

Bethune-Cookman-2007 Volleyball

Head Volleyball Coach Vanessa Cogswell has very high hopes for her team this season. Bringing in five new girls and returning a wealth of talent Coach Cogswell believes her future looks very bright for the 2007 season. Last year the Lady Wildcats finished the season tied for 5th in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference with a 9-12 (5-5 MEAC) record and confidence to build for a bigger and better future. Cogswell has set the goals for her team this year and as hefty as they are she believes her team can accomplish them. Cogswell wants her Lady 'Cats to turn in a winning season as well Compete for the MEAC title.

The Lady 'Cats lost six players from last season, **Rachelle Aupperle (.75 kpg and 1.95 dpg)**, **Ariane Guy (3.88 dpg)**, **Vonetta Simpson (2.12 kpg and 1.16 bpg)**, **Terra Wagner (2.53 kpg and 2.97 dpg)**, **Meredith McCormick (6.19 apg)** and **Tabatha Williams (1.89 kpg and .77 bpg)**. Although Cogswell is sadden to lose her talent from last year, two of which only played one season, she is excited about the talent that is coming in to help the Lady 'Cats in their quest for a conference championship. Cogswell says, "This group of girls has the potential of helping the team be successful into the future.

The Lady Wildcats are returning a host of talent, with two seniors leading way. "A person that has stepped up her mental game is **Keisha Vicks**", expressed Cogswell. She is happy that Vicks is growing as a player and is no longer letting mental mistakes set the tone for her game. Cogswell is also looking for Vicks to become more of leader on the court and vocally in this her final season.

Marlene Holmes transferred in from Independence College as an outside hitter last season. Marlene is a very versatile and mature player with good ball control who will help add a lot of game experience to the Lady Wildcats' Volleyball Team. Cogswell looks to Holmes as the fire of the team, "She is a very vocal player that brings lots of energy to the team", stated Cogswell.

Jessica Belton earned the team's Most Improved Player award from two seasons ago and because of her hard work and dedication Belton has gone from a walk-on athlete to a scholarship athlete. Cogswell exclaimed, "Jessica personifies what a player should be, she is the type of athlete that has a never quit attitude." Belton works hard to get what she wants and it show in her off court efforts, while being a junior on the court Belton will be graduating from Bethune-Cookman University in the spring of 2008.

A very mature player, **Reina Carson** was groomed so she can play the outside hitter position. "She is developing at a very good rate and her consistency is improving a lot", stated Cogswell. Carson's down fall is that she has been battling lots of injuries over the last two seasons; nevertheless she will be looked to play valuable minutes for Lady 'Cats.

Junior **Danielle "Dani" Goodrum** is one of the Lady 'Cats most versatile players, playing the outside hitter and the libero positions. Cogswell trusts the ball in Goodrum's hands because she has such good ball control. "She also does those things necessary for the team to win and that's why I play her at multiple positions", said Cogswell.

In her first season **Chelle Ticeson** played more like a veteran than a freshman, fulfilling almost every expectation that Cogswell had for her young athlete. Cogswell believes that the sky's the limit for this young player and is looking for her to grow even more in this upcoming season.

Kumiko Chow got the majority of the starts at the setter position her freshman year, playing most of the season with an injured wrist. Cogswell says, "Kumiko has gotten more consistent with her ball placement and is playing with a greater deal of confidence". Chow is a very hard worker that is only going to get better with time.

Along with seven players with a lot of game time experience, Cogswell is also bringing in five new players; almost all of which will be contributing to the team immediately this upcoming season. **Kiayana Johnson**, a freshman from West Hills, California, will be assisting Chelle Ticeson at the Middle Blocker position. "Since Ticeson is the only true middle blocker on the team

Johnson will be able to help her anchor that position”, said Cogswell. **Shanicka Reddick**, from Jonesboro, Georgia, will be seeing some time as a libero and a defensive specialist. Cogswell says, “Reddick is a player that will see some time at her positions, but we also want her to use this time and learn from our veteran players”. The only transfer on the team this year is **Shakhea Moore-Hagins**, from Orlando, Florida, has one year of playing experience under her belt and Cogswell believes that, that experience will help her in this 2007 season. The second California native on the team is **Alyse Guzman**. Guzman, hailing from Vacaville, California, will be competing for a starting spot at the setter position against Kumiko Chow. Guzman should be looking to see some time throughout the season. **Julie Gibson**, from Espanola, New Mexico, will be also competing against her fellow Lady ‘Cats for playing time. Cogswell expects her to learn and from the veteran players so she may contribute to the season at hand.

The Setters run the team’s offense, there job is to place the ball in the attacker’s hands to create scoring opportunities. Young setters such as Alyse Guzman and Julie Gibson will have to become game ready very quickly, sophomore Kumiko Chow is heading up this position and coach Cogswell wants her last setter to be just as prepared as her first setter. This will only strengthen the Lady Cats’ on the offensive side of the ball with the experience and leadership coming from Kumiko Chow.

The Outside Hitters will be one of the Lady Wildcats’ strongest positions this season. This position has only one freshmen playing, all the other young ladies are coming into their second, third and fourth season of play, bringing a lot experience to this attack core.

The Middle Blockers will be led by sophomore Chelle Ticeson, the only upper classmen at this position. Chelle will be called to help guide the Lady Cats’ rising freshmen Kiayana Johnson and any other athletes that might play this position during the season. The Lady Wildcats are bringing a new level of confidence to this position with all of the youth that they have.

The Libero/Defensive Specialist is a position that is returning three upper classmen. This will be another strong point for the Lady Cats’ on the defensive side of the ball. The defensive unit, headed by Keisha Vicks and Dani Goodrum is tough and quick and will do whatever it takes to help the team win.

The Schedule This year the Lady Wildcats’ schedule is somewhat similar to last season’s. “I feel that keeping our games to a certain amount will help us in the long run, that we won’t burn ourselves out and will have time to recuperate from game to game ”, stated Cogswell. For 2007, Cogswell is concentrating on a winning season and in order to do this the Lady ‘Cats need to have a good non-conference record. Games against The Citadel, Alabama State, North Florida and others will tell the tale of the Lady Wildcats for this winning season they are trying to achieve. Cogswell also believes that she has given her team an advantage by cutting down on away games and scheduling more home games. In the MEAC this year, North Carolina A&T and Florida A&M will be two teams that Cogswell looks to as true tests for her team. Both teams have always been formidable opponents for the Lady ‘Cats and FAMU is always on the top of league standings. Cogswell is very optimistic about this season and achieving her two goals, a winning season and competing for the MEAC title.