

Braswell's suspension presents Deacs with unanticipated worries

By MICKEY KRAYNYAK
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Who will replace Randolph Childress in the Deacon backcourt? The question is too absurd to warrant an answer. There is no player in the country who has the talent and leadership that the Demon Deacons lost when Childress graduated last spring after leading the Deacons to unprecedented heights and an ACC Championship.

The squad had planned to attempt to minimize the effects of Childress' departure with the further development of two sophomore guards who spent last year under the superstar's tutelage and who seemed poised to run the Deacon offensive show.

Now, after Saturday's announcement that sophomore Jerry Braswell has been declared academically ineligible for the fall semester (and potentially the entire season), the Deacons will be forced to cope with a very serious wrench in their gears.

Prior to Saturday's announcement, Braswell was the likely starting two-guard for the Deacons this year. Along with sophomore Tony Rutland, his probable counterpart at the point, Braswell would have attempted to maintain the Deacons' recent tradi-

tion of backcourt excellence.

Now, Rutland will be forced to accomplish that goal with either sophomore Steven Goolsby, who did not see very much playing time last season, or one of a pair of freshman guards.

After somewhat of a rocky start in his freshman season last year, Braswell quickly improved to start the final 20 games of the season.

Up to the point when Braswell started for the second time in the Deacons' Jan. 21 home game against Clemson last season, he had had a pretty rough time.

Prior to the game against the Tigers, Braswell had shot only four-of-22 (18.2 percent) on the season and had suffered a broken nose in practice that caused him to miss a game. However, upon starting against Clemson, Braswell began to turn things around. He shot 34-of-74 (45.9 percent) the rest of the year.

Indeed, though he shot the ball quite a bit less than fellow backcourt addition Rutland, Braswell did so with a greater success rate, hitting on 39.6 percent of his shots from the floor on the season (to Rutland's 32.5 percent) and 35.0 percent of his three-point attempts (to Rutland's 32.0 percent trey conversion rate).

In addition, Braswell shot 20-of-24 from the charity stripe in his debut season and notched 3.9 rebounds per game for the Deacons.

The key for Braswell now seems to be maintaining his high conversion rate while expanding his shot-taking and point production.

Braswell's athletic gifts allowed him to fill a variety of niches for the Deacons. Playing at shooting guard, he is at once both powerful enough to penetrate off the dribble and quick enough to give defenders all kinds of problems.

Similarly, on the defensive end, Braswell's strength has allowed him to guard players quite a bit bigger than himself, while he has retained the speed necessary to stay with smaller, faster guards.

For junior Tim Duncan to again finish as the premier big man in the country, the Deacon backcourt will have to prove itself capable of both running a tightly-coordinated offensive ship and posting a generous share of the team's points.

Braswell had been an important key to the Deacons' hopes this year. Now, Rutland has his work cut out for him if he hopes the Deacons' 1995-96 backcourt can begin to echo the standard Childress set last year.



Old Gold and Black photo
Sophomore guard Jerry Braswell was supposed to be one-half of an experienced starting Deacon backcourt this season. Now, the Deacons will have to cope with his academic suspension for the fall semester.

Jackson wants a championship of his own

By ROBERT NEELY
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REPORTER

Few players are more excited about the new, higher-octane version of the Demon Deacon offense than sophomore forward Antonio Jackson.

"Up-tempo suits me better," Jackson said. "Tony (Rutland) is an aggressive guard, and he likes to move.

"Things will be a little more up-beat, and that's better for me."

In his freshman season, Jackson appeared in 19 games, including eight ACC contests, averaging 1.5 points and 1.1 rebounds while shooting over 52 percent from the field.

His best outing came against the Citadel, when he totalled six points and six rebounds.

He also grabbed seven rebounds against Marshall.

Jackson has added 10 pounds to his frame during the off-season, and he believes that this addition will help his game.

"It's very important because of the class of players I'm playing with," Jack-

son said. "I needed more weight to improve my game. In practice, I can tell a difference."

Jackson said that players like junior Tim Duncan and Scooter Banks along with Assistant Coach Russell Turner have been the main influences on his game as a Demon Deacon, especially in the area of improving body strength.

Jackson will share time at power forward, which he says is not his natural position, with junior Sean Allen, who is expected to start. Jackson said that their games are very similar.

"I don't think there's too much difference right now," Jackson said. "He's older and bigger, but that's about all."

For now, Jackson will come off the bench, and he is trying to accustom himself to the role.

"As the season goes on, I'll adjust to that role," Jackson said. "But (against Nancy of France in an exhibition) I couldn't get into the game because of foul trouble."

In the exhibition, Jackson was charged with four fouls in just seven minutes. He hit

one-of-two shots for two points and had one rebound.

But Jackson has had time to get into the feel of ACC-caliber competition after a season.

"It's a big jump," Jackson said. "From high school to any college is different."

A first-hand look at the Deacons' run to their first ACC Championship in 32 years was a positive experience for Jackson, but he feels it is also a motivation.

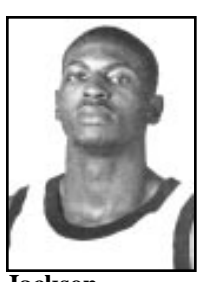
"I'm so competitive that it was a good experience," Jackson said.

"But because I didn't contribute much in getting there on the court, I didn't feel it was my championship," Jackson said.

"That's more motivation.

"I know there's great anticipation that we should do as well this year, but there's no added pressure."

Jackson looks to do his part this season as the Demon Deacons seek once again to reach a level of excellence, and he hopes that he will even get his own ACC championship.



Jackson

Allen ready to provide Deacs with added muscle up front

By ERIC LAW
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Can anyone replace the dominating defense, banging on the boards, and sheer physical presence of Scooter Banks? At 6-8 and 230 pounds, junior Sean Allen is by far the strongest player on our basketball squad. Deacon fans have not seen much of Allen but have heard great things about him. A lot of weight will be placed on Allen's broad shoulders this year as he tries to fill the enormous shoes of one of the fans' favorite players last year in Banks.

Allen transferred to the university last year to provide some quality backup at power forward for junior Ricky Peral and Banks. The addition of Allen into the lineup in no way depleted the Deacons' height and strength.

Allen looked promising last year, scoring four points and grabbing five rebounds in 14 minutes in his first game as a Deacon against Florida State. He played briefly in the Deacons' next three games, despite showing noticeable signs in practice and games of extreme fatigue. He was diagnosed with mononucleosis in mid-January and applied for a medical redshirt. He

qualified, and has two years of eligibility left.

Allen is just the second player, along with Derrick Hicks, '93, to join the Demon Deacon basketball team from a junior college during Dave Odom's head coaching era. They both came from Anderson Junior College in S.C., the No. 1 ranked team in junior colleges two years ago. Allen averaged 14 points and 10 rebounds per game for that championship team.

Allen came to play for the Deacons because of the university's excellent academic reputation, and he wanted to be close to home, in Knightdale. He is not only going to be dealing with challenging academics, but he will also be thrown into big-time ACC basketball, joining the Deacons' frontcourt of Peral and All-American Tim Duncan.

This trio of juniors averages 6-9 and 220 pounds, a formidable "tree"-some that should be able to stand up to and dominate any, if not all, ACC and national foes. Allen fits into this scheme as a big body capable of pushing guys off the block so that he, Duncan or Peral can grab the rebound. Allen has also shown solid defending skills and an uncanny passing touch for a big man.

Sophomore Goolsby remains an unknown quantity at guard or forward

By MICKEY KRAYNYAK
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR



Courtesy of Sports Information
Sophomore Steve Goolsby will see time at guard and forward.

A year ago, Steven Goolsby was the forgotten freshman on the Demon Deacon men's basketball team.

As then-freshmen Tony Rutland and Jerry Braswell competed to see who would garner the most minutes playing opposite Randolph Childress, '95, in the Demon Deacon backcourt, Goolsby spent most of the 1994-95 season on the bench.

Now, with Childress practicing his trade in Portland with the NBA's Trailblazers and Braswell academically suspended possibly for the entire season, the team will apparently need the sophomore to assume a more active role in determining the team's fate.

If early-season indications are accurate, Rutland will likely get the starting nod at point guard for the Deacons. However, with Braswell gone, the shooting guard position (Goolsby's likely spot on the floor) becomes quite intriguing for the Deacons.

In Braswell's absence, it is likely that Goolsby, if he can overcome the problems he had on the defensive end of the floor last season, will see a lot of playing time in the Demon Deacon backcourt along with freshman guard Joseph Amonett.

The biggest question mark surrounding Goolsby's play last year was his defensive intensity. The stigma about the sophomore continues to be that, while his perimeter shot is highly-effective, his play on the other side of the ball is often not so.

Concerning his lack of playing time last year, Goolsby said, "I guess coach (Head Coach Dave Odom) didn't feel I was ready to play, so he let me practice and get my confidence up. That's what coach stresses a lot, and I've improved a lot."

Indeed, Goolsby evinced the sharp-shooting prowess he possesses in the Deacon's exhibition opener Saturday night. Against Nancy of France, the sophomore scored efficiently, burying three-of-five three-point field goals in only nine minutes of action against the European visitors.

According to Goolsby, there are more good shooting performances on the way.

"I really haven't shown my true talents yet," Goolsby said.

Entering this season, questions surrounded Goolsby about the leg injury he sustained during the summer.

"I hurt it during summer school," Goolsby said. "They had to put it in a hard cast."

Though his play Saturday would seem to indicate that the sophomore is well

on the way to completing his recovery from the leg problem, Goolsby said that the injury has hampered his preseason development.

"It's still sore and I'm still rehabilitating," Goolsby said. "It really slowed my conditioning down. I just have to get out there."

"I guess coach (Head Coach Dave Odom) didn't feel I was ready to play, so he let me practice and get my confidence up. That's what coach stresses a lot, and I've improved a lot."

Steve Goolsby
Sophomore team member

As a member of last year's ACC championship team (albeit one who did not see a lot of playing time), Goolsby answered thoughtfully when presented with the inevitable questions about Childress' absence.

"We've got to see how we're going to play without his presence," Goolsby said.

On the positive side for Goolsby, he also said, "I will probably play more

because he's gone."

With Scooter Banks' departure, the Deacons will also face tough questions about how to rotate players in their frontcourt.

The personnel dilemma means that the 6-4, 188-pound Goolsby may also be asked to play some time under the basket at small forward.

Goolsby said that he does not care where on the floor he ends up playing for the Deacons.

Another intriguing question which promises to confront Goolsby this season, especially in light of the freshman Amonett's lack of experience, is whether Goolsby will consistently start for the Deacons.

Again, though, the sophomore seemed unaffected by the issue, stating that he had not given much thought to whether or not he will get the starting nod from Odom.

Clearly, the losses of Childress, Banks and Braswell will present the Deacons with several personnel problems throughout the course of the season. Where the team ultimately ends up in the conference and national pictures will be determined largely by the performance that players such as Goolsby will be able to generate with the extra playing time they will encounter this season.

Quartet of freshmen look to shore up lean areas in Demon Deacon roster

By SCOTT MAYNE
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

After a stellar 1994-95 season which included an ACC Championship and an Associated Press final national ranking of three, the Demon Deacon basketball team has established a strong precedent for victory. The future of Deacon hoops, and the task of maintaining this newfound perennial basketball powerhouse, rests in the hands of the "future four" — this year's freshman class.

To Head Coach Dave Odom, half of his recruiting this year was seemingly all a dream about Tennessee. His "Tennessee twosome" of Joseph Amonett, a 6-5 freshman from Byrdstown, Tenn., and Rodney West, a 6-10, 210-pound freshman from Oneida, Tenn., look to add both shooting ability and strength to the Deacon lineup.

Amonett, who averaged 33.5 points per

game as a senior for Pickett County High School, led his team to a 35-3 record and a Class A state championship last season. As a senior he was awarded Player of the Year honors in Tennessee by *USA Today*.

Amonett is a versatile performer, combining an excellent jumper with the ability to be a defensive force. This Deacon freshman is the most likely of his class to contribute significantly to the team in his first season at either the small forward or big guard position, but regardless of his immediate impact he wants to assist the team in seeking victory.

"I'm not sure what my role will be this year," Amonett said. "I just want to contribute any way possible, whether it be in practice or in games."

West's ability to play effectively in the

high post and his mental and physical toughness are factors that will help him play big in the ACC, although Odom's immediate plans are to redshirt him this season. His teammates are contributing to his progress. "I think working with the older guys will help me out a lot overall," West said.

Although he was slowed by various physical ailments in his high school basketball career, West managed to average 18 points, 12 boards and five blocks per game in his senior season. At the conclusion of his high school career, he had amassed over 500 blocked shots, and he should prove to be a veritable force in the near Demon Deacon future.

Probably the best pure athlete in the freshman class is William Stringfellow, a 6-8, 208-pound freshman from Austin, Texas.

"Strings," as he is known by his friends and invariably soon enough by the nation, presents the ACC with an explosive package of size, athleticism and quickness.

"I'm a person who likes to go hard," Stringfellow said. "I like to rebound." The Deacon fans should look for Stringfellow to be a prolific rebounder and shot blocker, as he averaged 14 boards, seven swats and 18 points a game his senior year at Anderson High School. He has high expectations for the success of his team this season, and although his role has yet to be defined, he said,

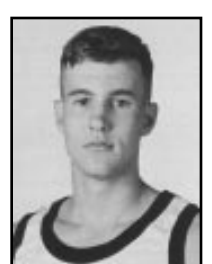
"My personal goal for the season is to play as hard as I possibly can."

Rounding out the freshman class is Armond Wilson, a 6-2 point guard from Laurel, Miss. Wilson is recognized for his ball handling

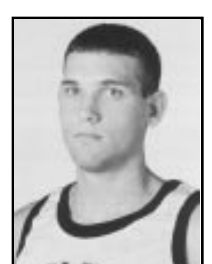
skills and floor presence, and with his innate leadership abilities he may be a crucial asset in the seasons to come. This freshman Deacon is a playmaker and a winner, who averaged 14.8 points and six assists as a senior at Northeast Jones High School. In his junior season he led his high school to the class 4-A state championship. Wilson is a hard worker, and a team-oriented individual.

"I'm here to do what coach (Odom) wants," Wilson said. "If he wants me to score, I'll score. If he wants me to dish the ball, I'll dish it."

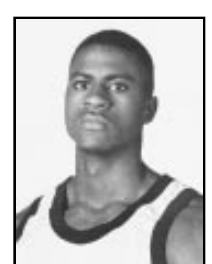
The "Future Four" is a class of freshmen loaded with talent and a desire to win, and all are intent on succeeding in the ACC. Judging from their athletic abilities and past histories, it appears as though they will be capable of meeting the high expectations that surround their class and the institution of Deacon Basketball.



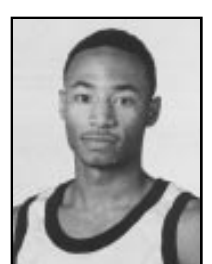
Amonett



West



Stringfellow



Wilson