

Ferris State Women's Basketball

2002-03 SEASON PREVIEW

Fifth-year Ferris State women's basketball head coach **Tracey Fisk** notices one key difference from years past when looking at the prospects for her 2002-03 team.

"We'll be a much more balanced team than we've been," she said. "I expect several players to vie for playing time, which will provide us with added depth and more versatility."



STEPHANIE BENAAR

The return of eight letterwinners from last season's 14-12 squad, the debut of five promising freshmen and the addition of co-captains **Patti Larson** and **Molly Potvin**, both of whom missed the majority of last season with injuries, provide Fisk with numerous options heading into the 28th season of Bulldog women's basketball.

"It should be an exciting year," she said. "We really have a lot of players capable of putting points on the board on any given night, which should make this the most competitive team we've had."

While the loss of first-team 2001-02 All-Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) North Division standout **Debbie Killips** leaves a potential void, Fisk feels the opening provides a tremendous opportunity for a number of players to step in and help Ferris in its quest to post a sixth-straight winning campaign and reach the GLIAC Tournament for a fourth consecutive season.

"Debbie was a three-year starter, so there's no doubt losing her will have a huge impact," Fisk said. "However, it leaves the door wide open for others to step up and make major contributions."

In addition to Larson, who started 14 games during the 2000-01 season, the Bulldogs also return six other players who earned valuable starting experience last season.

Ferris' interior attack is expected to be keyed by returning second-team 2001-02 All-GLIAC North Division center **Bridget Horwitz**, who tallied 15 points and 8.8 rebounds per game as a sophomore. The 6-2 junior currently ranks third (58) among the school's career blocks leaders and is eighth in career field goal percentage (.475; 244-514) at FSU.

"Bridget is a proven scorer who is a force to be reckoned with inside," Fisk said. "I expect her to play with more consistency this season. We'll count on her to both score and rebound."

Horwitz's continued development should benefit from Ferris' added depth and a healthy **Ann Platz**, who battled through injuries in 2001-02. Platz, a senior, averaged 3.2 points and 3.7 rebounds per game in limited action last season.

Depth at the interior post positions has also formed through the addition of prep recruits **Darcie Philp** and **Kelly McLaughlin**.

Philp, a 6-1 forward/center, averaged 19 points and 10 rebounds per game during the fall 2001 campaign at Ubyly High School while attaining second-team 2001 *Detroit Free Press* Class C All-State accolades. A 6-0 forward, McLaughlin led Clare High School to a school-record 18-4 overall mark and a second consecutive Jack Pine Conference (JPC) Championship as a senior. She also received fifth-team 2001 *Detroit Free Press* Class C All-State recognition.

Nowhere is Ferris' depth more prevalent than at the forward positions where Larson, Potvin, junior **Stephanie Benaar** and sophomore **Sarah Duesing** headline the list of returnees.

Along with Killips, Benaar was the only Ferris player to start all 26 games in 2001-02. Despite averaging only 3.3 points per game, her consistency and defensive skills proved to be invaluable in Fisk's full-court attack.

The 5-10 Duesing progressed nicely throughout the 2001-02 campaign and entered FSU's starting lineup for the final six games.

Potvin figures to make significant contributions after totaling 5.5 points per game in six appearances prior to suffering a season-ending knee injury a year ago.

The versatility of **Mary Brown**, a 5-8 freshman, should allow her to make an instant contribution at both the guard and forward positions. Brown averaged 14 points and 9.5 rebounds per game as a prep senior while leading Lake Michigan Catholic High School to a 26-1 overall mark and a Class D state semifinal round appearance for the second consecutive season. The four-time (1998-01) first-team All-Red Arrow Conference pick garnered

first-team 2001 Class D All-State accolades from the *Detroit Free Press*, *Detroit News*, *Associated Press* and the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan (BCAM).

In the backcourt, the Bulldogs will rely heavily on sophomore **Lucy DeMartin**, a second-team 2001-02 Verizon Academic All-District IV pick. She scored 14.2 points and grabbed 4.2 rebounds per game last year while starting 24 contests.

"Lucy is a multi-dimensional player who continues to improve her overall game," Fisk said. "She's cranked up her defense too, which should be difficult for opponents to handle."

With Killips gone, the bulk of the ball handling chores will likely rest upon the shoulders of several players, including DeMartin, sophomores **Lindsey Kohn** and **Kari Searles** and freshmen **Erin Miller** and **Kara Gallert**. Junior **Michelle Welch**, a two-year letterwinner, is expected to redshirt.

One of the team's top outside threats, Kohn saw action in 25 games last season and ranked fourth among the squad's overall three-point leaders with 13 treys. Searles appeared in 10 games and gained valuable first-year experience.

The 5-7 Miller averaged 17.8 points, 6.1 rebounds and 6.8 steals per game as a senior while leading Niles High School to a 22-2 overall mark and the school's fourth consecutive regional championship game appearance. A fourth-team 2001 *Detroit Free Press* Class B All-State honoree, Miller received 2001 BCAM Academic All-State honors and the 2001 *Niles Daily Star* Player-of-the-Year Award.

Gallert propelled Wyoming Park High School to both a district championship and regional tournament berth during the 2001 campaign. She averaged 15 points, five assists and four rebounds per game while attaining fifth-team 2001 *Detroit Free Press* Class B All-State accolades.

"Our incoming freshmen fit into our system well," said Fisk. "Because of our depth, I expect us to be a much improved defensive team."

A particularly sound defensive approach will be needed this season as Ferris' non-conference schedule ranks among the league's toughest. The Bulldogs will play eight of their first 10 outings away from home, including a seven-game stretch that covers the entire month of December.

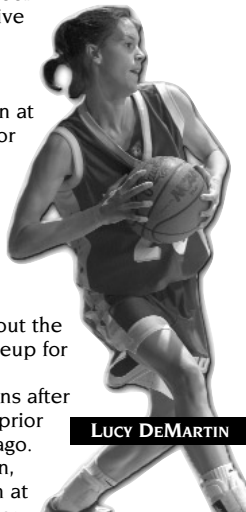
"Our non-conference schedule is extremely competitive," Fisk said. "However, I think when you're a player or a coach, you want to play the best teams and we're definitely doing that."

Ferris will play 23 of its 25 regular-season contests against Great Lakes Region opponents. The lone exceptions are the 2002-03 home opener versus NAIA power St. Francis (Ind.) and a trip to NCAA Division I Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne. FSU will also battle NCAA-I Kent State in an exhibition contest.

"It's a great opportunity for us to step up our level of play," Fisk said. "In order for us to be successful, we're going to have to be ready to compete each and every night."



BRIDGET HORWITZ



LUCY DEMARTIN

Returns

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
5	Kari Searles	G	So.	5-6	1L
10	Michelle Welch	G	Jr.	5-8	2L
12	Lindsey Kohn	G	So.	5-6	1L
15	Sarah Duesing	F	So.	5-10	1L
23	Lucy DeMartin	G	Jr.	5-9	2L
24	Stephanie Benaar	F	Jr.	5-9	2L
30	Patti Larson	F	Sr.	5-9	3L
31	Molly Potvin	F	So.	5-10	1L
40	Bridget Horwitz	F/C	Jr.	6-2	2L
54	Ann Platz	C	Sr.	6-2	1L

Newcomers

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
11	Erin Miller	G	Fr.	5-7	HS
14	Kara Gallert	G	Fr.	5-6	HS
33	Mary Brown	G/F	Fr.	5-8	HS
42	Kelly McLaughlin	F	Fr.	6-0	HS
45	Darcie Philp	F/C	Fr.	6-1	HS

G – Guard

F – Forward
HS – High School

C – Center