

BLUE HENS LOOK TO CONTINUE WINNING WAYS WITH YOUNG LINEUP

The University of Delaware women's basketball team enjoyed a year like none other in 2006-07, when the Blue Hens tied a team record with 26 wins and earned an at-large berth in the NCAA tournament. Carried by Colonial Athletic Association Defensive Player of the Year Tyresa Smith, they toppled a pair of top 25 teams, stormed through the regular season unbeaten at home, and let America know that little Delaware was a hoops giant.

Head coach Tina Martin will cherish last year's memories forever. But she acknowledges that they're just that - memories - and knows her team will face huge challenges come 2007.

Smith, the CAA's leading scorer and the very definition of Delaware basketball, took her supernatural hops and 19.8 points per game to the WNBA. She finished a fine career in Newark as the school's all-time steals leader and number two scorer.

The Hens also lost deadeye forward Chrissy Fisher - their second-leading scorer - and steady point guard Alena Koshansky to graduation. Fisher, a third-team All-CAA pick, averaged 13.3 points per night, led the Hens in rebounds at 7.8 per game, and knocked down 43.2 percent of her long-distance tries. Koshansky ran the show with poise and court vision, posting the conference's top assist-to-turnover ratio.

To fully appreciate what those three seniors meant to UD, consider the following numbers: 1) Smith, Fisher, and Koshansky, the only players to start all 32 games, accounted for 60 percent of Delaware's points, half of its rebounds, and 54 percent of its assists; 2) Fisher and Koshansky combined for 70 of the squad's 116 three-pointers, and; 3) Smith placed in the CAA's top 15 in seven major statistical categories.

To make matters worse for Martin, shooting guard Melissa Czorniewy's career was cut short by a back injury midway through the season, while forward Kristina Gineitis left the team over the summer to focus on academics. Needless to say, the Hens will have to fill lots of holes if they want to notch their eighth 20-win campaign in the last nine years.

But Martin firmly believes the Hens can compete with the Colonial's best once again, and that conversation begins with Kyle DeHaven. Delaware's third-leading scorer (8.5 ppg.) in 2006-07, the point guard saw action in all 32 games as a junior. Despite making only 13 starts, she matched Koshansky

2007-08 Delaware Women's Basketball Quick Facts

UNIVERSITY FACTS

Location	Newark, DE 19716
Founded	1743
Enrollment	16,000 Undergraduates
Nickname	Fightin' Blue Hens
Home Court	Frank Acierno Arena (Bob Carpenter Center)
Capacity	5,000
NCAA Affiliation	NCAA Division I
Conference	Colonial Athletic Association

ADMINISTRATION

President	Dr. Patrick T. Harker
NCAA Faculty Representative	Dr. John L. Burmeister
Director of Athletics	Edgar N. Johnson
Assistant Athletic Director, Internal Affairs (SWA)	Susan Groff
Associate Athletic Director, Recreation Services and Athletics	Kate Pohlig
Associate Athletic Director, Business and External Affairs	Scott Eatough
Assistant Athletic Director, Marketing	Curt Krouse
Athletics Development Director	Dr. Scarlett Schmidt

ATHLETIC MEDIA RELATIONS

Assistant Athletic Director, Media Relations	Scott Selheimer
Selheimer's Home/Cell Phone	(302) 368-8639 / (302) 562-5129
E-Mail Address	selheim@udel.edu
WBB Contact	Kenny Riedel
Riedel's Office / Cell Phone	(302) 831-2186 / (302) 841-4164
E-Mail Address	bluecat@udel.edu
Sports Information Fax	(302) 831-8653
Website	www.udel.edu/sportsinfo

ATHLETIC TRAINING STAFF

Sports Medicine Physician	Dr. Andrew Reisman
Head Trainer	Keith Handling
Associate Head Trainer	Joan Couch
Assistant Athletic Trainers	John Smith, Dan Watson, Courtney Butterworth (WBB)
Head Strength & Conditioning Coach	Jason Beaulieu

COACHES

Head Coach	Tina Martin (Lock Haven '86)
At Delaware (Overall / Same)	215-110 (11 seasons)
Office Phone	(302) 831-8663
E-Mail Address	tmartin@udel.edu
Associate Head Coach	Jeanine Radice (Fordham '89, 12th season)
Assistant Coaches	Melissa Dymek (Richmond '04, fourth season), Tiara Malcom (Delaware '05, second season)
Director of Basketball Operations	Alison Pate (Maryland Eastern Shore '02, first season)

BASKETBALL FACTS

NCAA Tournament Appearances	2 (2001, 2007)
WNIT Tournament Bids	4 (2002, 2003, 2005, 2006)
2006-07 Season Record	26-6 (16-2 CAA/T-2nd)
2006-07 Postseason	Defeated #6 seed Virginia Commonwealth, 79-58, in CAA Tournament Quarterfinals
.....	Lost to #2 seed James Madison, 67-56, in CAA Tournament Semifinals
.....	Lost to #23 Michigan State, 69-58, in NCAA Tournament First Round
Letterwinners Returning/Lost	7/5
Starters Returning/Lost	2/3
Newcomers	5
Captains	Kyle DeHaven, Courtney Irving, Jamie Mundy

Returning Players

Kyle DeHaven (Sr., G, 8.5 ppg, 3.3 apg, 3.1 spg, 31 3-pointers, CAA All-Defensive Team)
Courtney Irving (Sr., F, 6-1, 7.8 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 57.6 FG%, 81.8 FT%)
Farrah Ferguson (So., C, 6-4, 2.4 ppg, 2.7 rpg, 30 blocks)
Jamie Mundy (Jr., G, 6-0, 1.3 ppg, 1.2 rpg)
Corinthia Benison (So., G, 5-9, 1.4 ppg, 0.6 rpg)
Ethlynn Thomas (Jr., G, 5-10, 0.9 ppg, 0.9 rpg)
Sha'Ron Harrison (So., F, 6-1, 0.6 ppg, 1.0 rpg)

Key Losses

Tyresa Smith (G, 19.8 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 2.5 spg, CAA Defensive Player of the Year, First Team All-CAA)
Chrissy Fisher (F, 13.3 ppg, 7.8 rpg, 43.2 3-Pt. FG%, Third Team All-CAA)
Alena Koshansky (G, 7.3 ppg, 3.3 apg, 32 3-pointers)

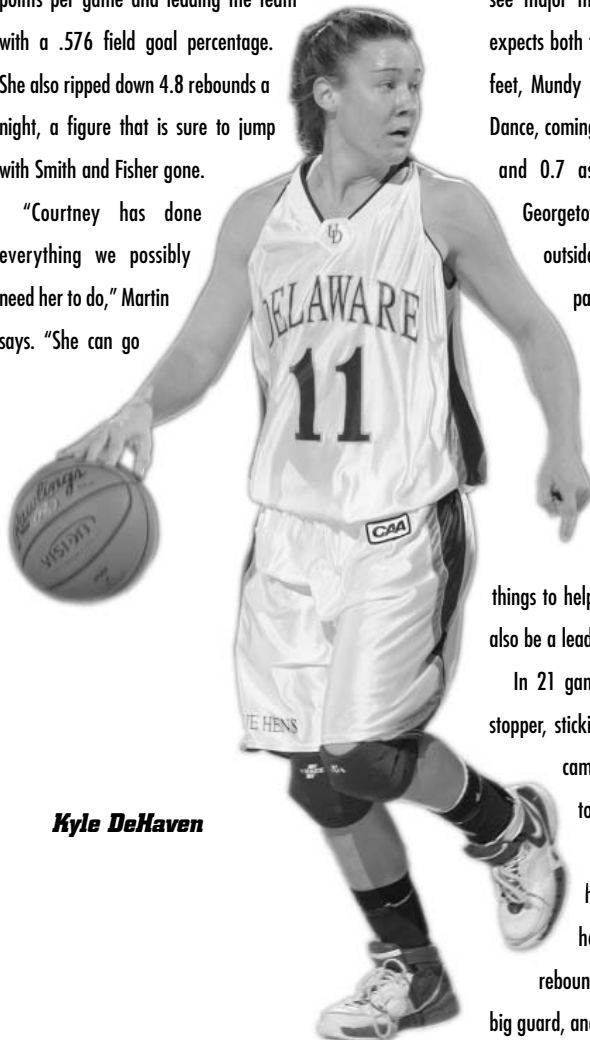
with 106 assists and led the league with 99 steals, including a school-record nine in a December win over Boston University. A ballhawk with lightning-quick hands, she was arguably the team's best on-ball defender last year. But if UD is to keep pace with the likes of NCAA tourney teams Old Dominion and James Madison, Martin says DeHaven must take on more of the offensive load.

"She has to be a leader on and off the court," Martin says of her floor general, a CAA All-Defensive Team pick last year. "As a senior, it's really important that she leads the underclassmen and freshmen. And her game has really emerged. She's gotten a much better mid-range game and she can hit the three consistently. She's gonna run our team as the point, but we're expecting her to score more this year. She's gotta look for that, and I think she's more than capable of handling it. Her role will expand, especially on the offensive end."

Martin looks for the Blue Hens' other returning senior, power forward Courtney Irving, to step up her game in the post and provide some much-needed scoring punch. The 6-foot-1 Irving produced as a part-time starter in 2006, pouring in 7.8 points per game and leading the team with a .576 field goal percentage.

She also ripped down 4.8 rebounds a night, a figure that is sure to jump with Smith and Fisher gone.

"Courtney has done everything we possibly need her to do," Martin says. "She can go



Kyle DeHaven

into a starting role this year, but she always thinks team first. She'll be fine if we decide to bring her off the bench, but she's gonna strive to be a starter. I'm expecting her to be the inside force we need ... rebounding, scoring, and being more vocal."

Minus five of her top seven scorers, Martin knows Delaware's success rides on one letter: D. Enter sophomore forward Farrah Ferguson, whose length and defensive presence earned her 12 starts and 17 minutes a game as a freshman. The Hens' tallest player at 6-foot-4, she led the squad with 30 blocks and proved more than capable on the glass, especially at the offensive end. Martin says the Pennsylvania product oozes potential and could develop into an enforcer in the paint.

"Farrah's really come a long way and worked hard in the weight room," she says. "She blocks shots, she runs the floor well, and her 10-foot jump shot's gotten a lot better. I think she's gained a lot of confidence from starting at center our last six or seven games, and that should carry over to help her set the tone for us defensively. And when she's on defensively, that makes her more aggressive on offense."

Junior guards Jamie Mundy and Ethlyne Thomas should see major minutes in the Blue Hen backcourt, as Martin expects both to contend for starting spots. An ideal wing at 6 feet, Mundy played a key role in the Hens' run to the Big Dance, coming off the bench in 20 games to put up 1.3 points and 0.7 assists per contest. Martin, who named the Georgetown transfer a captain in the offseason, likes her outside stroke and says she's one of the Hens' best passers.

"Jamie really gave us a spark at the end of the season after coming back from a dislocated knee," Martin says. "She's ready for a breakout year because she can open up some things with her outside shot. She's tough, rebounds well, takes charges. Jamie does all the little things to help us win games. But as a captain, I want her to also be a leader."

In 21 games last year, Thomas emerged as a defensive stopper, sticking the other team's best player whenever she came in to spell Smith or Fisher. Martin expects her to show the complete package this winter.

"With what we've lost offensively, E's gonna have to pick up her game," she says. "We played her inside at times because we needed her rebounding. This year, she'll be at her natural spot as a big guard, and she'll have an opportunity to show us what she

can do. She's a very good athlete who knows how to get to the basket."

Sophomore shooting guard Corinthia Benison averaged 1.4 points per game in 16 appearances last season, statistics that belie her scorer's mentality. If that knack for the net shines through, the 5-10 spark plug could find herself in the starting five.

"Corinthia's a lefty with a real feel for the game on offense," Martin explains. "She can score in bunches and stroke it from deep, but shot selection's a question. She'll definitely challenge for the two-guard spot."

Sha'Ron Harrison, a tough power forward with a nose for the ball, also returns to the fold.

Martin sees potential in the sophomore, who saw spot duty last year.

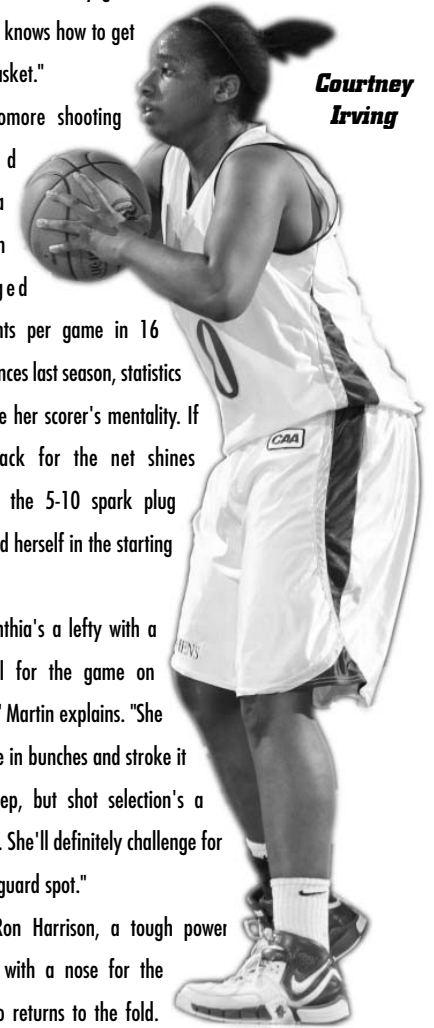
"Sha'Ron is one of the best rebounders we have," she says. "The question with her is conditioning. I'm hoping she steps up to help us inside. If she can stay focused on conditioning, she can be a factor."

The Hens welcome Brittany Bell and Ariene Jenkins, red-shirt freshmen who practiced with the team last season, and four highly touted recruits to the fold. Martin expects Bell, a 6-2 Wilmington native who starred at Padua Academy, to contribute on the inside.

"Brittany is extremely athletic and can shoot the three, but the way she'll get minutes is on defense," Martin says. "She can really disrupt offenses, which is what we need. She can get playing time if she commits herself defensively."

Jenkins, a versatile wing from Woodbridge, VA, should get plenty of minutes and make a case for a starting spot.

"Ariene can score on the block and rebound," Martin says. "She's a real physical presence, she's in great shape, and I really think she can make an impact on both ends of the floor."



Courtney Irving

Martin and her staff put together a 2007 recruiting class that she calls "probably the most athletic group we've ever had." She expects all four true freshmen — Gracie Palucis, Vanessa Kabogo, Tesia Harris, and Eva Riddick — to play immediately.

Palucis, a 5-foot-10 point guard from Moon Township, PA, made 76 three-pointers as a high school senior. Without Fisher and Koshansky, the Hens will need her range.

"She shoots the three very well and has a good feel for the game," Martin says. "She'll have an opportunity to get minutes behind Kyle. I'm very confident in her ball-handling and decision-making. She can even slide over to shooting guard with her shooting ability."

Kabongo, a native of the Congo, played prep ball in Ontario and saw action with the under-20 Canadian national team. Martin says the 5-foot-9 off-guard has the tools to make a name for herself from day one.

"Vanessa is already one of the best athletes on the team," Martin says. "She should challenge for the starting spot at [shooting guard]. Her future here is bright."

In dire need of a pure scorer, Martin may have found one in Harris. The



Farrah Ferguson

6-foot-1 wing from Dix Hills, NY, who averaged 19 points and 16 rebounds last season at Half Hollow Hills West High School, was rated the 104th best prospect in the country by Allstar Girls Report. Martin says Harris is more than worthy of the ranking.

"Tesia can do a lot of things on the floor: post up, score off the dribble, score with a straight-up jump shot," Martin explains.

"What separates her from other young players is that she likes to score, likes to take over games, likes to take big shots. She'll definitely challenge for a starting role."

Riddick, a 6-3 center from Rochester, NY, is expected to contend for minutes in the frontcourt. Her size should bolster a Hen front line that lacked length last year.

"Eva runs the floor well and can block shots," Martin says. "Offensively, she's worked hard on her game over the summer. She'll have an opportunity for playing time, and I'm not ruling out playing her and [Ferguson] together inside."

With nine freshmen and sophomores on their roster, the Hens will count on DeHaven and her fellow upperclassmen to promote chemistry and help the youngsters develop. Martin knows youth will be an obstacle, but she welcomes the challenge.

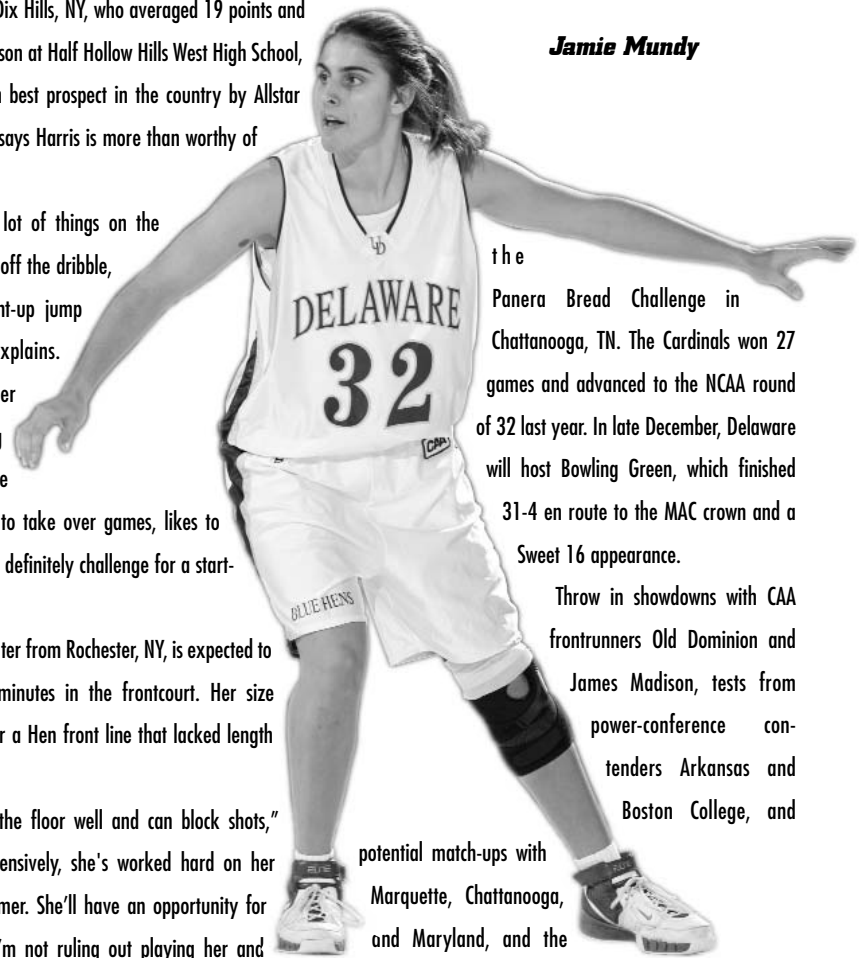
"I'm excited about having such a young team," she said. "But we've gotta rely on the two seniors and the two juniors to step up and bring everyone together. It's important that our chemistry comes together quickly."

Delaware might struggle with inexperience early, but Martin says the Hens' schedule will force the freshmen to mature on the fly.

"This schedule is the toughest we've ever had," she says. "With our youth, that's a huge test. But they'll be out there against some national-caliber competition, and I think that's exciting to them."

UD will face at least five teams that made the NCAA tournament last year. The Hens open the season November 9, when they'll get a visit from MEAC champion Delaware State in the first round of the Preseason Women's National Invitational Tournament. On November 23, they will take on Louisville at

Jamie Mundy



The Panera Bread Challenge in Chattanooga, TN. The Cardinals won 27 games and advanced to the NCAA round of 32 last year. In late December, Delaware will host Bowling Green, which finished 31-4 en route to the MAC crown and a Sweet 16 appearance.

Throw in showdowns with CAA frontrunners Old Dominion and James Madison, tests from power-conference contenders Arkansas and Boston College, and

potential match-ups with Marquette, Chattanooga, and Maryland, and the Hens are in for a fight.

They can survive that arduous slate with defense. Delaware allowed a CAA-low 55.9 points per game in '06-'07, when it also led the league in steals and turnover margin. Anchored by DeHaven and bolstered by their cast of athletic newcomers, the Hens could approach those numbers once again. Martin says pressure is the key.

"We need to press, run, get turnovers, and create our offense through defense," she says. "What we lost in firepower, we have to make up with defensive intensity."

"The young players have to buy into the team concept, understand that chemistry comes before anything else, and understand that defense is where we set the tone. If everyone can buy into our team concept of pressure and getting after people, I think we'll be okay in the long run."