



# FERRIS STATE VOLLEYBALL

## 2007 SEASON PREVIEW

**T**eam strong. The term may be simplistic to most but for the 2007 Ferris State University women's volleyball team, those two words take on a significant amount of meaning.

Entering the 2007 season, the Bulldogs are focused squarely on making the 35th anniversary edition of Ferris State Volleyball something special.

"This is a tremendous group of individuals and one of the most focused teams I've ever coached," said FSU head coach **Tia Brandel-Wilhelm**. "They are all committed to being at their best on the court and in the classroom."

"As a whole, these ladies have a great sense of team unity and everyone possesses an outstanding work ethic as demonstrated by every player on the squad passing their physical fitness test," added Brandel-Wilhelm.

For Ferris State, being among the best on almost an annual basis has provided a significant amount of pride and accomplishment within the program. Certainly the numbers speak for themselves as the Bulldogs have compiled an impressive 200-78 (.719) record over the last nine seasons while advancing to the NCAA Division II Great Lakes Regional Tournament five times during the nine-year span, including four of the last five seasons. In fact, FSU has won 20 or more matches eight times in Brandel-Wilhelm's 11 years at the helm.

Ferris State is coming off the heels of another solid season as the Bulldogs turned in their ninth consecutive winning campaign in 2006 at 21-9 overall while registering the program's eighth 20-win season in the last nine years to date.

"While 2006 was a highly-successful one for us, it left us all wanting more," said Brandel-Wilhelm. "There were some really good things which happened, but we all now have a much better sense of what it's going to take to be a champion and what are responsibilities are. The focus was exceptional during our spring season and we had one of the most productive spring camps in my coaching career at Ferris."

With nine letterwinners returning, including at least four regular starters from last season's squad, the Bulldogs are poised to make a return trip to the NCAA Tournament. FSU, which earned a berth in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) Tournament for the ninth year in a row, also competed in the NCAA-II Tourney for the 14th time in school history a season ago.

There's no question the graduation losses of outside hitter Danielle Baucher and Karla White, a pair of 2006 American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) All-Great Lakes

Region First-Teamers and first-team All-Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) performers, will be difficult to replace. Both



**JAMIE PALAZZOLO**

provided outstanding team leadership and played a huge part in the Bulldogs' offensive scheme.

Despite the loss, plenty of firepower returns to the floor with the most notable returnee being senior outside hitter **Lindsay Tye**. The 2006 All-GLIAC Second-Team selection turned in her most productive season ever last fall by setting career single-season bests in almost every statistical category. The 5-10 FSU captain paced the Bulldogs in service aces (55) while ranking second in digs (289) and third in kills (355). Tye, who registered double-figure kills in 20 matches and had four 20-plus kill outings, will not only be relied upon for her offensive skills but leadership qualities as well.

A solid veteran performer, **Jamie Palazzolo** will also assume captain duties this year as the fifth-year senior's leadership skills and strong defensive presence will help fuel the Bulldog attack. The 5-7 libero-outside hitter received action in all of the team's 30 matches last season and her 449 digs total represented a squad high. For her efforts, Palazzolo was an All-GLIAC Honorable Mention honoree and was the 2006 season recipient of the team's Bulldog Award after being a co-winner of the award the previous campaign. Palazzolo owns the distinction of being just the second player in Ferris State history to don the libero uniform since the position was instituted in 2002.

Serving with those two as captains for this upcoming season will be junior setter-outside hitter **Candice Marut** and senior outside hitter **Lindsay Johnson**. The 5-10 Marut, who was a co-recipient of FSU Coaches Award a year ago, was the team assists leader with a career-high 720 total and claimed runner-up squad honors for the best attack percentage (.229) in 101 games. Marut also chipped in with career season bests in digs (157), kills (54) and block assists (31). Johnson started in 24 of 28 matches played in last season and produced 46 service aces, 179 digs, 31 block assists, 37 kills, and 22 assists which all were personal career highs. The 5-10 GLIAC All-Academic Team member was the squad's top scholar-athlete last season as evidenced by achieving the FSU President's Academic Award for having

the team's highest cumulative grade point average.

Another regular returning to net is sophomore middle hitter **Kristy Gilchrist**, who started in all 30 matches and appeared in a team-high tying 111 games in 2006 after redshirting the prior season. The 6-0 Gilchrist showed a great deal of promise by placing fourth among the team leaders with 220 kills and third in attack percentage at .221 in her collegiate debut and should play a vital role this season. Hoping to do likewise is 5-11 sophomore **Katie Edwards**.

The outside hitter played in only five matches last fall before suffering a season-ending injury. Edwards did receive a medical redshirt and has worked diligently in the off season in order to battle for a regular lineup spot.

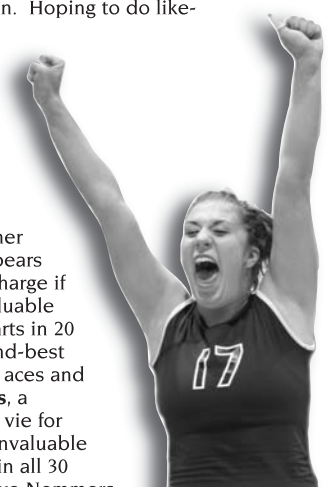
Junior setter **Andrea Rich** has displayed continual improvement in her first two seasons as a Bulldog and appears well equipped to lead the offensive charge if called upon. The 5-10 Rich gained valuable match experience last year with 18 starts in 20 matches. She racked up a team second-best 595 assists to go along with 29 service aces and 217 digs in 76 games. **Emily Nemmers**, a 6-0 outside-middle hitter, should also vie for extensive playing time and supplies invaluable experience to the lineup. Appearing in all 30 matches last fall, the highly-competitive Nemmers chalked up a career-best in kills (63), digs (35), and block assists (25).

Two up-and-coming players to keep an eye on this season and the two to follow are sophomores **Amanda Kettlewell** and **Sarah Lark**. A FSU Coaches Award co-honoree, the 5-10 Kettlewell saw action in 19 matches as a utility player during the 2006 campaign and the outside-middle hitter is back to provide competitive depth at the front row positions. Lark participated in 27 games last season exclusively in a reserve capacity, but should receive a considerable amount of action this fall with a year of collegiate experience gained. The 5-11 middle hitter, who was praised by Brandel-Wilhelm for a great spring season performance and an excellent off season, figures to play a more significant role in Ferris State's fortunes this year.

Contending for playing time will be a pair of redshirt freshmen in 5-8 libero **Whitney Rupp** and 5-7 setter **Dana Ruttie**. Both sat out last season and should be ready to offer contributions in 2007 as a result of having a better grasp of the Bulldogs' system. Rupp will vie for action in the backrow while Ruttie's notable defensive talents will give Ferris strength in that phase of the game.

Comprising the incoming six-member freshmen class are 6-2 middle hitter **Arielle Goodson**, 6-0 middle-outside hitter **Danielle Hamilton**, 6-0 outside hitter **Ashley Nugent**, 5-8 outside hitter **Dana Fairbanks**, 5-6 setter-outside hitter **Leslie Swanson**, and 5-8 libero-defensive specialist **Lisa Tobiczkyk**. All fit the program's mold of being team-oriented, hard-working individuals.

"This is a unique group which is a joy for me to coach," said Brandel-Wilhelm. "This team has the potential to accomplish a lot this season."



**LINDSAY TYE**

### Returns

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
1	Katie Edwards	OH	So.	5-11	1L
2	Amanda Kettlewell	OH/MH	So.	5-10	1L
3	Candice Marut	S/OH	Jr.	5-10	2L
7	Lindsay Johnson	OH	Sr.	5-10	3L
8	Jamie Palazzolo	OH/LIB	Sr.	5-7	3L
9	Sarah Lark	MH	So.	5-11	1L
17	Lindsay Tye	OH	Sr.	5-10	3L
18	Andrea Rich	S	Jr.	5-10	2L
19	Emily Nemmers	OH/MH	Jr.	6-0	2L
20	Kristy Gilchrist	MH	So.	6-0	1L

### Newcomers

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
4	Dana Ruttie	S	RFr.	5-7	RS
5	Arielle Goodson	MH	Fr.	6-2	HS
6	Leslie Swanson	S/OH	Fr.	5-10	HS
10	Dana Fairbanks	OH	Fr.	5-8	HS
12	Lisa Tobiczkyk	LIB/DS	Fr.	5-8	HS
13	Whitney Rupp	LIB	RFr.	5-8	RS
14	Ashley Nugent	OH	Fr.	6-0	HS
15	Danielle Hamilton	MH/OH	Fr.	6-0	HS

MH – Middle Hitter      OH – Outside Hitter      S – Setter  
 DS – Defensive Specialist      LIB – Libero      RS – Redshirted

