

There's an old saying which notes, "There is strength in numbers." Tenth-year Ferris State University women's volleyball head coach **Tia Brandel-Wilhelm** certainly believes that's the case.

For the second consecutive year, the Bulldogs' 2005 roster will be significantly large featuring 19 individuals. The group includes six starters and 12 returning letterwinners from last season's squad, which claimed the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) championship and made the school's 12th NCAA Division II Tournament appearance.

"We'll be extremely deep as well as dynamic and athletic this season," Brandel-Wilhelm said. "We have a lot of experience coming back and a number of players who redshirted last year will be ready to play."

While the Bulldogs must replace the program's third all-time leading assists leader in Ashley Green and American Volleyball Coaches Association Second-Team All-America pick Karla Fairbanks, Brandel-Wilhelm believes the squad has enough talent, depth and versatility to contend for the school's 10th league title following last year's 25-7 finish.

"We'll miss the tremendous leadership of Karla and Ashley in addition to their ability," said Brandel-Wilhelm. "Several returning players will have to step up in order for us to replace their valuable leadership."

Headlining the list of returners is a veteran five-member senior class led by two-time (2003-04) Daktronics Division II All-Great Lakes Region Second Team honoree **Brittney Godlewski**. The 5-7 Godlewski, who's the only libero position player the Bulldogs have ever had, also became the first libero in GLIAC history to attain second-team all-conference laurels last season. Godlewski tallied 396 digs last year and previously earned All-GLIAC Honorable Mention kudos twice (2002-03). Needless to say, she ranks as one of the premier players at her position across the nation and has proven to be a valuable asset in the Bulldog arsenal.

The other seniors include middle hitters **Lauren Heine** and **Becky Thureau**, outside hitter **Sarah Miller** and setter/defensive specialist **Emily Clouse**.

Heine and Thureau were virtually interchangeable at times last campaign as both notched 186 kills and 39 digs. Heine, who was named to the 2004 GLIAC All-Tourney Team, added a team-leading 150 total blocks while the 6-4 Thureau stopped 86 attacks at the net. Both have been mainstays in the middle for the Bulldogs the last two years and expect this season to be no different.

Clouse played in 112 games last campaign and filled in as the squad's starting setter while Green was out with an injury late in the year. She netted 572 assists and also provided a highly-valuable contribution in the back row with 220 digs. Clouse has shown the ability in the past to adequately fill Green's void and direct the Bulldog offense. With Green gone, her steady play and experience at the position should help keep the Bulldogs from missing a beat.

Miller, at 6-3, not only gives the squad significant height but also an established veteran to help provide needed leadership. The fifth-year senior saw action in 36 games last year and should contend for additional time once again this season.

With Fairbanks now a member of the FSU coaching staff following a four-year career filled with numerous accomplishments, the Bulldogs could call upon junior outside hitter **Danielle Baucher** to become the squad's next go-to hitter at key times on the outside.

The 5-10 Baucher led Ferris with 416 digs in 2004 and posted the team's second-highest kills figure with 340 total. An honorable mention AVCA All-Great Lakes Region selection, Baucher also earned second-team All-GLIAC recognition. She has started 29 matches each of the last two seasons and played in 117 of the squad's 120 games a year ago. Her versatility and all-around play combined with an added year of experience should make her one of the league's best.

Fellow junior **Karla White** emerged as a quality middle hitter in her second Bulldog season. The 6-0 White quietly produced 263 kills, 112 blocks and 40 digs while sharing time with both Heine and Thureau among others inside. White cracked the starting lineup on 26 occasions after playing in only 51 games her initial season. The 2004 FSU Coaches Award Co-Recipient ranked third among the squad's kills leaders and placed second in blocks while recording GLIAC All-Academic Team honors. White has the potential and power to become an all-conference type of player in the middle of the FSU lineup.

The Bulldogs will also welcome back junior outside hitter **Molly Picket** for a third season this year. Picket hit the court in 28 matches and totaled 79 kills and 44 blocks in 2004's title run. She also proved to be an effective server as she placed fifth among the squad's leaders with 20 aces. Picket figures to battle for more action with Fairbanks' departure this season.

Ferris' five-member junior class also includes two other outside hitters

in **Keagan Krauss** and **Jamie Palazzolo**. The 5-10 Krauss claimed GLIAC All-Academic Team honors in 2004 when she played in 32 games. Palazzolo sat out last season after competing in 24 matches as a reserve in 2003. Both will help provide ample depth and solid play on the outside.

"I believe we'll be a good ball-control team this year and more balanced in our offensive play," Brandel-Wilhelm said. "However, I truly think we'll be much more of a defensive-oriented team."

Additional returning experience will be supplied by sophomore outside hitters **Lindsay Johnson** and **Lindsay Tye** along with redshirt freshmen **Candice Marut**, **Andrea Zylstra** and **Emily Nemmers**.

Tye tallied 17 kills in 31 games last season while Johnson produced six kills in 14 appearances. Marut, despite redshirting last season, was honored as a co-winner of the team's Bulldog Award for displaying the heart and desire of a Bulldog in 2004. The 5-10 Marut is the Bulldogs' only other returning setter behind Clouse and could help provide needed relief at the spot.

Nemmers notched eight kills in six matches before opting for a medical redshirt a year ago. Both Nemmers and Zylstra will contend for interior playing time with Nemmers also using her versatility to play on the outside at various times.

"A number of our players redshirted last season so they've already had time in our program and will be coming in as freshmen with valuable experience," said Brandel-Wilhelm.

Despite having 15 returning players from last season's team, Brandel-Wilhelm and her staff did elect to bring in four incoming recruits. The four-some includes the Cedar Springs' twin duo of outside hitter **Katie Edwards** and middle hitter **Jacque Edwards**. Both are talented and athletic players who should develop well and grow with experience in Brandel-Wilhelm's program.

Along with the Edwards' sisters, the Ferris staff also inked the Anchor Bay High School combination of setter **Andrea Rich** and middle hitter **Kristy Gilchrist**.

Rich started every match of her four-year prep career and finished eighth in Michigan's Miss Volleyball voting as a senior. Rich, who's a cousin and former prep teammate of FSU's Karla White, has the tools to vie for immediate playing time.

The 6-0 Gilchrist played her initial season at Anchor Bay during the 2004-05 season after spending her first three prep campaigns at Dakota High School in Macomb, Mich. She teamed with Rich to form a potent offensive punch at Anchor Bay.

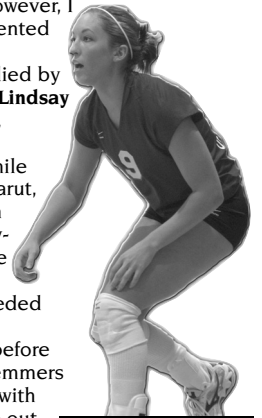
The four incoming players combined with the 15 squad members returning from a year ago provide Brandel-Wilhelm with optimism and excitement heading into the program's 33rd campaign.

"Our team will be extremely balanced this year and we're excited to defend our conference championship," said Brandel-Wilhelm. "The GLIAC is always a tough league so we'll have to be prepared to play well each time we step on the court."

Luckily for the Bulldogs, "There is strength in numbers."



EMILY CLOUSE



KEAGAN KRAUSS

Returns

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
2	Lauren Heine	MH	Sr.	6-1	3L
5	Becky Thureau	MH	Sr.	6-4	3L
6	Danielle Baucher	OH	Jr.	5-10	2L
7	Lindsay Johnson	OH	So.	5-10	1L
8	Jamie Palazzolo	OH	Jr.	5-7	1L
9	Keagan Krauss	OH	Jr.	5-10	2L
11	Emily Clouse	S/DS	Sr.	5-9	3L
13	Brittney Godlewski	LIB	Sr.	5-7	3L
14	Molly Picket	OH	Jr.	6-0	2L
15	Karla White	MH	Jr.	6-0	2L
16	Sarah Miller	OH	Sr.	6-3	3L
17	Lindsay Tye	OH	So.	5-10	1L

Newcomers

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
1	Katie Edwards	OH	Fr.	5-11	HS
3	Candice Marut	S/OH	Fr.	5-10	RS
10	Andrea Zylstra	MH	Fr.	6-2	RS
12	Jacque Edwards	MH	Fr.	6-0	HS
18	Andrea Rich	S	Fr.	5-10	HS
19	Emily Nemmers	OH/MH	Fr.	6-0	RS
20	Kristy Gilchrist	MH	Fr.	6-0	HS

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