

# Versatile Murray fills multiple roles for Deacs

*Senior from Teachey to play point guard, shooting guard and small forward in Prosser's system*

By Mike Hendee  
Old Gold and Black Reporter

You could say that senior Ervin Murray has seen it all – the good, the bad and the ugly – of Wake Forest basketball.

As a sophomore, he came off the bench to replace Robert O'Kelley as the starting point guard and lead the Deacs out of a tailspin to recover from a loss to Wake Forest in the NIT Championship. Last year he was sidelined for much of the early part of the season with mono-nucleosis, but returned to lead the ACC in assist-to-turnover ratio at 3.23, mostly as a



Versatile senior Ervin Murray will play many positions off the bench.

Graphic by Tamara Dunn

"(Coach Prosser) is tough and very aggressive. He really wants to win and he's a great leader. He tells us what he believes, what it takes to win. He expresses a lot of confidence in what he's doing, and that makes us very confident in what we're doing."

Ervin Murray  
Senior

backup to Broderick Hicks as he battled knee tendonitis.

Now, with the addition of freshman guard Taron Downey, some questioned Murray's place on the 2001-02 team. Complicating matters was the running-and-pressing system of new Head Coach Skip Prosser. Some critics felt that Murray was better suited to the slower style of former coach Dave Odom, but Prosser disagreed.

"I think Ervin's a bright kid, he's a great kid," Prosser said. "And I think he can play that way (uptempo), too. Because he's a little bit bigger kid, in some ways it's probably not good for him because he'll be asked to play a couple different positions, and with a whole new set of terminology and things like that, so that's probably less than ideal for him, but I think both those guys (Murray and Hicks) have their place in what we're trying to do."

One of Murray's greatest strengths as a player is his versatility. He possesses the speed of a guard, but at 6-foot-5 he is easily able to match up with an opposing team's small forward. His height and his tenacious defense make him an ideal defender in the pressing style that Prosser will employ. His height also helps him to be a strong rebounder.

Although he has only averaged 2.9 points per game in his Demon Deacon career, he is a capable scorer when he isn't passing the ball off to his teammates. His career field goal percentage is .449, an excellent number for a guard, and he seems to have a knack for making timely shots.

Because of his versatility, Murray will be seen playing point guard, shooting guard, and small forward this year. The loss of redshirt freshman center Dshamal Schoetz will only increase the need for him to play a variety of positions. With this comes added responsibility, but he says he is up to the task.

"I will do whatever it takes (to help the team win)," he said. "I need to rebound and score and be the best basketball player I can be."

Murray has also demonstrated the qualities of a leader on the court. As a player who has expressed an interest in possibly coaching some day, he has gone out of his way to help the younger players.

"(My role) is to be a leader, help the younger players out, and go out and play basketball," he said.

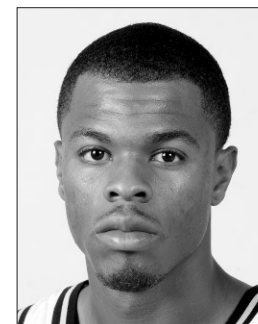
He is also very confident in Prosser and his approach.

"(Prosser) is tough and very aggressive," Murray said. "He really wants to win and he's a great leader."

"He tells us what he believes, what it takes to win. He expresses a lot of confidence in what he's doing and that makes us very confident in what we are doing."

Prosser's confidence has left an obvious effect on Murray and the team, and its goals are high.

## Ervin Murray



**Hometown:**  
Wallace,  
North Carolina  
**Year:** Senior  
**Height:** 6'5"  
**Weight:** 189 lbs.  
**Position:** Guard

**2000-01 PPG:** 2.2

"We're small, but we can use our quickness to our advantage," Murray said.

"(The goal is) to get as many rings as possible ... to win and get some trophies. I'm ready to go home and relax, but right now I just want some gold."



Photos by Chris Carlstrom/Old Gold and Black  
Senior Ervin Murray looks for an open teammate during the Deacs' exhibition win over Nike Elite.