



Wittenberg Women's Basketball 2001-02 Season in Review

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SETTING THE SCENE: The Wittenberg women's basketball team put together another fine season in 2001-02, finishing 21-6 overall and 14-2 in the North Coast Athletic Conference. The Tigers, who posted a 12-0 regular season home record and a mark of 14-1 overall in the HPER Center, won an outright NCAC regular season title for the first time since 1998.

The season's successes ended in the finals of the NCAC tournament when the Tigers were toppled by defending champion Ohio Wesleyan in overtime. The Tigers were then considered as an at-large team for the NCAA Division III tournament, but weren't selected.

The tournament title game loss concluded an eventful final week of the season that included a milestone in the coaching career of **Head Coach Pam Smith**. On Feb. 19, she picked up her 300th career victory as the Tigers downed the College of Wooster, 76-69, in the first round of the NCAC tournament. She received two proclamations for her outstanding career accomplishments — from her hometown of Cincinnati and from Springfield Mayor Warren Copeland. After the season, Smith was named NCAC Coach of the Year, the fourth time she has claimed the award.

The Tigers were led by a core group of outstanding juniors. Guards **Kate Rolf (Ft. Wayne, Ind./Carroll)** and **Stephanie Campbell (South Charleston, Ohio/Southeastern)** were the team's leading scorers for a second straight year, while forwards **Meghan Bruggeman (Middletown, Ohio/Fenwick)** and **Tiffany Keller (Massillon, Ohio/Tuslaw)** were probably the team's most improved players. The Tigers went 12 players deep on most nights in 2001-02, giving them plenty of depth to run and press frequently.

SUPER SENIORS: **Meghan Gaydos (Concord, Ohio/Lake Catholic)**, **Jen Korsberg (Dayton, Wash./Dayton)** and **Jill Swary (Columbus, Ohio/Grandview)** all stepped on the court for the last time as a Wittenberg Tiger on Feb. 23, when the Tigers fell to Ohio Wesleyan for the NCAC tournament championship. This group of seniors helped Wittenberg to an impressive 63-32 four-year record and two outright NCAC regular season championships.

Gaydos fished her career with 182 points in only 53 games, 50 of which she started after coming back from a knee injury in her sophomore year. Gaydos' on-court leadership is going to be missed.

Swary finished her Wittenberg career with 308 points in just over 70 games. Swary came on strong late in the 2000-01 campaign, and she carried that into this year. As a senior, Swary started 19 of the team's 27 games and averaged 4.6 points and 3.6 rebounds per outing.

Korsberg finished her collegiate career with 101 career points in limited action.

A FIVE-STAR PREVIEW: Heading into the 2001-02 season the Tigers were picked to finish third in one preseason conference poll and second in the other. But utilizing a deep bench and getting significant contributions from a variety of unexpected sources, Wittenberg soared past the field in the regular season to win the NCAC crown.

At any given time you could see the Tigers' future on the court this year. With six juniors, five sophomores and a freshman making up the majority of the bench, numerous players gained valuable experience and will undoubtedly make Wittenberg one of the preseason favorites again next year as they prepare to make a run towards their conference-leading ninth regular season NCAC championship and conference-leading sixth NCAC tournament championship.

One example is **Meghan Bruggeman**, who came into this season with just seven games of playing experience under her belt and a grand total of six points on six free throws to her credit in her first two years. What a difference a season can make — in 2001-02, she played in 26 games and poured in 154 points off the bench. She finished the season as the team's fourth-leading scorer and rebounder, hopefully providing a glimpse of things to come.

Another young player whose playing time increased throughout the season and figures to be a major factor in the future is freshman guard **Emilie Schmid (Canton, Ohio/Massillon Jackson)**, who arrived to the team late after starting for the NCAC champion Tiger volleyball team. She is one of several talented role players who will be called upon in 2002-03 to carry the Tigers to the next level.

CONFERENCE COMPETITION: Wittenberg led the conference as a team in scoring (75.6 points per game), scoring defense (58.7), scoring margin (+16.9), rebounding margin (8.8) and offensive rebounds (17.11). Individually, Kate Rolf ranked ninth to lead three Wittenberg players among the top 20 in scoring.

Amazingly, no Wittenberg player finished among the top 20 in the conference in rebounding despite the fact that the Tigers led the NCAC in rebound margin in 2001-02.

ALL-NCAC: For the second year in a row, **Kate Rolf** was named first-team All-NCAC. She led the team in scoring and rebounding for a second straight year, and her averages in those categories both ranked among the best in the conference.

Stephanie Campbell and **Tiffany Keller** both earned second-team all-conference for their performances. And **Pam Smith** earned NCAC Coach of the Year.

THE COACH: Head Coach **Pam Smith** (Wittenberg, 1982) completed her 16th season at

the helm of the women's basketball program at her alma mater. She is 301-129 in her career. The 21-6 finish of this year's women's basketball team marks the 13th consecutive winning season under Smith's tutelage.

The Tigers won the 300th game of Smith's career on Feb. 19. Just 21 NCAA Division III women's basketball coaches had won 300 games in their career heading into this season and Smith stood tied for 26th among active Division III coaches in total victories at that time.

Smith has guided the Tigers to ten 20-win seasons, six appearances in the NCAA tournament and eight NCAC regular season championships since 1986. Wittenberg has never finished lower than third in an NCAC regular season since joining the league in 1989.

A 1999 Wittenberg Athletic Hall of Honor inductee, Smith was a record-setting forward at Wittenberg during her playing days, a three-time team Most Valuable Player and an Academic All-America selection. The school record-holder for season scoring average, she also serves as the university's associate athletics director and senior women's administrator.

2001-02 Wittenberg University Women's Basketball Results

Nov. 16	vs. UW-Oshkosh#	L, 49-65
Nov. 17	vs. Earlham#	W, 109-68
Nov. 20	BALD.-WALL.	W, 71-53
Nov. 28	@ Capital	L, 57-63
Dec. 4	EARLHAM*	W, 71-55
Dec. 8	@ Denison*	W, 85-63
Dec. 12	THOMAS MORE	W, 85-56
Dec. 15	@ Defiance	L, 57-62
Dec. 28	MT. ST. JOSEPH&	W, 72-62
Dec. 29	MARIAN&	W, 70-60
Jan. 4	HIRAM*	W, 94-41
Jan. 5	Allegheny*	W, 93-71
Jan. 9	@ O. Wesleyan*	L, 72-74
Jan. 12	OBERLIN*	W, 82-50
Jan. 16	@ Kenyon*	W, 66-58
Jan. 19	@ Wooster*	W, 78-52
Jan. 26	O. WESLEYAN*	W, 66-60
Jan. 29	KENYON*	W, 57-41
Feb. 1	@ Hiram*	W, 70-28
Feb. 2	@ Allegheny*	L, 69-78
Feb. 6	@ Earlham	W, 91-64
Feb. 9	WOOSTER*	W, 111-58
Feb. 13	@ Oberlin*	W, 81-61
Feb. 16	DENISON*	W, 65-43
Feb. 19	WOOSTERS	W, 76-69
Feb. 21	ALLEGHENYS	W, 75-58
Feb. 23	O. WESLEYANS	L, 75-81 (ot)
# Kalamazoo Tipoff Tournament & Kiwanis-Wittenberg Holiday Classic \$ NCAC Tournament		