiter.



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# Season of new faces

## 4-95 men's basketball season

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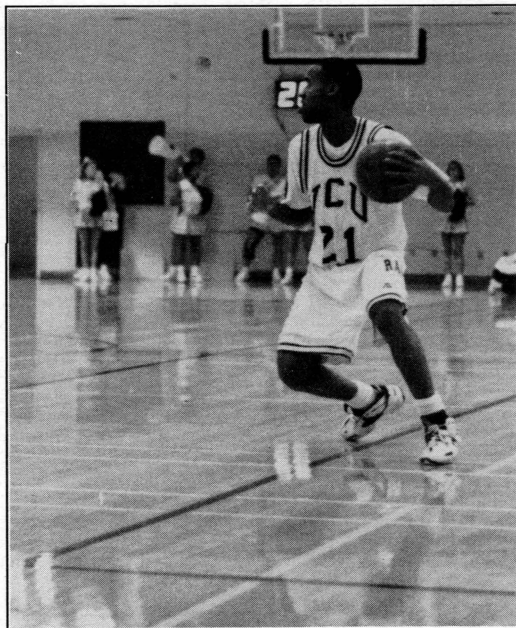
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It's in the gym where Smith, usually soft spoken off the court, asserts himself. Directing his players, knowing at all times where they should be and where the ball is going, Smith's voice can be heard above the regular clatter that a practice can bring. There is a rhythm in his voice — low and steady — that is reminiscent of an auctioneer's. And, of course, the Southern accent helps.



Sonny Smith

Entering his 19th season as a head coach and his sixth season at VCU, Smith has recruited a team that is big on skills but short on experience.

"Well, we got these players so we can try to dish out some of the physical play we weren't able to do a year ago," Smith said about this season's recruiting class. "People pushed us around all over the place last year and I don't think they'll be able to do that this year."

But Smith is in his element, both as an educator and as a head coach, when it comes to developing the talents of young players. The coach has surrounded himself with the game of basketball since his early days as a player at Holmes Junior College and Milligan College and later through his six seasons in the semipro circuit. He took his experience to East Tennessee State in 1976 as head coach, and it was there that his reputation began to grow.

Smith has the ability to turn slumping programs around and point them in a winning direction. He did it at East Tennessee State and later at Auburn and, most recently, he has done it at VCU.

Smith said he is not ready to dismiss this season as a rebuilding year.

"I would like to have the luxury to say this is a rebuilding year," he said. "But the disappointment of last year, even though it was a winning season, put the pressure on us to win."

Returning to the Rams are a tested veteran staff of assistant coaches.

Eddie Webb enters his 10th season with VCU and his 20th overall as an assistant. With a resume that boasts winning seasons at Randolph-Macon, Wyoming and Old Dominion, Webb has been able to concentrate on recruiting and game coaching.

A fixture on the Rams bench since 1988, Mike Ellis learned the game from North Carolina's Dean Smith, but has honed his skills under Sonny Smith. Ellis, known as an excellent basketball strategist, also is responsible for scouting the Rams' opponents and developing individual game plans.

Helping Ellis with VCU's recruiting duties is Tyrone Beaman, an assistant coach with the Ram's since 1992. The former Tennessee Volunteer brings with him the reputation for being a relentless worker and a top-notch recruiter.



# Rams change latitudes, attitudes against non-conference rivals

**Brett Scott**  
CT STAFF WRITER

Whether the VCU basketball team likes musician Jimmy Buffett, they should be familiar with his song "Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes." The Rams will play five teams for the first time in school history, with the possibility of playing two more in the Big Isle Invitational in Hawaii.

On the surface, VCU's non-conference schedule doesn't appear to be too tough. The Rams play Mount St. Mary's and Tennessee-Martin, two programs that wouldn't exactly give many Division III teams nightmares.

But they will meet Liberty, a squad that made the NCAA's last season, a first in school history; Alabama, a preseason top 25 selection; James Madison and Old Dominion, teams that are always tough despite the Colonial Athletic Conference schedule.

Let's not forget the intracity game with Virginia Union, a team that went 26-3 last season. These games and others should make for an exciting basketball season.

If VCU plays well against its non-conference foes and gains some momentum heading into the meat of their conference play, the Rams could be whistling a happy tune after all.

Here's a look at the team by team breakdown.

## BIG ISLE INVITATIONAL

Site: Hilo, Hawaii

Teams: New Orleans vs. Northern Illinois, Iowa State vs. Illinois State, Purdue vs. Niagara, VCU vs. Hawaii at Hilo

The Rams have the luxury of opening the season in Hawaii.

## LIBERTY

Site: Coliseum

Date: Nov. 30

Conference: Big South

Last season: 18-12

Series record: VCU leads 3-0

Last meeting: Dec. 4, 1993, VCU won 93-68 in Lynchburg

The Flames should be able to keep their momentum from their surprise NCAA appearance going into the 1994-95 season. Leading scorer Matt Hildebrand, who contributed 18 points per game, is gone, but Liberty's best-ever recruiting class from two years ago is turning it on. Peter Aluma, 6-10, could emerge as one of the best inside players in the Big South.

## ALABAMA

Site: Coliseum

Date: Dec. 3

Conference: SEC

Last season: 20-10

Series record: Alabama leads 1-0

Only meeting: March 17, 1985, Alabama won 63-59 in second round of NCAA Tournament in Albuquerque, N.M.

The Crimson Tide likely could be the toughest opponent the Rams face this season. Senior Jamal Faulkner leads all returning players with 13.5 ppg. The slashing swing man has the potential to break the game open. Their only real weakness is their outside shooting. Guards Artie Griffin and Marvin Orange need to produce from the perimeter if Alabama wants to contend for the SEC West. Coach David

Hobbs, in his third season with the Tide, is a 1971 graduate of VCU.

## TENNESSEE-MARTIN

Site: at Tennessee-Martin

Date: Dec. 5

Conference: Ohio Valley

Last season: 5-22

Series record: first meeting

This team looks to finish in the bottom of the Ohio Valley Conference, but they do feature one premier player — DeWayne Powell (16.5 ppg). Powell is one of the top guards in the conference and could help make some of the Pacers games interesting. The team has six newcomers this year, the most interesting should be freshman Robin Cude, who lit up the scoreboard for Obion Central High.

## FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL

Site: Miami

Date: Dec. 10

Conference: Trans America Athletic

Last season: 11-16

Series record: first meeting

The Golden Panthers will bring in seven new faces to a team that lost five of their seven top scorers from a year ago. Senior forward James Mazyck, who was second on the team in scoring (15.3 ppg) and rebounding (6.7 rpg), looks to carry much of the load. Five JUCO transfers will be counted on to pick up the slack left from the departed seniors.

## ILLINOIS STATE

Site: Norman, Ill.

Date: Dec. 18

Conference: Missouri Valley

Last season: 16-11

Series record: VCU leads 2-0

Last meeting: Nov. 23, 1991, VCU won 92-66 in Richmond

The Redbirds will try to rebuild on a team that lost three of its top scorers from a year ago. Only David Cason, last season's assist leader, returns from a starting lineup that finished 16-11. Freshmen Jamar Smiley and Kenny Wright both were highly touted as high school players and should see some quality minutes.

## TENNESSEE STATE

Site: Coliseum

Date: Dec. 21

Conference: Ohio Valley

Last season: 19-12

Series record: first meeting

The Tigers are the two-time defending champions of the Ohio Valley, but the loss of center Carlos Rogers will make things harder for a three-peat. Forward Monty Wilson returns from a pair of wrist injuries that kept him out of all but four games. The OVC Freshman of the Year two seasons ago, Wilson broke his wrist in preseason and then cracked it again in a midseason practice. If Wilson returns to his prior form, the Tigers could make a run at the conference title. Senior point guard Tim Horton has started every game since his arrival and should provide enough leadership on the court.

## MOUNT ST. MARY'S

Site: Coliseum

Date: Dec. 28

Conference: Northeast

Last season: 14-14

Series record: VCU leads 2-0

Last meeting: Feb. 2, 1972, VCU won 95-65 at Mount St. Mary's

The Mountaineers look to avenge last season's sixth place finish in the Northeast. With the loss of two starters, this team will be looking to its hired guns. Senior forward Michael Watson returns to lead the team, and the addition of Randy Edney, the 7-0, 300-pound sophomore center and junior point guard Chris Mc Guthrie, this team should surpass a few teams.

## RHODE ISLAND

Site: Coliseum

Date: Dec. 31

Conference: Atlantic 10

Last season: 11-16

Series record: first meeting

It is definitely a rebuilding year for the Rams. Their only returning starter is Michael Anderson. Anderson, a 7-0 center, averaged a whopping 4.1 ppg last season. Graduation destroyed this squad, leaving them with no seniors and only three juniors. The Rams will struggle to finish above eighth in the Atlantic this season.

## GEORGE MASON

Site: Coliseum

Date: Jan. 3

Conference: CAA

Last season: 10-17

Series record: VCU leads 9-3

Last meeting: Dec. 22, 1993, VCU won 109-88 in Fairfax

"Paul Ball" has arrived in Fairfax. In his second season at the helm expect to see Westhead's team average close to 100 points per game this year. The only problem with the GMU game plan, other than the lack of defense, is that there aren't enough Balls on the court. Guard Curtis McCants was the CAA Freshman of the Year last season, averaging more than 14 points per game. He assuredly will score more this year. The Patriots are a long shot for postseason play.

## RICHMOND

Site: Robins Center

Date: Jan. 11

Conference: CAA

Last season: 14-14

Series record: VCU leads 24-17

Last meeting: Dec. 18, 1993, Richmond won 76-61 at the Coliseum

This isn't the same Spider team that was capable of beating Indiana, Georgia Tech, Auburn and Syracuse in NCAA Tournament appearances in the past decade. In a season where most CAA teams are improving, Richmond just doesn't have the players to make a run in the conference. With Kass Weaver as the only proven returning player, look for Richmond to stumble toward the bottom of the conference. VCU will look to avenge last season's loss to the Spiders.

## JAMES MADISON

Site: Harrisonburg

Date: Jan. 18

Conference: CAA

Last season: 20-10

Series record: VCU leads 19-9

Last meeting: Nov. 27, 1993, VCU won 88-73 at the Coliseum

Senior Kent Culuko is the big man on campus in Harrisonburg. He's the man that drained the three pointer with no time left on the clock to cap a 19-point comeback

over ODU in the CAA tournament victory over ODU broke the jinx that brought to Harrisonburg and put the in the NCAA tournament for the first in Driesell's five seasons. Culuko shot percent from three-point range at astounding 92.1 percent from the stripe. Lefty will rely on small forward Louis Rowe to provide added offense. Rowe is an exciting player who can take control of the game at any time. The biggest question mark for the Rams will be their inside game. Center Kevin Robinson needs to have a big season if he is to help the Rams win the NCAA Tournament for a second-straight season.

## VIRGINIA UNION

Site: Coliseum

Date: Jan. 21

Conference: CIAA

Last season: 26-3

Series record: VCU leads 7-2

Last meeting: Feb. 15, 1973, VCU won 79-76 at Virginia Union

For the first time in 21 years, the "City Championship." A perennial Division II contender, the Panthers will look to rebuild a team that lost seven of its starters. Guard Thomas Meredith returned to lead the team, and head coach Robb has a cast of recruits that are ready to step up and fill the voids. With the inexperience, Union is ranked in the top 25 of most Division II polls. It will be a game that goes down to the wire.

## RADFORD

Site: Coliseum

Date: Feb. 2

Conference: Big South

Last season: 20-8

Series record: VCU leads series 3-0

Last meeting: Dec. 1, 1993, VCU won 70-64 in Richmond

The Highlanders have a quick, tenacious press defense. The top two scorers have great depth and will continue to be a problem for VCU unless one of five recruits steps in and contributes immediately. Forward David Ingram looks to lead the team on the court.

## OLD DOMINION

Site: Hampton Coliseum

Date: Feb. 6

Conference: CAA

Last season: 21-10

Series record: ODU leads 24-21

Last meeting: Jan. 31, 1994, ODU won 79-75 in Hampton

The Monarchs boast the top big man in the CAA in Odell Hodge, and have a cast of players surrounding him to make contributions. Petey Sessoms, a two-time All-CAA performer, should help take the pressure off Hodge to produce each game. Junior forward Mario Mullen could be a surprise of the conference. After a freshman season, Mullen got a late start last season because of injuries. Look for him to be a consistent rebounder and defender. New coach Jeff Capel, the guard's father and the former coach of North Carolina A&T, should have the team mentally prepared to make a run at the conference championship. Last year's loss to VCU left many Rams fans with a bitter taste in their mouth.

—CT Sports Editor Brian W. Whitson and Writer Terry Scanlon contributed to this article.

# A prediction of the 1994-95 Top 25

*Our man Arthur "the Swami" Mills gives his yearly assessment on who's who in the world of college basketball. Remember folks, Mills has a better record picking games than Danny Sheridan, and he isn't called "the Swami" for nothing. So bet the rent on this Top 25.*

**Arthur Mills**  
CT STAFF WRITER

## 1. Arkansas

Bill Buckman, the Commonwealth Times chief photographer and pollster for the CT's Top 25, has declared North Carolina his top choice. Last year, Arkansas finished 31-3, won the national championship and returned its entire starting five, and Buckman is picking North Carolina. This is a lot like picking Lauren Hutton over Vendela. Sure they're both sexy, but c'mon. Forward Corliss Williamson is the best player in the country, Cory Beck is an all-around guard, Scotty Thurman is dead at the small forward and off the bench and the school's top intramural player, Alex Dillard, vows to make a three pointer from nearby Little Rock. This team is so versatile the only thing it didn't score last year were babes for President Clinton.

## 2. Massachusetts

Ted Kennedy's campaign slogan in his successful bid for re-election for the Senate was "Lou Roe, Marcus Camby, Donta Bright, Ted Kennedy." Actually, the veracity of this statement is questionable, but using UMass's frontline as running mates couldn't hurt. Mike Williams and Derek Kellogg join last year's frontline, and the Minutemen join Arkansas and Maryland as the top teams in the country because they return all five starters. Though thin in size, not depth, Massachusetts is athletic, smart and plays in a much easier league than other top teams. John Calipari is one of the best young coaches in the game, at recruiting and at getting the most from his players. Only off-season at UMass was Calipari's denial that he was named after fried clams.

## 3. Maryland

The Terrapins have one problem — Joe Smith. Smith received the second most votes for the preseason All-American team and is one of the better players in the country. But Joe Smith is too ordinary a name for Joe Smith and the Terps to be taken seriously. Chris Jackson, formerly of LSU and formerly Chris Jackson, believed himself to be a star and realized that Chris Jackson had no pizzazz. So Jackson changed his name to Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf. He should have changed it to Robert Pack and he'd still be starting, but that is another story. Joe Smith needs to change his name to Muhammad Hakeem-Jabbar and Maryland is for real. Even if he remains Joe Smith, the Terps are going to be just fine. With five returning starters, including explosive Exree Hipp and solid Keith Booth, Gary Williams has a team with a powerful starting unit. But depth should prove to be the difference for this year's team. Six bench players return from last year, adding experience and a good run in the NCAA's to youthful exuberance.

## 4. North Carolina

Few coaches have consistently brought in as much talent as Dean Smith. Year in and year out, North Carolina's

talent base is equal to or greater than any other team in the nation. Unfortunately, and for fans of the Dean this will be a blasphemous statement, Smith can't coach. No coach gets less from his talent than the Dean. You want support. With Michael Jordan, James Worthy, Sam Perkins, Brad Daughtery, Kenny Smith, Jimmy Black, Joe Wolf et. al. in the early 80s (I know they weren't together for four years), Smith can coax only one title from that group. Now with Jerry Stackhouse, Rasheed Wallace, Jeff McInnis and Donald Williams, expect Dean to guide his second-to-none talent to another 7-10 loss season and a Sweet 16 appearance in the NCAA's. This accomplished, you'll still hear about how great the Dean is, but there is no hiding the fact that his teams are so underachieving they've become college basketball's Sweatshops.

## 5. Kentucky

Rick Pitino, on the other hand, can flat out coach. After coming from 30-plus down to beat LSU last year, Tigers coach Dale Brown asked how you beat a team that has 6-9 guys that can shoot three pointers. Seven teams found out how last year, but with more consistency from Rodrick Rhodes, Andre Riddick and Tony Delk, this year's Wildcats will be tough to beat. There's a brewing rivalry between Kentucky and UMass after Pitino was quoted as saying he wanted Calipari for dinner.

## 6. Arizona

The Wildcats return four starters from last year's Final Four team. Unfortunately, the one starter they lost was their best. Khalid Reeves now toils for the Miami Heat, but even without him, Arizona has the potential to scare people. Damon Stoudamire is the nation's top guard, and Joseph Blair and Ray Owes are tough inside. Coach Lute Olsen said his team may have more talent this year than at any time in school history. This would be a problem, because last year when little was expected of them, the Wildcats went to the Final Four. However, when they're supposed to do something, they lose in the first round to Santa Clara.

## 7. UCLA

A couple of years ago, I foolishly declared UCLA was legit. I won't make that mistake again, but I will say they look to be on the right track. Four starters return from last year, including explosive guard Tyus Edney. But the Bruins could be back in title contention because of freshman omm'A Givens. Givens gives UCLA depth in the frontcourt and has a name Joe Smith should have thought about. When your first name looks like an ancient Native American chant, you've got something going for you.

## 8. Georgetown

My yearly tradition is to pick Georgetown at least five spots higher than they belong in the preseason poll. And since the Hoyas have more talent this year than at any time in the last 10 years, I've little reason to change. With freshman guard Allen Iverson,

Georgetown has a player who can beat you up the court with speed. If you stop that, he can go around you with quickness. If you stop that, he can beat you from the outside. If you stop that, he'll penetrate with ease. Now, if you have successfully stopped all of what Iverson can do, he'll hit you with a chair. He's just that complete. Add Iverson to the eminently capable Othella Harrington on the inside, along with solid depth, and you've got a national championship contender.

## 9. Indiana

Alan Henderson is the best returning player in the Big Ten, Brian Evans proves white men can shoot and freshman Andrae Patterson give the Hoosiers some athleticism at center. Indiana's problem is that it is frighteningly white. Even Bob Knight's son, Pat, made the team again. But because Bobby can motivate his players with a well-placed slap or kick, Indiana might be tough. But Michigan with some seasoning is still the class of the conference.

## 10. Michigan

Jerod Ward is the top newcomer in the Big Ten, Jimmy King and Ray Jackson return as original Fab Fivers and Steve Fisher has brought in another class of freshmen that rivals his original group. Last season Michigan was hamstrung by a lack of depth and Dugan Fife in the starting lineup. Fife will remain a starter, but not in minutes. Aside from Ward (6-9, F/G), Fisher brought in Maceo Baston (6-9, C/F), Travis Conlan (6-5, G), Willie Mitchell (6-7, F/G) and Maurice Taylor (6-9, C/F). Michigan has become such an attractive place for highly touted players to go, Danny Manning reportedly was considering a free-agent contract.

## 11. Florida

The Gators must be rated this high because of last season's Final Four appearance. But does the word fluke have meaning here? Nothing about Dametri Hill, still about 300 pounds, and Andrew DeClercq is all that exciting. The Gators will be lucky to finish in the top 20.

## 12. Duke

Duke is on the decline, but with Cherokee Parks, Jeff Capel and the premiere coach in the country, Mike Krzyzewski, this team still is dangerous. A sure sign of the decline. The Blue Devils signed Trajan Langdon, the best player in his state. Unfortunately, his state is Alaska.

## 13. Kansas

Roy Williams, a Dean Smith disciple, consistently gets more out of his talent than does his mentor. Smith's system works with lesser-talented players like Jayhawks' Greg Ostertag and Jacque Vaughn. In fact, Williams would be a poorer coach at North Carolina than at Kansas.

## 14. Cincinnati

Bob Huggins has always had teams that play hard and scare you with defense. Now he has some size with Arthur Long (6-10) and freshman Danny Fortson (6-9). If Dontonio Wingfield hadn't gone to the NBA, the Bearcats would be in the

top five.

## 15. Syracuse

Super studs John Wallace and Lawrence Moten couldn't keep the Orangemen from falling to George Washington in the NIT. This team has the potential to be great, or, as it already has shown, to lose to inferior competition.

## 16. Villanova

An NIT title last year showed that the Wildcats should have been in the NCAA tournament. Five returning starters will make sure of that this year.

## 17. Michigan State

Shawn Respert is the best-shooting guard in the country, hitting better than 50 percent of his three pointers in international play this summer. The Spartans need to get production from their bench to compete with Michigan and Indiana.

## 18. Oklahoma State

Bryant Reeves is the Cowboys leader among three returning starters, but there is no depth in Stillwater.

## 19. Connecticut

The loss of Donyell Marshall keeps Connecticut from competing with Arkansas. But the Huskies are still athletic enough to beat the best on any given night.

## 20. Virginia

The Cavaliers' playing style is so ugly only their mother could love them. And after losing to Ohio University at home, even mom is lukewarm. Virginia returns four starters, and Cory Alexander returns from last year's knee injury, but this team is too erratic to be taken seriously.

## 21. Wisconsin

Michael Finley is the best small forward in the country, and Rashard Griffith is a force in the middle. The Badgers could be much better than No. 21.

## 22. Illinois

A lack of depth will hurt, but not nearly as much as playing Michigan, Indiana and Michigan State. Shelly Clark is the team's best player and only hope for being a contender.

## 23. Alabama

Athletic, but somehow they lost to New Mexico State. This team still is struggling from the loss of rival Sonny Smith (who coached at Auburn).

## 24. George Washington

Mike Jarvis bid a fond adieu to Yinka Dare to welcome Alexander Koul (7-1) from Russia. But who cares when you have Kwame Evans and Nimbo Hammons to lead the way?

## 25. Ohio University

Gary Trent, Gary Trent, Gary Trent, Gary Trent and Gary Trent is the starting five for OU. There may be other players on the team, but all bow to the man.



# The college basketball skinny

*A preseason glimpse at the best and worst of the upcoming year*

**Brian J. French**  
CT SPORTS EDITOR

The beauty of college sports can be encapsulated in one key point, one phrase that best describes why people like them so much: no strike.

For the umpteenth time, college basketball will begin its season (has already when you consider the preseason NIT) without labor strife.

Salary cap? Not a problem here. Players don't get paid for college ball (at least legally — take of that what you will).

Free agency? Yeah, whatever.

These just don't come up when the talk turns to the collegiate hardwood.

With that in mind, a preview of the best in the college game is in order. There is no time to get into great detail, so consider this a sound-byte preview, if you will.

The conferences will be ranked 1 to 8 (except for the Colonial, which is not even close to being top eight in the country), and the teams within will be ranked accordingly.

A single sentence will precede each team as well as the conference, providing a synopsis.

You'll understand when you read it.

**(1) ATLANTIC COAST** — Quite simply, the best conference around.

1. **North Carolina** — If they can avoid sophomore jinx, a title contender.

2. **Maryland** — See North Carolina. They're young, they're good.

3. **Duke** — Cherokee Parks needs to step up for Devils to contend.

4. **Virginia** — Popular to pick them high, but must shoot better.

5. **Wake Forest** — With Randolph Childress, all things are possible.

6. **Georgia Tech** — Travis Best leads the Jackets back from a disastrous season.

7. **Florida State** — In Tallahassee, basketball is a cool-down period for football.

8. **N.C. State** — Their top seven players return, and they can't break into the first division.

9. **Clemson** — Rick Barnes will be crying for Sharone Wright by Christmas.

**(2) BIG TEN** — General Knight's troops will storm the conference.

1. **Indiana** — They lose three starters, but gain a prodigy (Andrae Patterson).

2. **Michigan State** — Shawn Respert equals respect for the Spartans.

3. **Michigan** — Coming soon to a theater near you: Fab Five, Part Two.

4. **Wisconsin** — Michael Finley and Rashard Griffith lead the Badgers to fame and fortune.

5. **Minnesota** — If Voshon Lenard doesn't come back, the Gophers dig themselves into a grave.

6. **Illinois** — Without Deon Thomas, the Illini fall off.

7. **Penn State** — The East's most underrated player: forward John Amaechi.

8. **Purdue** — The Big Dog's in a new kennel, and the Boilermakers are in the second division.

9. **Iowa** — Losing isn't a habit of Dr. Tom Davis', but it's easy to pick up.

10. **Ohio State** — No program has taken a nastier fall than the Buckeyes'.

11. **Northwestern** — They do graduate almost all of their players.

**(3) SOUTHEASTERN** — They could send two teams to the Final Four again.

## EAST

1. **Kentucky** — This will be the year for Rodrick Rhodes to shine.

2. **Florida** — Maybe no Final Four this time, but Lon Kruger will have his troops back.

3. **Georgia** — With Charles Claxton returning, the Dawgs could be a surprise.

4. **Vanderbilt** — The Commodores lived and died on Billy McCaffrey's shooting. He's gone. Guess what?

5. **South Carolina** — Eddie Fogler was national coach of the year once. Even he may be in over his head with the 'Cocks.

6. **Tennessee** — Their women's team would beat the men by 15.

## WEST

1. **Arkansas** — They win a national title, and all five starters are back. That's usually good.

2. **Alabama** — The Crimson Tide, with four starters back, may push the Razorbacks.

3. **Mississippi State** — From coach to players, ignored but dangerous.

4. **Louisiana State** — If the young backcourt clicks, the Tigers could surprise.

5. **Mississippi** — Solid but stoic.

6. **Auburn** — A far cry from the day of Charles Barkley and Chuck Person.

**(4) BIG EIGHT** — Another year, another top seed in the NCAA's.

1. **Kansas** — You can't go wrong with the Jayhawks in the catbird seat.

2. **Oklahoma State** — Big Country tried to take Cowboys to the promised land.

3. **Iowa State** — Presenting the Big Eight's candidate for the most underrated team in the country.

4. **Missouri** — A quick fall for a former No. 1 team, but they'll rebound in 1995-96.

5. **Oklahoma** — A good recruiting class offsets Tubbs' departure.

6. **Nebraska** — From Big Eight tourney champ to second division. It happens when you lose Eric Piatkowski.

7. **Colorado** — Donnie Boyce. The most underrated player in the West, but

it isn't enough for the Buffs.

8. **Kansas State** — They can win ... if they find another year of eligibility for Mitch Richmond.

**(5) BIG EAST** — Just who started the rumor that the A-10 was the Beast of the East, anyway?

1. **Syracuse** — The Orangemen will score more than (fill in raunchy joke).

2. **Georgetown** — 'Cuse and G'Town 1-2 in the Big East. The more things change ....

3. **Villanova** — Kerry Kittles and company will put the Wildcats in contention.

4. **Connecticut** — They lose only one starter, but it's Donyell Marshall.

5. **St. John's** — A new nickname (Red Storm) and a new superstar (Felipe Lopez).

6. **Boston College** — They lose four starters, but recruits may save the Eagles.

7. **Providence** — Pete Gillen will have the Friars frying on the court with a run-and-press game plan.

8. **Seton Hall** — P.J. Carlesimo left at exactly the right time.

9. **Miami** — It's Hurricane Constantin (Popa) and a bunch of tropical depressions.

10. **Pittsburgh** — Maybe the Panthers and the Piranhas (CBA) will start playing.

**(6) PACIFIC 10** — Same old story: Arizona, UCLA wrestle for crown.

1. **UCLA** — Tyus Edney and the brothers O'Bannon take the Bruins to the top.

2. **Arizona** — Despite loss of Khalid Reeves, the Wildcats will contend.

3. **Oregon** — If Orlando Williams comes through, it'll be a good year to be a Ducks fan.

4. **Arizona State** — A Sun Devils short jumper: 17 feet.

5. **California** — But the Bears lost only two starters ... and 40 points, 14.6 rebounds, 11.3 assists ....

6. **Southern California** — Trojan coach Kareem Abdul-Jabbar? Hmmm....

7. **Stanford** — See Illinois: Solid but stoic.

8. **Washington** — A Pac-10 title? Only if Napoleon Kaufman plays.

9. **Oregon State** — They have a Barry on their team. Nuff said.

10. **Washington State** — They are not good.

**(7) GREAT MIDWEST** — Don't get too attached to the GMC — this is its last year, too.

1. **Cincinnati** — Fun fact: The Bearcats are the only team to win a GMC title in the league's history.

2. **Memphis** — If multitallented David Vaughn is on, the Tigers could go on the

prowl.

3. **DePaul** — Don't look now, but the Blue Demons are back.

4. **Saint Louis** — Charlie Spoonhour's squad won't sneak up on the unsuspecting masses this year.

5. **Alabama-Birmingham** — Gene Bartow seems to milk an NIT bid out of anything.

6. **Marquette** — Losing gigantic Jim McIlvaine hurts the Warriors big time.

7. **Dayton** — The Flyers will improve under former ODU head coach Oliver Purnell. But in what conference?

**(8) WESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE** — This is BYU's to win or lose.

1. **Brigham Young** — They've won 70.3 percent of their games in the past five years.

2. **New Mexico** — They're good and smart — returnees average a 2.92 GPA.

3. **Utah** — Rick Majerus is one of the best coaches in the country, and he'll have to prove it this year.

4. **Hawaii** — Beautiful beaches and a 7'1" center (Tony Maroney). Indeed, paradise.

5. **Texas-El Paso** — Explosive Antoine Gillespie leads a high-scoring Miners attack.

6. **Wyoming** — Ever hear of Theo Ratliff (4.1 blocks a game)? You will by the NBA predraft camps.

7. **Fresno State** — Fresno is the home of the raisin, which is ironic, since the Bulldogs chances at a WAC title have shriveled up.

8. **Air Force** — They're the Air Force, but except for unsung Otis Jones, nobody can get off the ground.

9. **San Diego State** — The Aztecs dwell near the cellar yet again.

10. **Colorado State** — This could be a bad year for basketball Rams all around.

**COLONIAL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION** — Look for Old Dominion and James Madison to butt heads again.

1. **Old Dominion** — Led by NBA prospect Odell Hodge, the Monarchs are the cream of the CAA crop.

2. **James Madison** — Lefty wants back in the NCAA's, and Kent Culuko would be the means for that end.

3. **East Carolina** — They lose four starters but still are a first-division squad.

4. **George Mason** — This may be the year Paul Ball starts paying dividends.

5. **UNC-Wilmington** — Big and slow the Seahawks may surprise on occasion.

6. **American** — They can only go as far as Duke transfer Christian Ast can take them, which probably isn't very far at all.

7. **Richmond** — The Spiders have been ranked with dissention, as four players left during the off-season. They're hurting.

8. **William & Mary** — New coach old results.

# Women's Metro 1994-95: Va. Tech expected to rule

## VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES

**Last Year:** 24-6 (9-3 Metro)  
**Postseason:** NCAA first round  
**Returning players:** F Christi Osborne, 5-10, Sr.; C Jenny Root, 6-3, Sr.; G Lisa Leftwich, 5-9, Sr.; F Angela Donnell, 6-1, Sr.; C Cynthia Lee, 6-4, Jr.; G Terri Garland, 5-7, Jr.; G Sherry Banks, 5-7, So.; F Stephanie Carter, 6-1, Sr.; C Stacy Brown, 6-6, So.; G Angie Gray, 5-4, Jr.

In the 1993-94 season, head coach Carol Alfano put the pieces together to build the Hokies' best season in the program's history. She was named the Virginia Sports Information Directors' All-State Coach of the Year for the second consecutive year.

Under Alfano, Virginia Tech reached the finals of the Metro Tournament for the first time in the school's history and then proceeded to win the tournament with an 83-76 win over No. 19 Southern Mississippi. That victory earned the Hokies a spot in the NCAA Tournament for the first time in the history of the women's program.

The Lady Hokies are an overwhelming favorite to take the Metro Conference top honors. Christi Osborne, a unanimous selection to the preseason All-Metro team, returns to lead the Hokies.

## SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI LADY GOLDEN EAGLES

**Last year:** 26-5, 10-2 Metro (champion)  
**Postseason:** NCAA East Regionals  
**Returning players:** G Kim Adams, 5-8, Sr.; G Nedra Hosey, 5-7, So.; G Shell Joseph, 5-7, Sr.; C Yoshiekia Lampton, 6-2, So.; G Patricia Nash, 5-9, Jr.; C Sules Walker, 6-0, Sr.

How will the team deal with the loss of three-time Metro Player of the Year Janice Felder? That is the biggest question surrounding the Lady Eagles' basketball program. In addition to Felder, gone are three other starters who led USM to a 26-5 record, a Metro regular season title, a No. 4 seed in the NCAA Tournament and a birth to the tournament's Sweet 16.

Back to lead the team are Hosey and Nash, a pair of guards who will be given the opportunity to shine. The Lady Golden Eagles also have a cast of newcomers who will be expected to contribute on a regular basis.

## UNC CHARLOTTE LADY 49ERS

**Last Year:** 14-13, 4-8 Metro  
**Postseason:** none  
**Returning players:** G Markita Aldridge, 5-10, Jr.; F Charlotte Hargrove, 6-3, So.; C Natasha Jules, 6-2, Jr.; CTiszara Kelly, 6-4, Sr.; F/G Charlene Reid, 5-10, So.; G/F Tinita Vick 5-10, So.; G Angie Woods, 5-4, Sr.

Last season, UNC Charlotte boasted three of the top four freshmen scorers in the Metro Conference: Hargrove (first, 11.5 ppg), Reid (second, 9.6 ppg) and Vick (fourth, 6.7 ppg).

Markita Aldridge, an All-Metro second team member last year, is the leading returning scorer in the conference with 15.3 points per game.

With a relatively young returning cast look for the Lady 49ers to make a move toward the top of the conference.

## TULANE GREEN WAVE

**Last Year:** 17-14, 5-7 Metro  
**Postseason:** NWIT (fourth)  
**Returning starters:** F Kim Bryant, 6-0, Jr.; G Roma Coleman, 5-8, Sr.; F Mary Ann Marino, 5-11, So.; G Kristi Pertuit, 5-6, Sr.; F Chasity Rainey, 5-9, Jr.; F Stephanie Simpson, 6-3, Sr.; G Christy Thomaskutty, 5-6, Jr.; F Kathey Young, 5-9, Sr.

Tulane is coming off its best season in the school's history (17-14).

The Green Waves saw its first postseason tournament (NWIT) appearance last season.

After a season that saw injuries take their toll on the roster, the 1994-95 squad appears to have recovered and will welcome the return of Marino, Rainey and Tiffany Clifton — each of whom had knee surgery.

Rainey, who suffered an anterior cruciate ligament tear in her knee in the 1994 Metro Tournament, is the last to return, but should be at full strength by the season opener against Southern Utah.

## LOUISVILLE LADY CARDINALS

**Last Year:** 10-16, 7-5 Metro  
**Postseason:** none  
**Returning players:** G Darnice Cloudy, 5-6, Sr.; G Latasha Glanton, 5-10, Sr.; G Dayna McGrath, 5-9, Jr.; F Mary Martin, 6-2, Sr.; F Kristin Mattox, 6-1, Jr.; G Leatrice Scott, 6-0, Sr.; G Kiva Thomas, 5-5, Jr.

The Lady Cardinals bring in nine new faces this season.

In addition to the seven freshmen on the 1994-95 team, two sophomores join the squad for their first season of competition in Louisville uniforms.

Mattox returns as Louisville's leading scorer with 14.2 points and 5.6 rebounds per game.

Marla Inman is expected to move into the starting lineup after sitting out last season following a transfer from Indiana University, where she averaged 22.5 points, 3.5 assists and 4 steals per game. She looks to make an immediate impact on a team hoping to finish in the conference's top three.

## SOUTH FLORIDA BULLS

**Last Year:** 14-13, 7-5 Metro  
**Postseason:** none  
**Returning players:** F Rachel Brown, 6-0, Jr.; F Conya Johnson, 5-11, Sr.; G Tamara Johnson, 5-10, Sr.; G Jenny Koepfel, 5-6, So.; G Angie Robinson, 5-9, Sr.; C Keira Rozier, 6-2, Sr.; F Brigid Smith, 6-0, So.

The Bulls rebounded a lot last season, literally and figuratively. The team bounced back from a losing record in the 1992-93 season to a 14-13 mark, good for third in the Metro. USF also topped the league in rebounding, with an average of 47 per game — setting a school mark in that category.

Despite leading scorer Tammy Van Oppen's decision to transfer to a school closer to her Illinois home, Rozier and Koepfel return to lead the team.

—Compiled from news sources.

# Profiles

## Jacinda Alston

Guard, 5-6  
Senior, Paterson, N.J.

Terry Scanlon  
CT STAFF WRITER

Jacinda Alston certainly will bring more than 11.4 points per game to the floor for the Lady Rams this season.

Not only will her scoring average rise with the transition from point guard to shooting guard, but she'll bring a lot more leadership and confidence to head coach Susan Walvius' team.

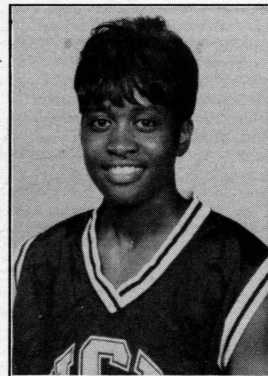
"Jacinda and her experience are going to help us," Walvius said.

A native of Paterson, N.J., and a graduate of Eastside High School, Alston has been playing organized basketball since the seventh grade.

Before joining the Lady Rams last season, Alston played two seasons at Mount Aloysius Junior College.

As a freshman, she led them to a 28-6 record and a No. 8 national JUCO ranking. In her sophomore season she averaged 26 points and led Mount Aloysius to the National JUCO Tournament.

Last season, in her first year with the Lady Rams, Alston was the work horse on the team. She averaged more than 36 minutes per game.



The experience was "flattering, but very tiring," she said.

Not only was she team leader in scoring average and minutes played, but she also carried the team in three pointers, in three-point percentage and in steals. Alston came up second in assists and third in rebounding.

Having experienced success and what it feels like to win, Alston tries "to lead by example," she said.

Growing up outside of New York she had plenty of basketball heroes to look up to as a child, but her greatest influence has yet to hit the big time.

"My cousin was a big role model," Alston said.

Her cousin is James Scott, a senior guard for the Red Storm at St. John's University.

"A lot of people are going to take us lightly because we only won three games last year," she said. "But we're going to surprise a lot of people."

A die-hard Knicks and Giants fan, one way she relaxes off the court is by watching "Days of Ours Lives," which she tapes religiously.

Her claim to fame has nothing to do with basketball. She appeared in the movie "Lean on Me"

as an extra. She could have auditioned for an actual role, but decided to skip it — opting for a basketball game instead, she said.

Alston urges her fellow students to "come support the Lady Rams" during her final season.

## Svetlana Pankratova

Center, 6-7,  
Senior, St. Petersburg, Russia

Coveh Solaimani  
CT STAFF WRITER

The success of the VCU Lady Rams may rest on the shoulders of 6-7 center Svetlana Pankratova, a native of St. Petersburg, Russia.

Pankratova's presence in the middle of the lane could help VCU to a winning record.

"Her defensive ability is very important to the team," said Lady Rams' head coach Susan Walvius, adding that Pankratova's ability to score from the inside will also be an integral part of the team's success.

Pankratova started playing basketball for VCU as a sophomore in fall 1992. As a sophomore she led the Metro Conference in blocked shots per game and finished with averages of 5.6 points and 2.9 rebounds per game.

As a junior the shot-block artist broke every VCU record pertaining to blocked shots. She rejected 11 attempts against the Lady Hokies in one game and finished the season with 55 blocks. She also upped her scoring- and rebounding averages to 9.1 and 5.1 respectively.

Walvius expects even bigger things from Pankratova this season because she has improved her game tremendously in many different phases.

"She has come so far, as far as her work ethic, as her strength and her understand-

ing of what it takes to be a great player will let her," Walvius said, adding that she has the potential to be a fantastic player.

Pankratova agreed, saying, "I've started to play more physical and I have improved on my shooting."

Being away from Russia has had its drawbacks for Pankratova, but she said her teammates and her friends on campus have helped her deal with the situation.

"The Russian people on campus make this place feel like home sometimes," she said.

As a youngster, the 22-year-old Lady Rams center played for the Russian Junior International Team and enjoyed the experience.

"I really liked it because I like to travel and see other countries," she said.

The physical education major said she would like to play professionally after she concludes her career at VCU. Pankratova feels that a big year will allow her to do so.

"I have to have a good year and show what I can do," she said.

Walvius said she believes that will happen, and with a big year she could earn a fat contract as well.

"There's no question she can play professionally," Walvius said. "The question is how much money she can make."





## Ali Ault

Guard, 5-7,  
Sophomore, Pittsburgh

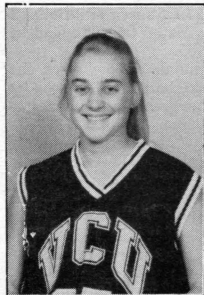
### 1993-94 highlights:

Appeared in 25 games, starting 18. Averaged 4.6 points, 2.2 rebounds and a team-leading 3 assists per game.

Finished second on the team in both three pointers—18—and steals—26. Scored in double figures on seven occasions and recorded a season-high 12 points against William & Mary (Feb. 5). Scored 10 points in each of the final two regular season games against Southern Mississippi (March 3) and Tulane (March 5).

### Season expectations:

"My only expectation is to be healthy all year and to be able to play the whole season," Ault said.



## Niamh Darcy

Center, 6-4,  
Senior, Dublin, Ireland

### 1993-94 highlights:

Darcy appeared in 21 games, starting three while missing six contests due to a knee sprain, suffered in a game against South Florida.

In the game prior to her injury, she recorded her first double-double with 11 points and 18 rebounds, both season highs.

### 1992-93 highlights:

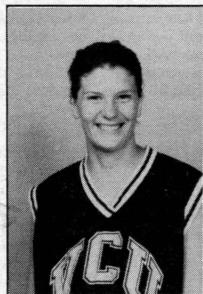
Appeared in 25 of 27 games for the Lady Rams, starting seven. Averaged 3.9 points and 3.1 rebounds in 12.8 minutes per game. Scored a season-high 11 points against UNC Charlotte (March 27). VCU went 5-2 with her in the lineup.

### 1991-92 highlights:

Started the final six contests of the season, averaging 7 points in games when she started. Poured in a career-high 14 points, grabbed six boards and swatted two shots vs. Georgia Southern (Dec. 18).

### Season expectations:

"I want to be consistent," Darcy said. "Rebounding has always been my game."



## Monifa Coleman

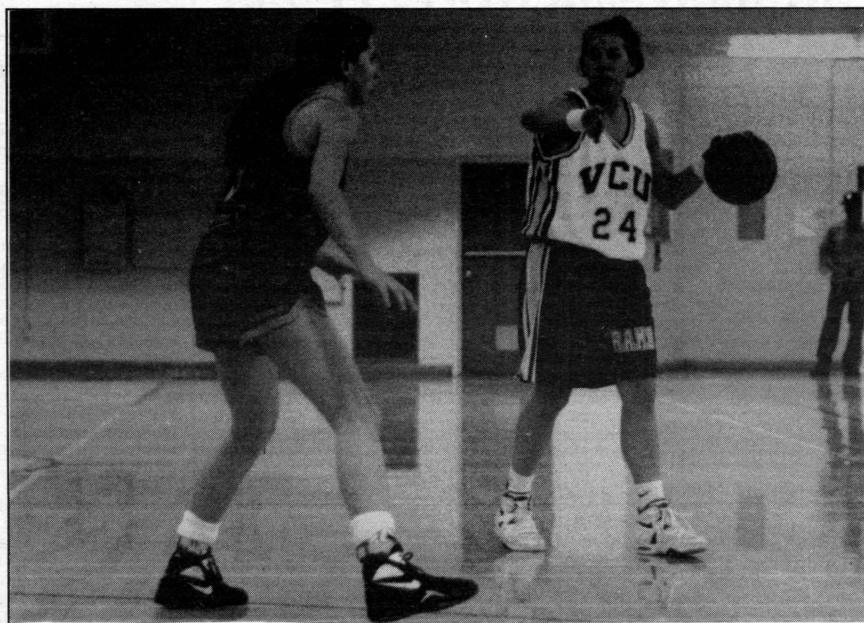
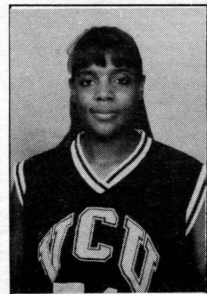
Forward, 5-11,  
Freshman, Highland Springs

### High school highlights:

A four-year starter and letter-winner for head coach George Lancaster at Highland Springs. Named to the All-District second team as a junior and senior. Co-captain of the Springers as a junior and senior.

### Season expectations:

"I bring a heart to the game," Coleman said. "If you have a heart, your going to get some games."



Bill Buckman/Commonwealth Times

## Vendela Thelander

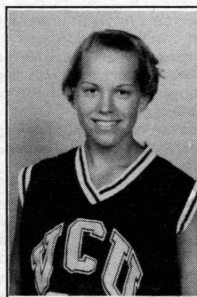
Guard, 5-9,  
Freshman, Stockholm, Sweden

### High school highlights:

Played against former Stanford star and current U.S. National team member Jennifer Azzi while a member of the Swedish Junior National team. Named Rookie of the Year for her club league team in 1993.

### Season expectations:

"I want to help the team play as good as possible," Thelander said. "I would like to play more at the point guard and shoot more myself. I want the team to do the best."



SETTING UP – Vendela Thelander starts at point guard for the Lady Rams. She brings speed and floor leadership to a team with new faces.

## Gabrielle Kyhlstedt

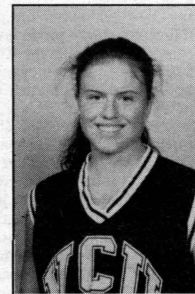
Forward/Guard, 5-11,  
Freshman, Spanga, Sweden

### High school highlights:

A member of the Swedish Junior National team. Guarded former Stanford star and current U.S. National Team member Jennifer Azzi during a club game in Sweden.

### Season expectations:

"I want to get better," Kyhlstedt said. "I want to help the team and get better on defense."



## Tammy Millsaps

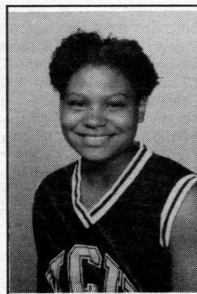
Guard, 5-9,  
Freshman, Statesville, N.C.

### High school highlights:

A four-year starter for head coach Doug Chilton at North Iredell High School. Averaged 11.7 points, 4 rebounds, 3.7 assists and 2.6 steals as a senior, despite missing the first 10 games of the season with a left knee injury. Was named All-Conference for the second consecutive season and was named All-Northwest team. Led North Iredell to a 23-2 record in her senior season.

### Season expectations:

"I think my defense is important and to be able to get back in transition," Millsaps said.



## Adrienne Beard

Forward, 6-0,  
Freshman, Gaithersburg, Md.

### 1993-94 highlights:

Played in five games for the Lady Rams, starting one, before suffering a season-ending knee injury in practice. Averaged 1.4 points and 0.8 rebounds in 5.4 minutes per game before the injury. Made three of four field goals (75 percent) during her brief stint.

### Season expectations:

"I want to improve my defense," Beard said. "I expect to step in and help anyway I can or do whatever is asked of me."



# Lady Rams look to surprise in 1994-'95

**Terry Scanlon**  
CT STAFF WRITER

Hanging in the office of Lady Rams head coach Susan Walvius is a neatly framed piece of artwork commemorating the 40th anniversary of the LPGA Tour. Walvius said she loves the game of golf not only because it's the most challenging game she's ever played, but also because it is an ongoing learning experience. With that being the case Walvius should be more than prepared to face the 1994-95 season. She and her team certainly learned a lot suffering through a 3-24 season last year, and they face the tough challenge of trying to win more games this season with only nine players.

"Last year was a nightmare season," said Walvius, who is in her fifth season at the helm. With a record of 0-12 in the conference and a .111 winning percentage, the Lady Rams' numbers are miserable.

The Lady Rams have been picked to finish last in the preseason Metro Women's Coaches poll.

Walvius agrees with the low ranking but doesn't let it bother her.

"We should've been picked last," she said, referring to last year's record. "I'm hoping people are going to overlook us. Last year our confidence was shaken early."

Walvius expects things to be different this year.

"We're going to take it one game at a time. And we're going to expect to win every game," she said.

The Lady Rams enter this season with a dangerously thin roster. Kim Lauderdale and Hillary Hyser will be sitting out their senior season as a result of recurring injuries. Aundria Sparrow left VCU with the intent of transferring to Evansville. And Sarah Kjulla, would-be freshman from Sweden, decided to remain at home after having signed a letter of intent.

All of this leaves the Lady Rams with an active roster of only nine players — five freshman, one sophomore and three seniors.

**• GUARD**  
**Jacinda Alston, 5-6, Sr.; Ali Ault, 5-7, So.; Vendela Thelander, 5-9, Fr.; Tammy Millsaps, 5-9, Fr.**

There are going to be some changes in the backcourt on Franklin Street this season. Co-captain Jacinda Alston will be starting at shooting guard rather than at the point. And the other co-captain, Ali Ault, who started 18 games last season, will be coming off the bench. This backcourt shake

up has been caused by Swedish freshman Vendela Thelander, who will be running the point for the Lady Rams this season.

Alston, who led the Lady Rams in scoring last year with 11.4 points per game, was a unanimous selection to the Metro Conference All-Newcomer team last season. Shooting guard will be an adjustment for Alston, but one that Walvius feels will benefit the team.

"She'll be open more and she'll be able to rebound more," she said.

Alston was third on the team in rebounding last year with 4.7 rebounds per game and shot 35.9 percent from behind the three-point line. Alston also will see some time at point guard this season when Thelander is not on the floor. Alston transferred to VCU following her sophomore season in which she led Mount Aloysius to the National JUCO Tournament.

Thelander (pronounced TEH-lan-der) quickly has earned the confidence of her teammates and coaches.

"She's a very intelligent girl and certainly can handle the role," Walvius said.

An excellent athlete, Thelander has outstanding speed and stamina. Her outside shooting and passing ability won her the starting spot.

Thelander comes to VCU as a 20-year-old freshman because the Swedish educational system is two years longer than the American equivalent. She still has four years of eligibility.

Ault will see a lot of playing time this season as shooting guard. A strong leader and a vocal player on the floor, she's also capable of stepping in at point guard.

Ault isn't bothered about being a non-starting captain.

"As long as we're winning I'm happy," she said.

Last season Ault led the Lady Rams in assists with 74 and scored in double digits on seven occasions.

Walvius has already seen improvement.

"Ali Ault is playing a much more composed-poised basketball game," Walvius said.

Tammy Millsaps, a native of Statesville, N.C., will provide some depth at shooting guard. Walvius said, "Tammy has the ability to score a lot of points."

**• FORWARD**  
**Gabrielle Kuhlstedt, 5-11, Fr.; Adrienne Beard, 6-0, Fr.; Monifa Coleman, 5-11, Fr.**

The Lady Rams' frontcourt may not be game-tested, but are more experienced than it appears.

Gabrielle Kuhlstedt (pronounced SHILL-stet), like Thelander, is a 20-year-old freshman. And Adrienne Beard played in five games last season before being redshirted with a season-ending knee injury.

The biggest surprise for VCU opponents this season will be the scoring ability of Kuhlstedt, who will be starting at small forward. The Swedish freshman can consistently knock down the three pointer, drive strong to the basket and find the open player. Kuhlstedt scored 33 points in an exhibition game against Austria Herzogenburg and her teammates say she could have scored more.

"She's a very unselfish player," Ault said. "She's a definite team player."

Starting at power forward for the Lady Rams will be redshirt freshman Beard. Probably the best all-around athlete on the team, Beard also could see some playing time at small forward. She may not have seen many minutes last season, but Beard is familiar with the program and should be able to step right in to produce. Beard, who has great speed and leaping ability, dreams of one day dunking in a game.

Richmond native Monifa Coleman will provide some frontcourt depth for the Lady Rams.

Walvius sees Monifa as having the potential to develop in the mold of Beth Mollerup. Mollerup holds several VCU rebounding records.

"Mo is going to be a great rebounder, a great screen setter... and a great defensive player for us," Walvius said.

**• CENTER**  
**Svetlana Pankratova, 6-7, Sr.; Niamh Darcy, 6-4, Sr.**

At 6-7, Svetlana Pankratova is the tallest player in school history. She holds school records for blocked shots in a game (11), in a season (55) and in a career (101). Her 55 blocks last season put her atop the Metro leaders and ninth on the career Metro leaders. An incredible season would allow her to pass Walvius on the Metro career leaders list.

Walvius expects that improved perimeter shooting will open up the lane for Pankratova. The result should be increased offensive output from Pankratova.

The only player on this year's squad to be playing in her fourth season with the Lady Rams is Niamh Darcy. Between backing up Pankratova and filling in at power forward, expect to see Darcy on the floor almost as much as the starters. One of the most physical players on the team, she will

likely improve on her 5 rpg average of last season.

"Niamh gets a lot of hustle points," Walvius said.

Darcy's strength and physical low-post play have Walvius expecting more offensive production from her this season.

## • OUTLOOK

The Lady Rams believe they will surprise some people this season.

"We're starting three freshman — three unknowns — and those three unknowns are going to be big impact players for us," Walvius said.

She said she feels that because they are mature freshmen, the three of them will be able to step up and contribute immediately.

"Offensively we've got a lot more out there (on the court) than we've had in the past," Walvius said.

Most of this new scoring ability is expected to come from Kuhlstedt and Thelander.

Walvius said she also is impressed by the team-oriented attitude of her players. "This is a very close knit group," she said. "They understand that it's not one person that wins the game, but it's a unit."

Their schedule ought to help the Lady Rams net a few more wins. The non-conference schedule includes Army, Maryland-Eastern Shore, Morgan State and several Colonial Athletic Association teams. Early games with Old Dominion and Howard could promise, however, to be big tests before they enter conference play.

Walvius does not like to use the term "rebuilding" when describing this club. She prefers to call it a "development year."

Regardless of what you want call it, this is a team of the future. And if they want to be successful this year there are several things they must do.

The Lady Rams need to avoid foul trouble, and remaining healthy is a necessity. Pankratova fouled out 10 times last year, and injuries have devastated this team in the past. The bench is not deep enough to handle either of these problems.

Perimeter shooting also is a must if they want to win. If the Lady Rams cannot establish a threat from the outside then teams will pack in their defense down low and shut down the VCU offense.

All in all, the Lady Rams have the talent to win many more than three games this season. To expect anything better than finishing in the middle of the pack in the Metro would be unrealistic, but that's why they play the games.

## Coaches Box

**Terry Scanlon**  
CT STAFF WRITER

Susan Walvius is entering her fifth season at the helm of the Lady Rams. One of the youngest Division I women's basketball coaches, Walvius is a 1986 Virginia Tech graduate. She was an assistant at Bradley for two years and at the University of Rhode Island for one season before coming to VCU in 1990.

At Tech the 6-2 Walvius was an All-Metro selection during her senior season, averaging 17.0 points per game and

9.7 rebound per game. She still is second in the conference in career blocked shots.

"Having an opportunity to play Division I basketball gave me a lot of insight on the perspective of a student athlete and I don't forget that," Walvius said.

With the help of her coaching staff, she takes care of her players as best she can.

"We try to be their (the players) home away from home," she said.

Walvius said she doesn't have much a social life because she spends so much time on Franklin Street. But when she does get free time she enjoys fishing, boating and golfing — claiming to shoot in the 80s.

She also encourages academic excellence from her team. Four of the 12 players on the roster last year received awards for 3.0 GPA or better.

"Most people don't realize how much time goes into this job. This staff puts in 13-hour days everyday," between high school games, recruiting, study hall and games, Walvius said.

She takes pride in her staff, which includes former Syracuse head coach Barbara Jacobs. "I would put our staff up against anybody in the country," Walvius said.

Jacobs spent 15 seasons at the helm in Syracuse and 7 years at Hartwick as head coach.

Missy Dickinson, also a Tech graduate, gets nothing but praise from Walvius. In her first season as a full-time assistant, Dickinson earned the Graduate Student of the Year Award for 1993 presented by the Women's Basketball Coaches Association.

Walvius said she feels she has "had an opportunity to learn a lot and grow with it very quickly in the head coaching position" here at VCU.



Susan Walvius





# RAM PAGE



## SCHEDULE

### WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Nov. 26	LIBERTY
Nov. 30	Old Dominion
Dec. 3	at Iona Tournament
	VCU vs. Army
	Iona vs. St. Francis (N.Y.)
Dec. 4	at Iona Tournament
	Consolation
	Championship
Dec. 7	MARYLAND-EASTERN SHORE
Dec. 9	at James Madison
Dec. 14	HOWARD
Dec. 17	at George Mason
Dec. 21	at Richmond
Dec. 29	UNC-WILMINGTON
Jan. 6	at South Florida*
Jan. 8	VIRGINIA TECH*
Jan. 19	at East Carolina
Jan. 13	TULANE*
Jan. 17	at Morgan State
Jan. 22	UNC CHARLOTTE*
Jan. 29	at Louisville*
Feb. 3	at Tulane*
Feb. 5	at Southern Mississippi*
Feb. 8	RICHMOND
Feb. 12	SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI*
Feb. 17	at Virginia Tech
Feb. 19	at UNC Charlotte*
Feb. 21	WILLIAM & MARY
Feb. 24	LOUISVILLE*
Feb. 26	SOUTH FLORIDA*
March 7-10	at Metro Tournament
	Louisville, Ky.

\* - Metro Conference games

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

### STANDINGS

TEAM	METRO		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI	10	2	26	5
VIRGINIA TECH	9	3	24	6
LOUISVILLE	7	5	10	16
SOUTH FLORIDA	7	5	14	13
TULANE	5	7	17	14
UNC CHARLOTTE	4	8	14	13
VCU	0	12	3	24

### 1993-94 INDIVIDUAL STATS

#### SCORING

PLAYER, TEAM	GP	FG	3P	FT	PTS	AVG
KEISHA JOHNSON, TU	31	241	0	140	622	20.1
JODY MARTIN, UL	26	177	28	110	492	18.9
JANICE FELDER, USM	31	237	0	111	585	18.9
TAMMY VAN OPPEN, USF	27	174	29	117	494	18.3
MARKITA ALDRIDGE, UNCC	21	128	16	50	322	15.3
CHRISTI OSBORNE, VPI	30	161	15	97	434	14.5
KRISTIN WATKIN, UL	25	124	65	43	356	14.2
JENNY ROOT, VPI	30	165	0	87	417	13.9
CHRISTY THOMASKUTTY, TU	31	124	98	76	422	13.6
PATRICIA NASH, USM	31	174	22	51	421	13.6

#### REBOUNDS

PLAYER, TEAM	GP	NO	AVG
KEISHA JOHNSON, TU	31	319	10.3
JANICE FELDER, USM	31	292	9.4
JODY MARTIN, UL	27	238	8.8
DEBRAH RUSK, TU	26	225	8.7
KIM BRYANT, TU	31	249	8.0
CHARLETTE HARGROVE, UNCC	26	204	7.8
JENNY ROOT, VPI	30	218	7.3
HEATHER HART, UNCC	27	155	7.2
KEIRA ROZIER, USF	27	191	7.1
TAMMY VAN OPPEN, USF	27	187	7.0

#### ASSISTS

PLAYER, TEAM	GP	NO	AVG
TANYA BULLOCK, USM	31	150	4.8
ROMA COLEMAN, TU	30	125	4.2
MARKITA ALDRIDGE, UNCC	21	87	4.1
DEBRAH RUSK, TU	30	117	3.9
RENEE BELLAMY, USF	27	103	3.8
DARNICE CLOUDY, UL	26	97	3.7
LISA LEFTWICH, VPI	30	110	3.7
TAMMY VAN OPPEN, USF	27	98	3.6
CHRISTY THOMASKUTTY, TU	31	112	3.6
PATRICIA NASH, USM	31	102	3.3

## NOTES

### WOMEN'S METRO

**LADY RAMS ON RADIO** - Four home games will be broadcast on WRVH-AM, SportsRadio AM 910. Terry Sisisky will call the play-by-play live from Franklin Street Gym for the following games: Maryland-Eastern Shore on Dec. 7, Howard on Dec. 14, Virginia Tech on Jan. 8, and William & Mary Feb. 21.

**BIG GUN** - Senior 6-7 center Svetlana Pankratova is believed to be the tallest player in NCAA women's basketball history to make a three-point shot. Pankratova is 7-30 from behind the three-point arc in her two previous seasons at VCU.

**SUPERSTITIOUS?** - Co-captain Ali Ault will be donning No. 13 for the Lady Rams this season. The sophomore guard wore No. 23 last year, but switched because she said she does not want to remember anything from last season. Hey Ali, isn't 13 unlucky?

**A.J.-OLYMPIC MATERIAL?** - Redshirt freshman Adrienne Beard advanced to the final cut of the U.S. Olympic Festival East Region trials in Philadelphia this past April.

**ALL IN THE FAMILY** - Assistant coach Missy (Sallade) Dickenson married VCU Assistant Athletic Director Hank Dickenson in September.

**LEFTY** - UNCC freshman guard Ashley Poston broke her right thumb during her senior year in high school. So she switched to her left hand. She went on to average 20 ppg and was named league and district player of the year and earned first-team all-state honors.

**HERE WE GO AGAIN** - The Hokies return 86 percent of their scoring and 91 percent of their rebounding from a year ago when Tech won a school-record 24 games, won the Metro Tournament championship for the first time and played in its first NCAA Tournament. And this season Lady Rams coach Susan Walvis feels this Tech team may be their finest yet, saying, "I think we'll see Tech in the Top 20 this year."

**DOUBLE THE TROUBLE** - UNCC has two Metro Rookies of the Year on their roster. Markita Aldridge won the award in 1992 and Charlette Hargrove was honored last year.

# CAROLINA WINS WOMEN'S TITLE

The three pointer by Smith with 0.7 seconds remaining gives the Heels the crown and will be known forever as 'The Shot'

Brian J. French  
CT Sports Editor

Respect.

The rallying cry for the North Carolina Tar Heels emblazoned on T-shirts and carried on banners by fans, will be forever etched in the annals of NCAA championship history.

And for that matter, so will Charlotte Smith.

Smith earned her spot in basketball lore by canning "The Shot," a three-point jumper with 0.7 seconds left in the game to give her Tar Heels a 60-59 victory against Louisiana Tech in the championship game of the NCAA women's basketball championship game.

"I knew I had to do it," said the tourney's most outstanding player of her buzzer-beater. "It was an order from the coach and I had to keep confidence in myself," she said noting she had slipped near the end of the game.

"I want to commend my teammates for helping me keep my composure."

The game-winning shot finished a magnificent game for Smith, who scored 20 points (19 in the second half) and set a NCAA Tournament championship record with 23 rebounds.

"I want to praise the pass (from Stephanie Lawrence), the screen (by Sylvia Crawley), and the shot," said North Carolina coach Sylvia Hatchell.

"Charlotte Smith is one of the most competitive people I have ever met," Hatchell continued. "She is a tremendous athlete."

The game itself was a closely contested one, with 11 ties. It didn't appear to be a classic contest early on, however.

Five minutes into the first half, Louisiana Tech had a 6-5 lead. The Tar Heels had as many fouls as points, and freshman sensation Marion Jones picked up her second foul. A minute later, she picked up her third, putting her on the bench for the rest of the half.

Meanwhile, Tonya Sampson went on a tear, scoring 17 points in 19 minutes.

Between Sampson and Crawley (nine points) came 26 of the 32 North Carolina points.

The Lady Techsters got equal contributions from almost all their players. Eight players scored for Louisiana Tech, while the leading scorer (Mauiela Walker) had eight.

Two different paths led to the same score, as the two teams got to a 32-32 tie.

Sampson gave the Heels that tie on a steal and layup as the half ran out.

That would soon be known as North Carolina's first shot at the home.

The half was an ugly one at best. Both teams shot less than 40 percent. Louisiana Tech shot 31.6 percent in the first period.

In stanza number two, Sampson moved out and Smith moved in. The Tar Heels jumped to a lead of as large as seven with 11:11 showing on the clock.

To further compound Louisiana Tech's problems, center LaShawn Brown fouled out of the game seconds earlier.

With the Lady Techsters having only one center, and North Carolina on a 16-9 run, Louisiana Tech looked to be out of time in their pursuit for their third national title.

Not quite.

Despite playing with only one player taller than 6-1, the Lady Techsters rattled off 12 straight points to take a five point lead with four minutes left.

Tech is a very hard team to defend because they don't really run set plays. We needed to talk more on defense and communicate, call switches and hope we could stop them."

With 42 seconds left, Smith took over.

In the next minute, Smith grabbed five rebounds and scored five points to tie the game for the Tar Heels.

Louisiana Tech point guard Pam Thomas, who scored 13 of her 15 points in the second stanza, hit a jumper with 1:40 left, giving the Lady Techsters a 55-53 lead.

Sampson woke up from a second-half slumber to hit a layup with 1:23 left, tying the game again.

Vicki Johnson returned the favor with a jumper 48 seconds before "The Shot" to restore a two-point Louisiana Tech lead.

With 42 seconds left, Smith took over.

With 26 seconds until "The Shot," Louisiana Tech coach Leon Barnore called a timeout.

Fourteen seconds removed from "The Shot," Thomas put up a jumper, giving the Lady Techsters their final lead, at 59-57.

With four seconds left, Sampson missed a jumper. The two teams scrambled for the ball.

Time ticked off the clock.

Finally with 0.7 seconds left before "The Shot," the referee called a jump ball.

The alternating possession rule gave the ball to North Carolina.

"I was going. Please get it, please get it," Sampson said. "Then I didn't even think it was our ball. My heart just dropped."

Hatchell called timeout.

Lawrence took the ball out of bounds, but could not find an open player.

Lawrence called timeout again.

"We changed the play twice," Hatchell said. "They took the first play that we called away from us (a lob to Crawley). I told Stephanie if that happened to call timeout, and she did."

After the second timeout, Lawrence took to the baseline again.

"Sampson was a decoy coming down, and the girl that was covering Charlotte had to cover Tonya, and Crawley set the screen on the back side," Hatchell noted.

It worked. The only Tar Heel open was Smith at the right wing, about six inches behind the three-point arc.

Smith took the pass, set for the shot and let it go. "The Shot."

The buzzer sounded.

The ball hit the inside rim, then slipped down the cylinder and out the bottom, sending a great deal of the 11,996 in attendance into a frenzy as the North Carolina players mobbed Smith.

### WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT "THE SHOT"

"I didn't look at it. My teammates mobbed me before I opened my eyes." Charlotte Smith on how she felt about "The Shot" before it went in.

"It was just a great screen by Sylvia." Smith crediting Sylvia Crawley for the play that got her into the clear.

"I tried to make it exciting for you guys. Can you believe that?!" Sylvia Hatchell to the media in her opening comments.

"She reminds me of the commercial of the rabbit that just keeps ticking ... she keeps going and going." Hatchell on Smith's durability.

"We were going for the win, not the tie." Hatchell on what she told her team after the final timeout when the lob to Crawley play did not materialize.

"This is the way I've always dreamed it." Senior Crawley on her role in "The Shot," and how it felt to leave North Carolina with a championship.

"I just can't describe it." Tonya Sampson, the other Tar Heel senior, on how she felt about how her last game ended.

"We should have switched out on the cross. I'll take full responsibility for that." Louisiana Tech coach Leon Barnore on why "The Shot" was made.

"No doubt it hurts, it just hurts." Louisiana Tech forward Vickie Johnson.

"Exactly!" North Carolina men's coach (and living legend) Dean Smith, answering if this was the most amazing thing he has ever seen.

### SHOTS HEARD AROUND THE WORLD

► Duke's Christina Laettner against Kentucky with no time left in 1992.

► North Carolina State's Lorenzo Charles against Houston and Hakeem Olajuwon and Clyde Drexler in the championship game in 1983.

► Connecticut's Tate George against Clemson in 1990.

► UNC's freshman Michael Jordan against Georgetown and Patrick Ewing in 1982.

► Indiana's Keith Smart against Syracuse and Derrick Coleman in 1987.

### BOX SCORE

LOUISIANA TECH	Min	FG	3FG	FT	Reb	Ass	PF	BK	Stl	To	Pt
A Brown	13	2-8	0-0	2-2	0	3	0	0	0	4	4
Johnson	40	6-15	0-2	0-0	10	4	1	2	0	1	3
Spurlock	29	4-10	0-0	0-0	6	0	0	0	1	3	12
Thomas	24	6-11	1-2	2-4	4	1	3	0	2	2	12
Williams	27	4-19	0-4	0-1	6	1	0	0	1	2	8
Neel	26	6-10	0-0	4-8	4	2	0	0	2	4	2
L Brown	18	1-2	0-0	2-2	0	5	0	2	2	1	5
Riser	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Walker	20	5-7	0-0	0-0	5	0	0	0	0	1	19
Totals	200	25-70	1-8	11-11	44	5	19	2	12	15	59

NORTH CAROLINA	Min	FG	3FG	FT	Reb	Ass	PF	BK	Stl	To	Pt
Smith	40	7-19	1-3	5-7	23	2	2	2	0	6	20
Sampson	38	9-25	3-7	0-0	8	0	0	0	0	6	21
Crawley	39	4-7	0-0	6-8	4	2	2	0	2	6	14
Jones	22	0-5	0-1	2-3	2	3	3	0	4	4	2
Lawrence	40	1-2	0-0	0-0	3	1	0	0	0	1	2
Coppel	12	0-2	0-1	0-1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mickles	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Schaeffer	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Geor	6	0-1	0-0	0-0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	200	21-61	5-13	13-19	44	5	19	2	12	15	59

Louisiana Tech..... 32 27 -- 59

North Carolina..... 32 28 -- 60

Technical - None  
Deadball Rebounds - N. Carolina 2, La. Tech 0  
Attendance - 11,996

### Championship Checkpoints

✓ One-point victory margin smallest in NCAA women's title history.

✓ Only the second time in basketball history a national title was decided on a last-second shot (N.C. State men vs. Houston in 1983).

✓ All 60 of North Carolina's points from starters.

✓ Charlotte Smith's 23 rebounds a women's title game record.

✓ First loss of season for La. Tech when opponent scores below 70.

✓ Two-day attendance of 23,932 was the fifth-largest in women's Final Four history.

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