

The pieces did not all fit last season for the Ferris State University women's basketball team.

Despite returning three starters and eight letterwinners from the school's second-ever NCAA Division II National Tournament appearance in 2003-04, the squad literally limped to an 11-17 overall record and a fourth-place 9-9 Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) North Division finish in 2004-05. The Bulldogs also failed to record a winning season for the first time in eight years.

While the Bulldogs were faced with the task of replacing three graduate seniors a year ago, injuries however proved to be the biggest downfall.

In only the second game of the year, Ferris lost its leading returning scorer in talented guard **Erin Miller** to a knee injury for the entire campaign. After struggling to a 4-10 start, the Bulldogs bounced back to win five consecutive games before lightning struck for the second time as point guard **Kristin Reinhart** was sidelined for the duration of the campaign.

Last season's bad news, however, could become this year's good news as the Bulldogs try to put all the pieces together once again.

With both Miller and Reinhart sidelined over the course of the season, eighth-year Ferris State head coach **Tracey Bloodworth-Fisk** believes her program has developed ample depth as the Bulldogs were forced to play many of this season's returning letterwinners many more minutes than what was originally expected last campaign.

In all, Bloodworth-Fisk again returns eight letterwinners this season with Miller and Reinhart leading the way.

"I believe we all still have a bad taste in our mouths from last season," said Bloodworth-Fisk. "Each returning player used some of our losses as motivation to prepare for this season. The experience we gained last season and the lessons learned should help us achieve much more this campaign."

A junior, Miller reached double-figure scoring 28 times in 2003-04 while ranking second among the squad's scoring leaders at 17.0 points per game. Her performance two seasons ago enabled her to attain both first-team All-Great Lakes Region and All-GLIAC North Division accolades along with being one of 40 finalists for the NCAA Division II Kodak/Women's Basketball Coaches Association All-America team. Her offensive exploits and all-around talent in the backcourt are a welcome return this time around and should help her emerge as one of the conference's top scorers.

The 5-5 Reinhart was asked to turn up her game in Miller's absence a year ago and had a breakout-type of season prior to her injury. Although she missed the final eight games of the year, she still managed to receive second-team All-GLIAC North Division kudos by averaging a team-high tying 15.4 points per ballgame while performing a majority of the ball-handling duties.

If the talented combination of Miller and Reinhart can manage to stay injury-free the entire campaign, they could possibly form one of the league's most dominant backcourt tandems.

On the wing, Ferris also has the luxury of a returning starter in senior tri-captain **Kelly McLaughlin**. While the 6-0 McLaughlin might not provide tremendously impressive offensive numbers, she has proven to be a stabilizing force on the defensive end and provides valuable leadership ability.

"I believe every player on this team will play a key role in our success, but it is crucial our three captains expect more out of themselves than what they even think is possible and then be willing to make the necessary sacrifices to get us to where they want to go," said Bloodworth-Fisk.

Sophomore guard **Katie Loosvelt** saw her playing time increase dramatically after Reinhart's injury last season and progressed rapidly down the stretch. Despite her 5-3 frame, Loosvelt has solid ball-handling skills and the ability to direct the Bulldog offense from the point guard spot.

Fellow sophomore **Sam Johns** appeared in 26 contests last season and averaged nearly six points per game in her rookie campaign. Her continued development and improvement could allow her to become an even more productive option in the squad's playing rotation.

While the Bulldogs appear rather loaded on the perimeter, interior depth and returning experience won't be quite as plentiful.

Ferris lost both first-team All-GLIAC center Bridget Horwitz and two-time GLIAC All-Defensive Team honoree Sarah Duesing to graduation. Together, they averaged nearly 23 points and 12 rebounds per outing last year in leading Ferris State to the league's annual postseason tournament for the sixth consecutive year along with helping achieve the program's ninth-straight campaign with 10 or more victories.

Sophomore forward/center **Rachel Folcik** features the bulk of the returning frontcourt production as she tallied 8.8 points and 5.4 rebounds last season. Folcik's solid low-post game and nice shooting touch will be

a key ingredient as Ferris tries to establish an interior attack to take some of the pressure off its backcourt.

Two-year letterwinner **Audrey Thwing** is also back. She saw ample playing time off the bench last year and figures to be an integral component in this season's interior attack.

Sophomore **Ashley Corbiere**, who played in two games last campaign, and redshirt freshman **Lindsey Deyo** both have an added year of experience and could figure into the mix.

Bloodworth-Fisk also expects several members of an extremely talented five-member freshmen recruiting class to contribute immediately.

In the backcourt, guard **Teghan Thelen** enters the program with impressive credentials of her own following a stellar prep career at Pewamo-Westphalia High School. The 2004 *Detroit News* and *Detroit Free Press* Class C All-State honoree averaged 17 points, seven rebounds and seven assists per game for the Pirates as a senior while being chosen as a Michigan Miss Basketball Award finalist.

With the lack of returning experience in the frontcourt, Bloodworth-Fisk and her staff inked four others who will battle for playing time either on the wing or inside.

Forward **Aubrey Freshour** garnered second-team *Detroit Free Press* Class A All-State kudos as a senior after guiding L'Anse Creuse High School to a district title in the fall 2004 campaign. Her competitive mentality and agility should help ease her adjustment to the collegiate game.

Rogers City High School product **Ashley Fleming** averaged 22 points and 18 rebounds in her final season of prep basketball. The three-time (2002-04) All-Straits Area Conference First Team selection picked up second-team *Detroit News* Class C All-State laurels while being chosen as the league's Player of the Year Award recipient. A talented all-around athlete, Fleming will help provide a low-post presence in the Bulldog arsenal.

Third-team 2004 *Detroit News* and *Detroit Free Press* Class B All-Stater **Caitlin Hutchison** led Riverview High School to its third consecutive district crown with an 18-5 overall record. Bloodworth-Fisk expects her to become a consistent contributor in the Bulldog program.

Finally, the Bulldogs also received a commitment from prep forward/center **Jenna Guay** of Escanaba during the spring signing period. The 6-1 Guay tallied 11.5 points and six rebounds as Escanaba High School posted a 15-6 overall record in 2004.

While last year's schedule was brutal for the Bulldogs, this year's slate won't be easy by any stretch of the imagination. Ferris opens with an exhibition game at perennial NCAA Division I power Notre Dame and closes with a league road contest at West Michigan archrival and conference favorite Grand Valley State. In between those two outings are six non-league road games, including a Thanksgiving weekend trip to Texas and a post-Christmas swing to Florida.

The Bulldogs will also host the Ferris State Holiday Classic just prior to the December holiday break where they will battle regional foes Southern Illinois-Edwardsville and Lewis (Ill.).

"With the valuable experience we gained last season, I expect us to compete for the GLIAC Championship. Of course, the division's level of play has elevated once again and a number of teams will vie for that spot," said Bloodworth-Fisk.

The pieces to the puzzle are in place and the Bulldogs are working to fit them all together this time around.



RACHEL FOLCIK



KATIE LOOSVELT

### Returns

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
3	Katie Loosvelt	G	So.	5-3	1L
5	Ashley Corbiere	F	So.	5-10	1L
11	Erin Miller	G	Jr.	5-7	2L (R)
22	Audrey Thwing	F	Jr.	5-11	2L
24	Kelly McLaughlin	F	Sr.	6-0	3L
25	Sam Johns	G/F	So.	5-9	1L
30	Kristin Reinhart	G	Jr.	5-5	2L
33	Rachel Folcik	F/C	So.	6-1	1L

### Newcomers

No.	Player	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Exp.
10	Caitlin Hutchison	F	Fr.	5-11	HS
14	Teghan Thelen	G	Fr.	5-6	HS
31	Aubrey Freshour	F	Fr.	6-0	HS
40	Jenna Guay	F/C	Fr.	6-1	HS
42	Lindsey Deyo	F	Fr.	5-11	R
45	Ashley Fleming	F/C	Fr.	6-0	HS

G – Guard  
T – Transfer

F – Forward  
HS – High School

C – Center  
R – Redshirt

