Celebrating women in basketball.

Sunday, Dec. 10, 2006
at Hilliard Gates Sports Center

2006 vs. vs.
The Gates Sports Center is home for the IPFW women's basketball and men's and women's volleyball teams. The center is also the practice facility for the IPFW men's basketball program.

The more than 68,000-square-foot, tri-level facility is located on the northeast end of the IPFW campus and features a multipurpose gymnasium with three practice/game courts. The Gates Sports Center seats 2,500 for events. The center also houses a 1/9-mile indoor tartan rubber track, three racquetball/handball courts, a fully equipped fitness center, and newly renovated athletic locker rooms.
Academician and scientist Michael A. Wartell came to IPFW as vice chancellor for academic affairs and chemistry professor in 1993. On July 1, 1994, Wartell was installed as chancellor. His prior experience includes positions at Sandia Laboratories in Albuquerque, N.M.; Humboldt State University in Arcata, Calif.; and James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va.

He received a B.S. in chemistry from the University of New Mexico and both an M.S. and Ph.D. from Yale University in physical chemistry.

Wartell currently serves on the U.S. Army Science Board and has worked on such projects as chemical warfare, manpower and logistics, and decontamination. He also serves on the Defense Science Board and chairs the Defense Intelligence Agency Science and Technology Advisory Board. Wartell stays involved in the Fort Wayne community by serving on the Board of Directors of the Greater Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce, Corporate Council, Leadership Fort Wayne, and Fort Wayne Philharmonic.

Mark Pope was named IPFW’s director of athletics in July 2001 as the university was transitioning from NCAA Division II to Division I. That transition was completed Sept. 1, 2002, as IPFW earned NCAA Division I certification — on schedule and on budget.

Since that initial year, Pope has set about transforming IPFW Athletics into a program worthy of the name “Division I.” The annual IPFW Soccer Showcase has become a nationally recognized sporting event; men’s basketball attendance increased tenfold from 2000, including the highest-percentage increase of all Division I institutions in 2003–04; women’s volleyball attendance doubled from 2004 to 2005; men’s volleyball attendance was ranked third nationally in 2004; and contributions to Athletics increased by 50 percent from 2003 to 2005.

With these successes and others, Pope has maintained a focus on the student component of the IPFW student-athlete. Pope’s departmental goal of a 3.0 grade-point average has been reached for the past three years.

Pope has a B.A. from Purdue University and a J.D. from Indiana University. He has been a member of the bar of the State of Indiana for 27 years. Pope and his wife, Julie, are the proud parents of two sons, Brent and Brad.
What is HOOPLA?

Women’s college basketball has evolved into a game of high-level excitement, athleticism, and entertainment in the last 20 years. In response, IPFW has sought to bring college teams to Fort Wayne that have elevated the sport to another level. The university hoped to provide a venue for the community and region to see outstanding women athletes from around the country, and we decided there needed to be an event to showcase the talent and contributions of these players. Thus, HOOPLA: Celebrating women in basketball has been created.

We have brought together some of the finest talent in the Midwest for this year’s event, featuring Ball State, Valparaiso, Indiana University, and IPFW. HOOPLA brings together female players and spectators from cities and towns across the region to promote and celebrate women’s basketball and its accomplishments.

The teams in this year’s event boast some impressive numbers. In total, the teams have produced five regular season and five conference champions; 10 trips to the NCAA tournament; two trips to the WNIT; 36 All-Conference, five All-America selections; five Academic All America selections; and one NCAA Post Graduate Scholarship winner in the last 10 years. These impressive numbers show not only the quality of the programs, but also the quality of student-athletes who provide positive role models for young women and future women basketball players. We decided to bring them all together for one day of action.

Fort Wayne began as an outpost on the western frontier more than 200 years ago. It gained its nickname, the “Summit City,” by being the highest place between the Maumee River and Wabash River basins.

Now with a population in excess of 200,000 people, it is the second largest city in Indiana. As such, it offers citizenry a wide variety of things to do, see, and appreciate. For the sports minded, there are three professional teams based here: United Hockey League’s Fort Wayne Komets, Midwest League’s Single A Baseball Fort Wayne Wizards (whose parent club is the San Diego Padres), and United Indoor Football Association’s Fort Wayne Freedom. Fort Wayne holds several places in sports history. It is the birthplace of the National Basketball Association and the home of the Daisies, one of five teams in the first professional women’s baseball league. Fort Wayne also has the honor of holding the first night baseball game under lights.

For those interested in the performing arts, the Summit City offers venues such as the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Fort Wayne Ballet, Civic Theatre, Artlink, Fort Wayne Dance Collective, and Fort Wayne Youtheatre.

Some little known trivia about Fort Wayne: the inventor of television, Philo T. Farnsworth, was born here as was fashion designer Bill Blass. Fort Wayne is the home of the washing machine, baking powder, parking meters, magnetic wire, streetlights, and gas pumps.

HISTORY OF THE SUMMIT CITY
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Chris Paul was officially named the head coach of the women’s basketball team on March 22, 2006.

Paul took over head coaching duties for the team on Dec. 21, 2005, after Bruce Patterson resigned from the position. Paul finished his first season at the helm with a 6-14 record after the Mastodons started the season going 1-7.

At IPFW, Paul is responsible for all daily activities, which include practice, game preparation, recruiting, and coaching defensive schemes.

Paul has served in multiple capacities at IPFW. He was previously the associate head coach for the Mastodons, a position he maintained for more than two seasons. Paul spend the previous three seasons as first assistant coach for the women.

Before coming to IPFW, Paul spent six years as an assistant coach at the University of Saint Francis under Bruce Patterson. While at USF, Paul was responsible for daily activities including practice, recruiting, and game preparation.

Paul received a B.S. in business administration in 1994 from the University of Saint Francis. As a student there, he was a four-year letter winner, and he holds the school record for assists in a game (18) and in a season (147).

In his limited free time, Paul assists in coaching his son Jalen’s T-ball, flag football, and basketball teams.

Paul resides in Fort Wayne with his wife, Trisha, a partner at Barrett & McNagny, and their three children, sons Jalen (7) and Jackson (4) and daughter Jersey.
2006–07 Season Outlook

After a tumultuous 2005–06 season, the women’s basketball team is looking toward the future.

The ladies return three of the five starters from the 2005–06 season and look to improve on their previous records. IPFW started to rebound—after going 5–1 at the end—and finished the season with a 7–21 record.

The Mastodons return their two top scorers in senior Ashley Johnson and junior Johnna Lewis-Carlisle. Together, the ladies’ combined efforts led to 813 points last year. In the scoring ranks, the Dons return every player but one who scored more than 100 points last year.

The Mastodons host seven guards for the 2006–07 season. Seniors Ashley Johnson, Hilary O’Connell, and Pavla Pletková, along with junior Johnna Lewis-Carlisle, look to improve on last year. Together, the ladies combined for 1,012 points last year. Sophomore Nanyamka Moore and freshmen Courtney Reed and Hannah Thieke will also be looking for playing time in 2006–07.

Ashley Johnson received many accolades in 2005–06. She was named Independent Player of the Week (Feb. 28) and was named to the All-Independent WBB Second Team. Topping the list was the breaking of a record that stood for 15 years. Johnson connected for 22 of 23 free throws against North Dakota State on Feb. 26 to set a new individual game record. Johnson is a captain for her senior year and leads the team on and off the court. Coach Chris Paul will count on her continued leadership in 2006–07.

Hilary O’Connell is returning to the Dons’ lineup after surgery in the off-season. O’Connell is a captain again this year, and Paul looks for her to get back on the floor because her strong point is her outside shooting. O’Connell capped last year with 6.9 ppg and 3.2 rpg averages. She was named to the Independent All-Academic Team.

Pavla Pletková is a strong, hard-nosed player. Although she didn’t see a lot of game time last year, the junior college transfer is a presence. Her experience from two years at Yavapai, as well as last year, makes her a great leader for the underclassmen, according to Paul. Pletková was named to the All-Academic team for Independents in her first season with the Dons.

Junior Johnna Lewis-Carlisle led the Dons in all scoring categories last season. She averaged 14.7 ppg as a sophomore and hit 73.2 percent of her free throws in 2005–06. Lewis-Carlisle was named Independent Player of the Week (March 3) and was named to the Second Team All-Independent Team.

“She’s a very quick guard who has the ability to score on anyone at anytime,” Paul says. “I expect a break out season for her this year.”

Sophomore Nanyamka Moore averaged 4.3 ppg and 2.8 rpg in her freshman campaign. The 5-8 guard will vie for minutes once again after seeing action in all 28 games last season. “Probably the best athlete on the team,” Paul says. “Her aggressive style of play, both on the offensive and defensive ends, causes many mismatch problems for our opponents.”

Courtney Reed comes to IPFW after a successful high school career at Fort Laramie. Reed is a true point guard and will give IPFW added depth in the backcourt. Reed averaged 13.93 ppg and 2.56 rpg during her senior season at Fort Laramie.

Hannah Thieke rounds out the Dons’ guards. She also comes to IPFW after a successful athletic career. Thieke is a Kokomo, Ind., native and graduated from Western High School. Thieke is a hard worker and is an athletic wing player with a very quick release. Thieke was a three-sport athlete at Western, participating in soccer, track, and basketball. She averaged 16.3 ppg and 5.6 rpg during her senior season.
Felisha Legette-Jack, who has served on two USA Basketball gold medal–winning coaching staffs and owns 15 years of Division I college coaching experience, was named the eighth head women’s basketball coach at Indiana University on April 19. Legette-Jack arrives in Bloomington after directing Hofstra to a 19-12 overall record and 12-6 Colonial Athletic Association (CAA) mark in 2005–06, culminating in a Women’s National Invitation Tournament appearance.

Legette-Jack guided Hofstra to its one of its best seasons in school history in 2005–06. The Pride’s 19 victories were the second-best in school history, and the 12 league triumphs tied a school record. In addition to the team success, Hofstra ranked among the CAA’s top three in scoring offense (second, 69.5 ppg), field-goal percentage defense (.379), rebounding offense (second, 43.0), rebounding margin (third, +3.9), assists per game (second, 16.0), steals (second, 11.03), offensive rebounds (second, 16.73), defensive rebounding (second, 26.27) and three-point field goals per game (third, 5.37).

Legette-Jack played an instrumental role in helping USA Basketball to the 2005 FIBA U19 World Championship in Tunisia last summer. Legette-Jack served as an assistant to Duke’s Gail Goestenkors on a U.S. team that averaged 105.9 points per game and posted an impressive 46.3 points per game margin of victory. The U.S. team is just the third to finish the U19 World Championships undefeated, and it is the first team to post an 8-0 ledger.

In her first three years at Hofstra, Legette-Jack guided the Pride to the CAA Tournament quarterfinals each year, and she earned 2003–04 CAA Coach of the Year after Hofstra went 14-14 overall and 11-7 in the league. The 11 league victories marked the most for Hofstra in 10 years. Hofstra’s 27 victories from 2003–05 were the most in consecutive years since Hofstra won 39 games from 1982–84.
A new era of Indiana women's basketball under first-year Head Coach Felisha Legette-Jack has begun, and the Hoosiers are ready for the challenge the 2006–07 season has ahead of them.

Legette-Jack and her staff bring 30 years of coaching experience to the Hoosiers that include stops along the way in the ACC, Atlantic-10, Big Ten, BIG EAST, MAC, and Mountain West, to name a few.

Most notably, Legette-Jack, the 2003–04 Colonial Athletics Association Coach of the Year, spent the last four years turning the Hofstra women’s basketball program into a postseason contender. In her fourth season leading the Pride, Legette-Jack guided Hofstra to 19 wins and a school-record 12 league wins, culminating in a Women’s National Invitational Tournament appearance in 2005–06.

Legette-Jack also brings a wealth of experience from two USA Basketball gold medal–winning coaching staffs that included Duke Head Coach Gail Goestenkors and Ohio State Head Coach Jim Foster.

With Legette-Jack’s experience and enthusiasm, the Indiana women’s basketball program is looking to build a new legacy in Bloomington.

The Hoosiers return seven from a squad that went 19-14 last season and made a trip to the quarterfinals of the Women’s National Invitational Tournament.

Despite the loss of graduating seniors Jenny DeMuth and Cyndi Valentin, the Hoosiers will look to leadership from a trio of captains in senior Leah Enterline (Monroeville, Ind./Heritage), junior Nikki Smith (Sylvania, Ohio/Northview), and sophomore Whitney Thomas (Bloomington, Ind./North).

Enterline represented Indiana on the Big Ten Foreign Tour Team, July 18–28, and averaged 6.8 points, 3.0 assists, and 1.3 steals as the all-star squad went 4-0 on the 11-day trip through Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The 5-9 guard averaged 2.0 points and totalled 26 assists in 33 appearances last season.

Smith returns as IU's leading scorer after averaging 7.2 points per game during the 2005–06 season. The 5-9 shooting guard also shot a team-high 7.2 rebounds per game in her rookie season for the team. Thomas earned Big Ten All-Freshman honors as one of the top Hoosiers from last season. The 6-foot post recorded three double-doubles as a freshman, including a 12-point, 13-rebound effort against Ohio State on Jan. 19. She was the only freshman in the league to record more than one double-double on the season. Thomas also had nine double-digit rebounding efforts and started 32 of IU's 33 games.

Smith and Thomas return as the only two Hoosiers who earned starting roles in at least 30 games a year ago.

The Hoosiers also welcome back Thomas after she averaged 6.1 points and a team-high 7.2 rebounds per game in her rookie season for the team. Thomas earned Big Ten All-Freshman honors as one of the top Hoosiers from last season. The 6-foot post recorded three double-doubles as a freshman, including a 12-point, 13-rebound effort against Ohio State on Jan. 19. She was the only freshman in the league to record more than one double-double on the season. Thomas also had nine double-digit rebounding efforts and started 32 of IU's 33 games.

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The Hoosiers also return 6-7 center Sarah McKay (Victoria, B.C., Canada/Stelly's Secondary) as one of three seniors on the 2006–07 Indiana roster. McKay, who earned “Player with Most Improvement” honors at the legendary Pete Newell's Tall Women’s Basketball Camp during the summer of 2006, averaged 1.7 points and 1.0 rebounds in 19 games for Indiana last season. McKay provided quality reserve time last season, including a team-best 13 points against Illinois on Jan. 26.
Valparaiso Crusaders

Meet the Team

1 Sanna Helenius F 5-11 Jr. Vantaa, Finland/Makelanrinteen Lukio (John A. Logan College)
10 Betsy Rietema F 6-1 Sr. Grand Rapids, Mich./Christian
12 Leah Hochstetler G 5-6 So. Berlin, Ohio/Hiland
14 Launa Hochstetler G 5-6 So. Berlin, Ohio/Hiland
20 Kelly Peller G 5-11 Fr. Chesterton, Ind./Chesterton
23 Krystal Taylor F 5-105th/Sr. Minneapolis, Minn./North
25 Whitney Farris G 5-11 Fr. Kokomo, Ind./Kokomo
31 Aimee Litka F 5-9 So. South Bend, Ind./Saint Joseph's

32 Sarah Ott F 6-1 Jr./So. Chippewa Falls, Wis./Chippewa Falls
33 Carrie Myers G 5-11 Sr. Stickleyville, Va./Lee
34 Katie Emig C 6-2 Fr. Farmington Hills, Mich./Birmingham (Marian)
35 Tamra Braun C 6-5 Sr. Savage, Minn./Prior Lake
43 Evva Comans C 6-4 Fr./So. Zonhoven, Belgium/Kindshed Jesu Hasselt
44 Agnieszka Kulaga G 5-6 So. Tarnow, Poland/I Liceum Ogolnokształcace

Keith Freeman

Valparaiso University Head Coach Keith Freeman took over as the sixth head coach in the history of the Valparaiso University Crusader women’s basketball program prior to the 1994–95 season.

The school’s and the Mid-Continent Conference’s all-time winningest coach, he enters the 2006–07 season with a record of 209-141 (.597) at Valpo. Beginning his 19th overall season of coaching women’s collegiate basketball, Freeman owns a 338-188 (.643) all-time mark.

During the past nine seasons, Freeman’s squad has recorded 18 or more victories seven times. With his exceptional overall mark, his teams have won more than 70 percent of their games at the Athletics-Recreation Center, compiling a 111-42 (.725) record since he took over the program.

During the 2005–06 campaign, Freeman posted his 200th victory at Valparaiso, a 69-55 triumph at Oakland on Jan. 2, 2006, and has been at the helm for more than 50 percent of the program’s victories all-time.

Freeman led the Brown and Gold to its first outright Mid-Continent Conference title in school history in 2001–02, while also leading the Crusaders to the Mid-Con Tournament title game. In addition, he orchestrated the biggest turnaround in the nation in 2001–02 when comparing records to the previous year, and was named Mid-Con Coach of the Year for his efforts as Valpo finished 26-7.

Valpo made its first postseason appearance in school history in the 2002 Women’s National Invitation Tournament, advancing to the quarterfinals after defeating Michigan and Ball State, both on the road. His Crusaders earned a home contest in the quarterfinals against Houston as well, to end the tournament run. Freeman was a finalist for the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) 2001–02 Coach of the Year award for his efforts during the season. The following year, 2002–03, Freeman guided the Crusaders to their first Mid-Continent Conference Tournament title.
With the 2006–07 basketball season right around the corner for the Valparaiso Crusaders, familiar faces abound for the Brown and Gold and hopes are high for yet another successful season.

This season marks Valpo’s final campaign in the Mid-Continent Conference, as the Crusaders move to the Horizon League in 2007–08. With that in mind, there is nothing the Brown and Gold would rather do than leave on top of the league.

The Crusaders are coming off of a 16-13 season overall as well as a 9-7 mark in the Mid-Continent Conference, finishing fourth during the regular season. Valpo advanced to the semifinals of the conference tournament before a cold shooting night ended the Brown and Gold’s dream of another tournament title.

With winning seasons in 15 of the past 16 years, expectations are high for the Valpo program. Head Coach Keith Freeman returns 11 letter winners, including three starters, from last year’s squad, and has added three freshmen to the roster as well.

Freeman, the Mid-Con’s winningest coach of all time, enters the season with 338 career victories, including 209 at the helm of the Brown and Gold. His squad has been picked to finish second in the Mid-Con this year, and has three preseason All-Conference selections on his roster.

Valpo’s senior class is an extremely talented one, with three All Mid-Con selections among it. The four members of the class of 2007 will be called upon to step up large with regards to leadership, both on and off of the court.

Tamra Braun, a preseason First Team All Mid-Continent Conference selection, looks to continue to climb Valpo’s record books in her final campaign with the Brown and Gold. A First Team All Mid-Con pick each of the past two years, she is second in school history shooting 52.3 percent from the floor throughout the course of her career. A dominant force in the paint, she has grabbed over 600 rebounds during her first three years and is ninth all-time on the Valpo charts.

As a junior, Braun averaged 12.0 points and 8.3 rebounds per game for the Crusaders and will be called upon to step up big again this year. The senior center has posted 16 double-doubles in her first three years on the roster, while averaging double figures in scoring each of the last two seasons.

A preseason Second Team All Mid-Con pick, Betsy Rietema proved she was a go-to scorer for Valpo last season. A Second Team selection last year in the Mid-Con, Rietema led the Crusaders in scoring averaging 13.0 points per game. The senior forward also had her best season of her career on the glass, grabbing 6.0 rebounds per contest.

Rietema, a Third Team Academic All-America selection as a junior, ranks 17th in school history with 855 career points. A proficient free-throw shooter as well, she is shooting nearly 70 percent throughout the course of her career.

Another preseason Second Team selection is Valpo’s force from the outside. Carrie Myers, an Honorable Mention All-Conference pick as a junior, averaged 10.6 points per contest last year while shooting 40.2 percent from three-point range.

A 39.0 percent outside shooter throughout the course of her career, Myers ranks second all-time in three-point shooting percentage entering the 2006–07 season. Her 130 triples also are eighth best in a Valpo uniform.

Fifth-year senior Krystal Taylor is coming off her first complete season in a Crusader uniform. The Valpo forward appeared in all 29 contests for the first time in her career last year, making five starts. Her physical presence in the post will be relied upon this year to provide a one-two combination with Braun inside.
Tracy Roller

Tracy Roller is in her sixth season as head coach at Ball State University. She boasts a 91-59 record guiding the Cardinals and needs just nine victories to become the third basketball coach, men’s or women’s, to reach 100 career victories at Ball State.

Roller has made a name for herself and the Cardinals’ program in her short time at the helm of Ball State. For starters, she is the all-time winningest coach in the 33-year history of the program at Ball State. She earned that honor in just her third season as the Cardinals picked up a 73-49 victory over Buffalo Jan. 24, 2004, in Muncie. The win, her 55th, placed her at the top of the list for women’s hoops coaches in program history.

Under Roller’s direction, Ball State has had a legion of firsts. In her rookie season at the helm in 2001–02, the Cardinals captured the program’s first-ever Mid-American Conference Overall Co-Championship and West Division title. BSU made its first postseason appearance in the WNIT, where it advanced to the second round and hosted both games at Worthen Arena. Roller also was named the 2002 Mid-American Conference Coach of the Year.

The season ended with the best overall (24-8) and best league (13-3) records in school history. Ball State set or tied 21 records during the campaign on the way to shattering single-game and single-season average attendance figures. Several players were on the receiving end of conference and regional awards. Tamara Bowie earned All-MAC First-Team accolades and honorable mention on the Kodak Division I Women’s All-American Basketball Team for the second-straight year. Shala Crook was selected as BSU’s first-ever MAC Defensive Player of the Year, while Kate Endress was named to the MAC All-Freshman Team. To make the season even more remarkable, the 2001–02 team was recognized on the WBCA Academic Top 25 Division I Honor Roll.
The Ball State women’s basketball team enters the 2006–07 season with high hopes and expectations in Head Coach Tracy Roller’s sixth season at the helm. The Cardinals are poised for success this season as they return nine letter winners, including four starters, from last season’s team and welcome in three newcomers.

“Every year you come into a season and you want to win a championship,” Roller said. “This year is no different. Our players know the potential this team has, and they are willing to work to achieve greatness this year.”

The Cardinals are led by seniors Tina Bolte, Kelsey Corbin, and Becca Bajorek. They have combined to appear in 267 games heading into this season with 147 starts total, over half of their career games played.

“Our seniors will provide some great leadership this year and bring a lot of experience to the floor,” Roller said. “All three have something exceptional to contribute to this team, the best of which is still to come.”

Bolte, a 5-7 guard from Columbus, Ind., averaged 10.9 points per game last season as a junior. She is one of the top three-point shooters in the entire Mid-American Conference as she finished last season with 67 three-pointers made while connecting on 37.4 percent of her long-range shots.

“Tina obviously has the biggest scoring potential among the guards, especially from the outside,” Roller said. “She is really driven as a senior to have a great last season so we, as a team, have to work to get her even more good looks this year.”

Corbin, a 5-9 guard from Fort Wayne, Ind., quarterbacked the Cardinals’ attack last season from the point-guard position as she dished out a team-high 115 assists. She also chipped in 8.6 points per game and 3.6 rebounds per contest for BSU. She finished last season with a 1.39 assist/turnover ratio to rank sixth in the MAC.

“Kelsey has high expectations for this year. She shared point guard duties last year but is a versatile guard that can play numerous positions,” Roller said. “We go as far as Kelsey goes. Her leadership is key and she will need to step up even more. She is a great defender who distributes the ball very well.”

Corbin made us a different team last year when she was on the floor,” Roller said. “We need her to stay healthy as she brings a different dimension to our team with her size, strength, and leadership. Her consistent play is very important for our team.”

Roller will rely heavily on this year’s junior class with the likes of Julie DeMuth and Lisa Rusche. DeMuth, a Third Team All-MAC performer last season, has already been picked as a preseason First Team All-MAC West Division member. She led the MAC last season in rebounding (8.9) and doubles-doubles (10) while also leading the team in scoring at 11.4 points per game.

“I expect a lot of solid play out of Julie. Opposing defenses know that she is our best scorer and rebounder. Because of that, she will battle through double teams this season,” Roller said. “She is such a blue collar player that will do whatever it takes to win, I believe she has the ability to be one of the best players in the entire league.”

Rusche, a 6-1 forward from Cincinnati, Ohio, appeared in 28 games last season and averaged 3.1 points and 2.7 rebounds per game. She scored a career-high 11 points against Central Michigan late in the season for the Cardinals.

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Roller will rely heavily on this year’s junior class with the likes of Julie DeMuth and Lisa Rusche. DeMuth, a Third Team All-MAC performer last season, has already been picked as a preseason First Team All-MAC West Division member. She led the MAC last season in rebounding (8.9) and doubles-doubles (10) while also leading the team in scoring at 11.4 points per game.

“I expect a lot of solid play out of Julie. Opposing defenses know that she is our best scorer and rebounder. Because of that, she will battle through double teams this season,” Roller said. “She is such a blue collar player that will do whatever it takes to win, I believe she has the ability to be one of the best players in the entire league.”

Rusche, a 6-1 forward from Cincinnati, Ohio, appeared in 28 games last season and averaged 3.1 points and 2.7 rebounds per game. She scored a career-high 11 points against Central Michigan late in the season for the Cardinals.
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