



Ferris State Men's Basketball



2002-03 SEASON PREVIEW

A tireless work ethic and a passion for the game helped first-year Ferris State University men's basketball head coach **Bill Sall** land the vacant coaching position last spring.

Sall, a former FSU assistant coach, hopes those same qualities will become synonymous with Bulldog basketball as Ferris prepares to embark on the 2002-03 campaign, its first of the Sall era.

"With hard work and a blue-collar mentality, we'll be able to overcome a lot of things," Sall said. "Our goal is to get better in every practice and every game."

"If we can put ourselves in a situation where we play with a competitive fire and intensity each time out, the rest will take care of itself."

Sall's young squad, which includes only five juniors and seniors, has established two primary goals for the 2002-03 season.

"Our guys would like to bring some respect back to the program and have a chance to win every game," he said. "I think those are good objectives for us to start with and see what they can do."

A trio of seniors, led by 2002-03 *Street & Smith's* Division II Preseason Honorable Mention All-America selection **Adam**

Anderson, will be expected to spark Ferris' resurgence this season. Besides the 6-10 Anderson, who missed the final 23 games last season due to a

bone bruise injury (knee), fellow co-captain **Jeff Guernsey** and three-year letterwinner **Brian Monahan** will be called upon to provide leadership under the new regime.

"Besides the fact we have a new offense and new schemes, we've also got a lot of new faces in terms of personnel," Sall said. "However, I think this group has done a great job so far and really came together as a unit this fall."

Effective team cohesiveness will be crucial as the Bulldogs continue to adapt to Sall's coaching philosophy, which places a primary focus on rebounding, solid team defense and an up-tempo offensive attack.

"It's going to take some time for us to put everything together," said Sall. "Our success will be determined on how well our team melts together and how committed they make themselves to the Bulldog basketball program."

Anderson, the younger brother of FSU assistant coach **Cory Anderson**, returns as one of the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference's (GLIAC) top interior threats after being granted a medical redshirt season. As a junior in 2000-01, the veteran center led the league in scoring (21.3 ppg) while attaining first-team GLIAC North Division and GLIAC All-Defensive Team accolades. He headlines a crop of eight returnees from last season's team, which finished 4-22 overall and placed seventh (1-17) in the league's North Division.

"Adam's received a lot of honors in the past and has been the go-to-guy," Sall said. "For us to take that next step, he's going to have to continue to improve and become a tremendous rebounder."

His ability to stay healthy will also be a key as Ferris' 2002-03 roster features only four players 6-6 or taller, including returning starter **Nathan Wruble**. The 6-7 Wruble averaged 2.7 points and 4.2 rebounds per game last season in 26 outings.

In addition to Anderson and Wruble, three other players with significant starting experience are back. Sophomore guard **Carlton Epps** placed third among the team's 2001-02 scoring leaders with 228 points (9.5 ppg). He also tallied the program's eighth-best single-season steals mark (58) while ranking third among the conference's leaders (2.42 spg) and seventh (2.46 rpg) in the league's offensive rebound category.

Carlton's twin brother, **Corey Epps**, made 14 starts as a rookie and averaged 6.2 points per game. Monahan, who totaled 6.1 points per

contest, started 14 of his 21 appearances in 2001-02.

Other returning letterwinners include Guernsey, one of the team's top three-point threats, and sophomore wing player **Michael Anderson**, who saw action in 25 contests a year ago. Sophomore guard **Timothy O'Brien** also is back after playing in 25 games as a freshman.

"It will take some time for us to put everything together, but I'm pleased with where we're at," Sall said. "Our focus is on striving to get better every time we take the floor."

Highlighting a list of seven newcomers are transfers **Dennis Springs** and **Willie Thomas** and freshman recruit **Jeffery Shanahan**.

The 5-6 Springs, who earned third-team 2000-01 Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) Division I All-State accolades, provides the Bulldog attack with needed quickness and solid ball-handling ability.

Thomas scored 14 points per game and garnered honorable mention All-Michigan Community College Athletic Association Western Conference kudos at Muskegon Community College a year ago. He gives Ferris an athletic and versatile wing player who has the ability to finish around the basket.

A 6-5 forward, Shanahan averaged 18.4 points, 12.4 rebounds and 2.5 steals per game while leading Flint Kearsley High School to a school-record 15-6 overall mark during the 2001-02 campaign. The two-time (2001-02) team Most Valuable Player Award winner was also a unanimous first-team 2001-02 All-Big Nine Conference selection.

Two other transfers, **David Clarke** and **Jeff Blevins**, also joined the Ferris program and are expected to play key roles. Clarke played collegiate basketball at Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference member Siena Heights the last two seasons (2000-02) while Blevins averaged 16.5 points, five assists and four rebounds per game as a senior at Marion High School in 2000-01. Both, according to Sall, are good outside shooters who could contribute.

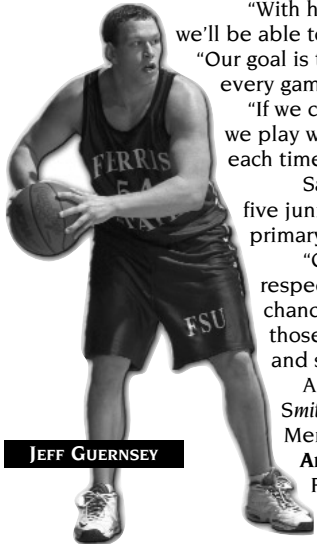
Two freshmen – **Dominic Gray** and **John Terrell** are both expected to redshirt after stellar high school careers.

"We're extremely young, which won't help us a lot in game situations," Sall said. "The schedule is also tough and we're going to have to be ready to go to war every night."

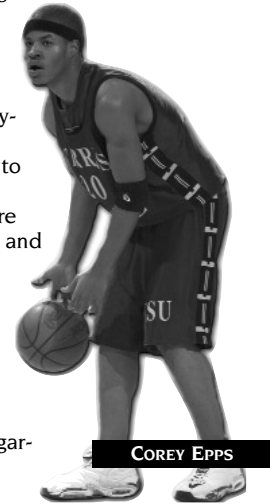
Ferris will play nine of its first 11 games away from home, including an eight-game stretch that covers the entire month of December.

"We'll find out where we're at in a hurry," said Sall. "The non-conference schedule is demanding, but it provides us with an opportunity to prepare well for our league contests."

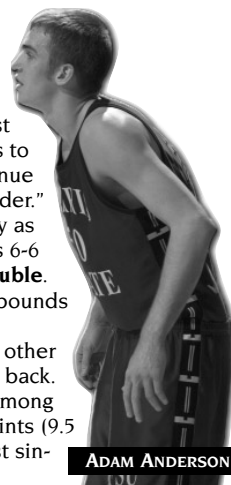
"During the month of December, we're going to play a number of outstanding teams and really have to be road warriors."



JEFF GUERNSEY



COREY EPPS



ADAM ANDERSON

Returnees

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
3	Michael Anderson	G/F	So.	6-3	1L
12	Timothy O'Brien	G	So.	6-3	1L
20	Corey Epps	G	So.	6-2	1L
22	Brian Monahan	G	Sr.	6-1	3L
23	Carlton Epps	G	So.	6-2	1L
42	Nathan Wruble	F	Jr.	6-7	2L
50	Adam Anderson	C	Sr.	6-10	3L
54	Jeff Guernsey	G/F	Sr.	6-5	3L

Newcomers

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
4	Dennis Springs	G	Fr.	5-6	T
10	David Clarke	G	So.	5-11	T
30	Jeffery Shanahan	F	Fr.	6-6	HS
33	Jeff Blevins	G	Fr.	6-1	T
34	Willie Thomas	G	Jr.	6-4	T
RS	Dominic Gray	G	Fr.	6-2	HS
RS	John Terrell	F	Fr.	6-6	HS

G – Guard
HS – High School

F – Forward
T – Transfer

C – Center