

# Amid hype, Prosser focusing on D

## Fourth-year coach sees plenty of room for improvement

By Gerard McMahon  
Old Gold & Black Reporter

Two years ago, Head Coach Skip Prosser's mantra to his team was TJDK (They Just Don't Know), in response to preseason predictions that picked his Deacon team to finish as low as seventh in the ACC.

This year, with his Deacons ranked No. 2 in the preseason in the *ESPN/USA Today* Coaches Poll and No. 1 by several publications, Prosser stands by his TJDK attitude.

"I've always been skeptical if somebody gives you something that you haven't earned," Prosser said, "and we haven't earned anything yet."

While the Deacons may not have exactly earned anything yet, they do return 11 of 12 scholarship players from the team that reached the Sweet

16 last year.

That is not to say, however, that Prosser is completely comfortable with his returning corps of players. While the Deacons return a team that ranked second in the nation in scoring average and first in the ACC in field-goal shooting and



Prosser

three-point shooting, Wake Forest certainly has some question marks on defense. "I don't think you have to be John Nash, the mathematician, to see that we were eighth in the league in blocked shots, ninth in scoring defense, ninth in field goal percentage defense and ninth in three-point field-goal percentage defense," Prosser said.

Ever since the Deacons' 84-80 loss to St. Joseph's in last year's NCAA tournament, the focus for Prosser and his coaching staff has been on finding a

way to tighten up his team's defense.

"We need consistency on offense and a balance in the post," Prosser said. "But we should be able to score. On those occasions where we can't score we must do a much better job of guarding."

The defense figures to benefit greatly from the return of senior forward Vytas Danelius and junior forward Chris Ellis, who both missed significant portions of last year to injuries. Having those two healthy would allow senior Jamaal Levy to return to his natural small forward position, thus improving both Wake Forest's rebounding and wing defense.

"Vytas' preseason preparation this year as opposed to last year is night and day," Prosser said. "He, Downey and Levy - a lot of what we do this year is going to be about those three guys."

The strength of this team figures to come in the form of the Deacons' depth up and down the lineup. The team's great depth should allow Wake Forest to finally play Prosser's

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Skip Prosser  
Head Coach

true up-tempo system that stresses a fast transition game that could lead to many easy baskets for the Deacons.

"We want to force more turnovers on defense and speed up the pace of the game," Prosser said. "Last year we did all right with it, but I would like us to create more steals on defense."

Capping off the incredible depth on the team is a starting five that should be able to compete with any in the country. The five include - sophomore Chris Paul, junior Justin Gray and junior Eric Williams - three players who were invited to try out for the USA Basketball 20-and-under squad.

Paul and Gray led the team

to a gold medal in the World Championship for Young Men Qualifying Tournament of the Americas, while Williams was the final cut after being sick in the final week of tryouts.

Prosser is confident that the intense workouts on defense and rebounding helped all three over the summer, although he did express disappointment that Williams was unable to compete at full strength.

"Anytime you're in the gym for a few weeks with (Oklahoma and Team USA Head Coach) Kelvin Sampson and (Marquette Coach) Tom Crean, it's like a summer seminar overseas," Prosser said. "From the standpoint of (Paul) and (Gray), it can only be an extreme positive."

The pundits have made their predictions. *The Sporting News* was one of several national magazines to pick the Demon Deacons as the NCAA national champions.

It is now up to Prosser's posse to show they can play better defensively, or else those preseason predictions will look downright offensive.

# Deacs' lone freshman likely to red-shirt

## Stanley coming off major knee injury, will work to improve game in practice

By Boomer Kennedy  
Old Gold & Black Reporter

With the Demon Deacons returning all five starters and six other letter-winners to this year's squad, one member of the team may be sliding under everyone's radar.

6-foot-7-inch forward Cameron Stanley is the only scholarship freshman on the squad and, though the coaching staff plans to red-shirt him this season, he plans to make an impact by helping the team in practice.

At the same time, he hopes to improve his own game, which is currently a little rusty after he missed most of his senior season in high school with a major knee injury.

And, while a redshirt requires that he not play in any games, there is the possibility of Stanley playing if the Deacs suffer an injury.

"I've been known to be an offensive player, but there is no doubt that there are many weapons on this team," Stanley said. "I just plan to bring the intan-

"I was here all summer with the trainer, Greg Collins, and I don't think there is any way possible I could have worked any harder."

Cameron Stanley  
Freshman

gibles. Whatever the team needs at the time, whenever my number is called, I know I will be ready for whatever I have to do."

Stanley scored over 1,000 points in his basketball career at Millbrook High School in Raleigh and verbally committed to Wake Forest following his sophomore season.

He averaged 21 points and eight rebounds a game his junior year and his senior season began just as positively. Stanley was averaging 23 points per game until, just seven games into the year, a knee injury cut his final high-school season short.

Though he tries not to dwell on the injury, Stanley remembers how hard it was to watch the majority of his senior season from the sidelines.

"In the early stages, it was real tough, especially seeing my team struggle a little bit," Stanley said. "I tried to take

what good I could out of it, and I've got a greater appreciation for the game now."

Stanley spent this past summer at the university, getting a head start academically and working to rehabilitate his knee.

"I was here all summer with the trainer, Greg Collins, and I don't think there is any way possible I could have worked any harder," Stanley said.

As far as his decision to attend Wake Forest, Stanley said the choice was an easy one.

"I already had my mind set on coming here, mainly because of the academics, in case basketball doesn't work out in the future," he said.

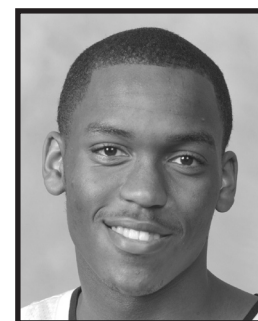
One thing Stanley and the rest of the team will have to try to avoid this year is getting caught up in the excitement of being selected so high in so many preseason polls.

"As far as the hype, we really don't pay much attention to it," Stanley said. "We are just trying to stay focused on what our goals are."

Even though he is the only new schol-

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## cameron stanley



Hometown: Raleigh

Year: Freshman

Height: 6'7"

Weight: 204 lbs.

Position: Forward

Prosser says:

He is behind. The

possibility of a redshirt is very real.

arship player on this squad, Stanley has fit in well with the tight-knit Demon Deacons, who have made a point to gel as a team.

"The chemistry is great," Stanley said. "We were given these dog tags that say, 'It's amazing how much can be accomplished when nobody cares who gets the credit,' and that is the type of mindset we have right now going into the season. Everybody is in it to win, and we're trying to get a national championship this year."