

# NOTRE DAME

2006-07 SEASON PREVIEW



*After spending her first two seasons mainly as Notre Dame's top reserve, junior guard Charel Allen will be called upon to take a larger role in the Irish offense this season.*



## Irish Hope Lessons Learned will Bear Fruit in 2006-07

*Eight veterans return from last year's 18-12 squad to lead Notre Dame into its 30th anniversary season*

Anniversaries are a time for celebration and recognition of past accomplishments. As the Notre Dame women's basketball team enters its 30th season in 2006-07, the Irish take time to recall the proud tradition of success they have developed. It's one that includes a national championship in 2001 and two NCAA Final Four trips (1997 and 2001), not to mention six NCAA Sweet 16 appearances, 13 NCAA Tournament bids and top-10 rankings in seven of the past 10 years. Notre Dame also has collected 20-or-more wins in 20 of their 29 seasons (including 12 of the past 13 years) and has averaged nearly 25 wins per year in the past decade (1996-97 through 2005-06).

So it comes as no surprise that not one single member of the Irish was pleased with the results of the 2005-06 season. To be sure, there were highlights during the 18-12 campaign, including an 11th consecutive NCAA Tournament berth, three wins over ranked opponents, a 9-2 regular-season non-conference record and a late-season four-game winning streak that helped boosted Notre Dame's post-season resume. But when looking back on last year, one word consistently comes from the lips of the Irish players and coaches — unacceptable.

College is sometimes referred to as "higher education." This season, Notre Dame will look to take the lessons it learned from last season and turn them into a successful future, adding to a legacy that is now three decades in the making.

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The Irish certainly have the foundation in place for great things in 2006-07. Eight monogram winners are back in the fold for Notre Dame, with five of those eight having started more than half of the team's 30 games a season ago. Add to that another traditionally-strong incoming freshman class (ranked 21st nationally by All-Star Girls Report, the 10th consecutive top-25 rookie group for the Irish), and 20th-year head coach **Muffet McGraw** will have numerous options at her disposal for the upcoming season.

Notre Dame's strength this year may lie in its backcourt, where five of six players



Sophomore guard Lindsay Schrader was Notre Dame's second-leading scorer last year and was the squad's top rebounder, averaging 10.5 points and 5.4 rebounds per game in 2005-06.

return, including two of the team's top four scorers in sophomore guard **Lindsay Schrader** (10.5 points per game) and junior guard **Charel Allen** (8.5 ppg.). Schrader proved to be an immediate asset for the Irish at the offensive end of the floor, starting 27 times in her rookie season and scoring in double figures 14 times, including three 20-point outings. She got her college career off to a flying start with a double-double (10 points, 14 rebounds) on opening night vs. Michigan, becoming only the second freshman in school history (and first in the program's Division I era) to post a double-double in her first-ever contest. Schrader then capped off her initial season with the Irish by pouring in a career-best 29

points in Notre Dame's NCAA Tournament first-round loss to Boston College.

The 6-0 native of Bartlett, Ill., also proved to be strong on the boards as well, leading the Irish in rebounding with 5.4 caroms per night, including three double-digit rebounding games. In addition to those scoring and rebounding abilities, she posed numerous match-up problems for opponents with her size and versatility, whether firing from the perimeter or toiling on the blocks. Following a strong off-season development program that included a stint at the 2006 USA Basketball Under-20 National Team Trials, Schrader should provide a significant piece of the puzzle for Notre Dame's fortunes during the upcoming year.

Meanwhile, Allen showed continued progress throughout last season, despite missing much of the preceding summer while recovering from surgery to repair a torn anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee, an injury she suffered in the 2005 NCAA Tournament. The 5-11 Monessen, Pa., product has fit nicely into the role of "sixth man" for the Irish during her first two collegiate seasons, averaging more than eight points and four rebounds per game while coming off the bench in all but one of 63 games to date. She also has scored in double figures 23 times thus far, including a career-high 14 times during her sophomore campaign.

A lithe wing player who has no hesitation about driving the lane and battling with larger opposition, Allen also has a strong perimeter game in her arsenal, a feature that was honed even more during the summer months. What's more, she has earned her stripes on the defensive end, using her long frame to not only hit the glass, but come up with nearly 1.3 steals per game during her career to date, including 41 thefts last season that are tops among this year's returnees. Put it all together and you can bet Allen will be an important contributor for Notre Dame in 2006-07.

Each team needs a utility player, the kind of athlete you can plug into just about any situation, a jack-of-all-trades that comes through with flying colors no matter the circumstance. For the Irish, their "Swiss army



knife" for the past three seasons has been senior guard **Breona Gray**. A hardworking defender and rapidly-improving offensive threat, Gray has been a reliable force for Notre Dame with 55 starts in the past two years, including 22 starting assignments a season ago when she averaged 4.5 points and 2.3 rebounds per game. The 5-9 veteran from Las Vegas also is the top returning three-point threat for the Irish this season, having connected at a 33-percent clip (21-of-63) as a junior.

Gray originally made her mark at Notre Dame as a solid defender, often drawing the tough assignment of guarding the opposition's primary backcourt threat. She has been more than up to the challenge, with some of her most impressive lockdown performances coming in the past year, when she stifled Tennessee's Shanna Zolman (five points on 1-7 FG), the nation's second-leading scorer in South Florida's Jessica Dickson (12-37 FG, .324 FG% in two games) and the eventual NCAA three-point champion, Julie Larsen of Utah (two points, 0-5 FG). As one of just two seniors on this year's youthful Notre Dame roster, Gray will be called upon to show leadership and maturity, not to mention impart the wisdom of lessons learned during her first three years with the Irish.

Every coach will tell you a vital key to a team's success lies with its point guard production. While Notre Dame bid farewell to one of the program's great floor generals in All-American and two-time all-BIG EAST Conference pick Megan Duffy (15.6 ppg., 4.1 apg.), the Irish offense should be in very good hands, as 5-7 junior **Tulyah Gaines** takes over the everyday duties. Gaines started 20 of 29 games last season, sometimes playing alongside Duffy (who shifted to shooting guard), which allowed the North Las Vegas resident to sharpen her craft and be prepared for the mantle of leadership this season. Gaines averaged 4.9 points and 1.7 assists per game last year, more than doubling the scoring production from her rookie season and nearly doing the same with her assist total.

Gaines will bring a different dimension to the point guard position for Notre Dame this season with blazing speed that puts her among the fastest players in the BIG EAST, if not the nation. Her quickness will not only be an asset on offense, where she will help the Irish transition game, but also on defense, where she has developed into a constant hounding presence for opposing guards, coming up with 28 steals last season. On top of that, Gaines spent the better part of this summer working to expand her offensive capabilities with a consistent perimeter shot that now extends to the three-point line, positioning her to be one of the team's most improved players this year.

Junior **Amanda Tsipis** rounds out the core of returnees in the backcourt for Notre Dame. The 5-9 native of Perry, Ohio, has been a vital contributor to Irish fortunes behind the scenes, primarily in practice situations. Her strong work ethic and fundamentals, coupled with a solid outside game, give Notre Dame much-desired depth at the guard position and will allow McGraw some of the flexibility she seeks.

While the handful of veterans in this year's backcourt provide a stable foundation upon which to build, it's the two incoming Irish freshmen, both of whom were ranked among the top 30 in the nation, that offer the greatest degree of anticipation for the coming season.

Indianapolis native **Ashley Barlow** was a Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) All-America selection and was third in the voting for Indiana Miss Basketball as a senior, having averaged 19.2 points, 5.4 rebounds and 3.6 assists per game during her prep career. A two-time all-state shooting guard, the 5-foot-9 Barlow was an especially potent scorer in her final two high school seasons, averaging better than 24 points per game and ranking among the top scorers in the state in Class 4A both years. Ranked 24th nationally by *Full Court Press*, she also had a distinguished AAU pedigree, having played with The Family, an Indianapolis-based squad that went an astonishing 40-1 during the summer of 2005 and won four national tournaments, including the Nike Nationals where Barlow averaged team bests of 13.4 points and 1.6 steals per game.

Providing an exceptional rookie complement to Barlow in the Irish backcourt is point guard **Melissa Lechlitner**, who played her prep ball just a stone's throw from the Notre Dame campus at South Bend St. Joseph's High School. As a four-year starter for the Indians, Lechlitner averaged



Senior guard Breona Gray has been a strong utility player for the Irish the past three seasons and now will add leadership to the qualities she brings to the Notre Dame lineup on a nightly basis.

16.4 points, 6.0 assists and 3.4 steals per game, garnering *Street & Smith's* honorable mention All-America accolades as a senior. A four-time all-state selection and two-time adidas Top Ten Camp All-Star, Lechlitner finished her career as the 2006 Indiana Miss Basketball runner-up and was ranked 27th in the nation by *All-Star Girls Report*. She also guided St. Joseph's to an 88-16 (.846) record during her tenure, including four consecutive trips to the state semifinals, two title game appearances and the 2005 Indiana Class 3A state crown.

The chemistry between Barlow and Lechlitner was sharpened even more this summer, when the pair joined up to lead the Indiana All-Star Team to a two-game sweep in its annual series with Kentucky. Barlow was voted the series MVP after posting double-doubles in both victories over the Bluegrass State, averaging team highs of 20.0 points, 11.5 rebounds and 4.5 steals per game for the all-star series. Meanwhile, Lechlitner expertly piloted the Indiana offense, averaging 9.5 points and 3.0 assists per game with a .563 field goal percentage (9-16).

# 2006-07 Season Preview

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Traditionally, Notre Dame's success has been predicated on the ability to strike a blend between a lethal perimeter offense and a solid post game. Last season, that balance showed itself in flashes, most notably during the first two months of the campaign, when the Irish were averaging more than 26 points in the paint per game and enjoyed a positive rebounding margin of more than four caroms per contest. However, Notre Dame wasn't able to maintain consistency in the post all season long, due in part to a young core group that featured only one senior and several players missing time with injuries.

Entering the 2006-07 season, opportunity and potential are the common themes for the Irish on the blocks. Three veterans are back, all of whom have significant experience in the trenches of the rugged BIG EAST Conference, while two freshmen join the mix to provide Notre Dame with its largest degree of depth in the post in several years. What makes this year's front line unique from its predecessors is its variety and versatility, with each of the five players bringing different elements to the Irish scheme.

Senior forward **Crystal Erwin** is the leader of the Notre Dame post contingent, having started 36 times in her first three seasons under the Golden Dome. A physical, blue-collar player, Erwin averaged 4.7 points and a career-high 5.1 rebounds per game last season despite battling a recurring leg injury throughout the campaign. The 6-2 native of Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., has made contributions to the Irish in a number of ways, from her aggressive play on the boards to her emerging offensive prowess, which she has honed a perimeter jump shot extending near the three-point line.

Erwin also is expected to provide wisdom and counsel to the younger Notre Dame posts, helping initiate them to the rigors of high-level college basketball. A passionate and fiery player, she often serves as the emotional on-court leader of the Irish, displaying no fear of any opponent or situation and doing whatever is necessary to help Notre Dame be successful.

Without question, junior center **Melissa D'Amico** showed great potential during the 2005-06 season. After spending the previous summer going through a rigorous workout routine, the 6-5 native of Manorville, N.Y., stepped into the starting lineup on opening night and felt right at home, averaging 10.3 points, 5.8 rebounds and 1.5 blocks per game through the season's first 10 contests. She was at her best at the Duel in the Desert in



*Physical play continues to be the hallmark of senior forward Crystal Erwin's career, as the veteran anchors the Notre Dame post group in 2006-07.*

Las Vegas, earning tournament MVP honors (and a BIG EAST Player of the Week citation) after averaging 16.0 points and 6.5 rebounds with an astounding .824 field goal percentage (14-of-17) as the Irish won the tourney title with a pair of victories.

D'Amico's performance in Las Vegas was the cornerstone of a significant season-long improvement on the statistical charts, as she nearly tripled the scoring and rebounding efforts of her rookie season to end up with 5.9 points and 3.7 rebounds per game while starting 17 of 30 games. She also ranked eighth in the BIG EAST in blocked shots with 1.17 swats per night and wound up second on the team with a .468 field goal percentage.

Now, as an upperclassman, D'Amico will be counted upon to take an even greater role in the Notre Dame offense and display a similar improvement in her third season that she showed last year. Early indications are that development already is taking place this summer, with extended sessions in the weight room, not to mention a trip to San Diego to work at legendary post guru Pete Newell's Tall Women Camp.

Sophomore forward **Chandrica Smith** is the other returning front-liner for Notre Dame, coming off a freshman year that saw her average 1.8 points and 1.9 rebounds in 20 games. A long and athletic wing at 6-foot-1, Smith saw her confidence and performance rise throughout last season, with her best outing coming at Rutgers when she nearly rang up a double-double with nine points and 10 rebounds in 24 minutes. Her potential for growth was magnified even more this summer, as she eagerly embraced a high-intensity workout schedule that showed off her increasing comfort level with the college game. Thus, it would seem apparent she is ready to offer much of the same rapid development in year two as D'Amico and Erwin showed, positioning Smith to be a regular contributor to the Irish in '06-07.

Notre Dame's two-player freshman post crew could provide additional support as this season wears on. Standing 6-foot-3, forward **Danielle Ben-Tsvulun** is a tough, physical force on the blocks, cut from much the same mold as Erwin. Ben-Tsvulun also turned out to be a quick learner, as evidenced by her final two years at Harding High School in Fort Wayne, Ind.,

when she averaged 12.1 points, 9.3 rebounds and 3.1 blocks per game. A two-time all-state selection, Ben-Tsvulun was the driving force behind Harding High's back-to-back sectional titles and the school's first-ever regional crown and state semifinals berth in 2006.

Like her classmate, freshman center **Erica Williamson** has shown a knack for adaptation and development on a rapid scale. Williamson had the unenviable task of moving to a different state between her junior and senior years of high school, and yet she handled the change with aplomb, averaging 10.0 points, 10.4 rebounds and 4.7 blocks per game across two states (New York and North Carolina). On top of that, she played a pivotal role on state championship teams in both states, first as a junior at Honeoye Falls-Lima High School in Rochester, N.Y., and then as a senior at Charlotte's South Mecklenburg High School (that school's first title in 20 years).

A two-time all-state selection and ranked 89th in the nation by *All-Star Girls Report*, Williamson has good hands and a soft touch around the basket with a wide variety of



post moves, not to mention a reliable mid-range jumper. In addition, she has a solid fundamental base to build from, along with a positive attitude and a burning desire to improve. What's more, her ability to complement and mesh with the talent around her, along with her tremendous potential makes Williamson a key addition for the Notre Dame front line this season.

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Part of McGraw's scheduling philosophy throughout her 20-year tenure at Notre Dame has been to play the best possible competition in an effort to have her team prepared when postseason play rolls around in March. The 2006-07 Irish schedule should be no different, as Notre Dame will play 16 postseason qualifiers (including 11 NCAA Tournament teams) from a season ago.

Among the spotlight games during the non-conference season will be a visit to Penn State on Nov. 16 (the first for the Irish since 1993) and a trip to USC on Nov. 24, as well as home matchups with in-state rivals Purdue and Indiana. Notre Dame will close out its non-conference schedule with a bang on Dec. 30, venturing to Knoxville, Tenn., to square off with Tennessee.

Once again, the BIG EAST Conference will play a 16-game regular-season schedule, with teams facing 14 of the other 15 league schools once (seven home, seven away) and the remaining school twice. For the second consecutive year, Notre Dame's "repeat" opponent will be DePaul, as the Irish and Blue Demons continue a regional rivalry that pre-dates both teams' membership in the BIG EAST. Last season, the two sides split their home-and-home series, each winning in their own arena, before DePaul went on to make its first-ever trip to the NCAA Sweet 16.

The rest of the 2006-07 BIG EAST schedule will merely see the sites of last season's conference slate reversed for the coming campaign. As such, Notre Dame's home schedule for this year also will include contests with three other NCAA Tournament qualifiers from last season — Rutgers (Sweet 16), St. John's (second round) and Louisville (first round). WNIT selection Cincinnati, BIG EAST Championship runner-up West Virginia, Georgetown and Syracuse will complete this year's list of BIG EAST visitors to the Joyce Center.

Conversely, Notre Dame's conference road schedule is highlighted by a trip to Connecticut, the first for the Irish since they ended the Huskies' 112-game BIG EAST regular-season home winning streak with a 65-59 win on Jan. 30, 2005, at Gampel Pavilion in



Sophomore forward Chandrica Smith showed flashes of her potential last season, most notably tallying nine points and 10 rebounds in a late January contest at Rutgers.



Junior center Melissa D'Amico showed significant growth in her second season with the Irish, as she nearly tripled her scoring and rebounding output as a first-year starter for Notre Dame.

Storrs, Conn. The other BIG EAST journeys Notre Dame will take this season include trips to NCAA Tournament qualifier South Florida, as well as WNIT runner-up Marquette, WNIT semifinalist Pittsburgh and WNIT quarterfinalist Villanova. Providence and Seton Hall also will be conference destinations for the Irish in 2006-07.

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Human nature suggests that it won't be easy for the Notre Dame players and coaches to simply sweep aside last year's results. Perhaps it's better that way, for experience can often be the best teacher when it comes to finding one's future path. The 2006-07 Irish may be young in age, but they also will be old pros when it comes to dealing with the challenges of playing at the highest level of college basketball. With that "higher education" in its collective mindset, Notre Dame is well on the way to adding the latest chapter of success in the celebrated history of Irish women's basketball.

## 2006-07: THE ANNIVERSARY SEASON

2006-07 will mark the 30th season of Notre Dame women's basketball, with the Irish having compiled an all-time record of 593-266 (.690) since making their varsity debut in 1977-78. Actually, Notre Dame spent its first three seasons at the Division III level, playing under the banner of the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIWA) before making the move to Division I status in 1980-81 (the NCAA began sponsoring a women's basketball championship the following season). The Irish have an overall Division I record of 544-246 (.689).

This year also will represent Muffet McGraw's 20th season as the head women's basketball coach at Notre Dame and her 25th campaign overall, including her five-year run at Lehigh (1982-87). McGraw's record is a stellar one — she is 429-167 (.720) at the helm of the Irish and has a career record of 517-208 (.713) entering her silver anniversary season on the sidelines.

In addition, Notre Dame will celebrate the 35th anniversary of women's athletics at the University during the 2006-07 season. All Irish women's sports teams will hold events to commemorate this milestone during their respective seasons. What's more, all Notre Dame women's teams will sport special 35th anniversary logo patches on their uniforms for the '06-07 campaign.

## YOUTH WILL BE SERVED

Sophomore guard Lindsay Schrader is Notre Dame's top returning scorer this season, after averaging 10.5 points per game during her rookie campaign in 2005-06. Schrader will be just the fourth sophomore to be the top returning scorer for the Irish, and the first since Beth Morgan in 1994-95 (coming off a 17.9 ppg. effort as a freshman in 1993-94).

| Sophomores As ND Top Returning Scorers |        |      |
|--|--------|------|
| Player                                 | Year   | PPG* |
| L. Schrader                            | '06-07 | 10.5 |
| Beth Morgan                            | '94-95 | 17.9 |
| M.B. Schueth                           | '82-83 | 13.0 |
| Shari Matvey                           | '80-81 | 17.6 |
| * - as freshman the previous season    |        |      |

## HOOSIER STATE HOOPSTERS

Notre Dame welcomes three Indiana natives among its four-player freshman class, as guards Ashley Barlow (Indianapolis/Pike) and Melissa Lechlitner (Mishawaka/South Bend St. Joseph's), and forward Danielle Ben-Tsvulun (Fort Wayne/Harding) will suit up for the Irish in 2006-07. This represents the largest influx of in-state personnel in one rookie class during the 30-year history of the Notre Dame



Perhaps no Irish player is more excited for the start of the 2006-07 season than junior guard Tulyah Gaines, who worked tirelessly during the summer months in preparing herself to assume the starting point guard role for Notre Dame this year.

women's basketball program. Counting the three freshmen, a total of 17 Indiana natives are on the all-time Irish basketball roster, making Indiana the most common home state in program history. Michigan is second, having produced 14 Notre Dame players (including current associate head coach and Flint, Mich., product Coquese Washington).

## OTHER STORYLINES FOR THE IRISH IN '06-07

- Junior guard Charel Allen is back at 100 percent after spending the better part of last season healing from summer 2005 surgery to repair a torn ACL suffered in the 2005 NCAA Tournament. Allen is Notre Dame's No. 2 returning scorer this year after averaging a career-high 8.5 points per game last year, including 9.9 ppg. in the final 11 games of the season. She also scored in double figures a career-best 14 times during her sophomore year.

- With the question of replacing All-American Megan Duffy at the point guard position an obvious one, junior guard Tulyah

Gaines is fully prepared to make it a seamless transition. Gaines made significant strides in that direction during the latter part of the 2005-06 season, averaging 8.0 points and 3.7 assists per game with a 2.2 assist/turnover ratio in Notre Dame's final six games. Gaines also came up big in the clutch at Cincinnati with her game-tying layup at the regulation horn, helping the Irish log a 75-66 overtime win and remain in position for another NCAA Tournament appearance.

- As the coaching cliché often goes, "championships are won in the summer." Junior center Melissa D'Amico and freshman center Erica Williamson certainly have done their part, most notably spending time at the Pete Newell Tall Women's Camp in San Diego. D'Amico is aiming to build upon her 2005-06 season that saw her average 5.9 points and 3.7 rebounds per game, earn MVP honors at the Duel in the Desert tournament and be named BIG EAST Player of the Week on Dec. 19. Meanwhile, Williamson comes to Notre Dame having averaged a double-double (10.0 points, 10.4 rebounds), along with 4.7 blocks per game during her final two high school seasons, winning state titles each year (albeit in different states — New York and North Carolina).

- For the second time in three summers, sophomore guard Lindsay Schrader gained valuable experience as a participant in USA Basketball National Team Trials at Colorado Springs. In 2004, she was a finalist for the USA Junior World Championship Qualifying Team, and this summer, she tried out for the USA Under-20 National Team. Schrader's presence at this summer's trials continues a decade-long trend of Notre Dame players in USA Basketball competition, dating back to Beth Morgan's tenure with the 1996 USA Select Team and most notably including Ruth Riley's stint with the gold-medal winning 2004 U.S. Olympic Team.

## 2005-06 SEASON REWIND

- Notre Dame posted an 18-12 record and finished 8-8 in the BIG EAST Conference. The Irish also made their 11th consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance (13th overall), bowing to Boston College, 78-61 in the opening round — the first time Notre Dame lost in the NCAA first round since 1994, snapping a run of 10 consecutive opening-round victories by the Irish.



• Head coach Muffet McGraw reached a personal milestone, winning her 500th career game on Nov. 18, 2005 at the Joyce Center (55-45 vs. Michigan). McGraw became the 27th NCAA Division I women's basketball coach to reach that landmark and the 10th to do so before age 50.

• Notre Dame played a school-record four overtime games during the 2005-06 season, going 2-2 in those extra-session contests, all against BIG EAST opponents (also setting a conference regular-season record). The Irish defeated Marquette (67-65 on Megan Duffy's buzzer-beating layup in OT) and Cincinnati (75-66), while falling to South Florida (68-64) and Villanova (69-65), after rallying from 21 points down in the latter contest.

• The Irish were ranked as high as 10th in the nation in both the Associated Press poll and ESPN/USA Today coaches' poll last season, marking the seventh time in the past 10 seasons Notre Dame has been a top-10 club.

• The Irish defeated three ranked opponents last season, downing No. 24/21 USC (73-62), No. 22/21 Utah (68-55) and No. 10 DePaul (78-75). Notre Dame now has recorded 50 wins over Top 25 opponents in the Muffet McGraw era (1987-present), including 40 in the past eight seasons, with 19 of those 40 victories coming over top-10 teams.

• In 2005-06, Notre Dame set single-season school records for fewest total turnovers (430) and fewest turnovers per game (14.3). Since the statistic was first kept in 1987-88, the previous Irish standards were 516 turnovers (2001-02) and 15.8 turnovers per game (2000-01). During the past two seasons, Notre Dame has been solid in protecting the basketball, averaging just 15.3 turnovers per game in that span.

## POTENT NOTABLES ABOUT THE IRISH

• Notre Dame is among the nation's winningest programs during the past decade (1996-97 to 2005-06), ranking seventh with 247 victories in that span.

### Winningest Teams (1996-97 to 2005-06)

|            |                   |
|------------|-------------------|
| 328        | Connecticut       |
| 318        | Tennessee         |
| 288        | Duke              |
| 284        | Louisiana Tech    |
| 259        | Old Dominion      |
| 253        | Purdue            |
| <b>247</b> | <b>NOTRE DAME</b> |
| 246        | UC Santa Barbara  |
| 242        | Texas Tech        |

• Notre Dame's incoming freshman class was ranked 21st in the nation by *All-Star Girls Report*, marking the 10th consecutive season that the Irish have had a top-25 recruiting class. Notre Dame is one of only three schools (along with Connecticut and Tennessee) to have an active streak of that length.

• Notre Dame was ranked 11th in the nation in attendance in 2005-06 (6,601 fans per game), marking the sixth consecutive season the Irish have ranked among the national top 20 in attendance. Notre Dame also has attracted 5,000-or-more fans to 78 of its last 80 home games, including three Joyce Center sellouts of 11,418 (most recently on Dec. 31, 2005 vs. Tennessee).

• For the sixth time in school history, Notre Dame has been selected to host NCAA Tournament action, as the Joyce Center will be the site of NCAA Tournament first- and second-round games in 2010. In four of the five previous instances, Notre Dame was involved in NCAA Tournament play, going 6-1 all-time and advancing to the NCAA Sweet 16 three times (2000, 2001, 2004), with only a first-round loss to Minnesota in 1994 blotting the resume. Notre Dame also hosted the 1983 NCAA Midwest Regional at the Joyce Center, with Georgia defeating Tennessee, 67-63 in the regional final.

• The Irish have become a regular fixture in the WNBA Draft in recent years, as six Notre Dame players have been selected in the past six seasons. All-America guard Megan Duffy was the most recent Irish player to be chosen, going to the Minnesota Lynx in the third round (31st overall pick) of the 2006 WNBA Draft. Other active Notre Dame players in the WNBA during the 2006 season included Ruth Riley and Jacqueline Batteast (league champion Detroit Shock), while Niele Ivey sat out this year as a free agent, rehabilitating an injury after previously playing with Indiana, Detroit and Phoenix. Riley's WNBA title with Detroit was her second (she was the 2003 WNBA Finals MVP), while Batteast earned her first pro crown this year.

• Notre Dame has been an elite program in the classroom as well. The Irish posted a perfect 100-percent Graduation Success Rate (GSR), according to figures released by the NCAA in October 2006. Notre Dame was one of 16 Division I-A programs to achieve this distinction, and one of only two BIG EAST programs (Syracuse was the other). Furthermore, since Muffet McGraw became the Irish head coach in 1987, every Notre Dame women's basketball player that has completed her athletic and academic eligibility at the University has graduated.

## JOYCE CENTER ARENA RENOVATION ON TAP

On Oct. 5, Notre Dame announced plans for a nearly \$25 million renovation of the Joyce Center arena, including new chairback seating, a four-sided digital video scoreboard, and a club/hospitality area (as part of a new two-story addition to be built on the south side of the facility).

The \$24.7 million renovation project has been underwritten with a \$12.5 million leadership gift from Philip J. Purcell III, a Notre Dame alumnus and Trustee, and the retired chairman and CEO of Morgan Stanley. Upon completion, the arena will be known as Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center. The Purcell gift, combined with other benefactions, has brought the total contributions to the project to \$22 million.

In accordance with University policies for new construction, work on the renovation will begin after the project is fully funded and designed. The University is actively seeking additional contributions.



Playing alongside future backcourt classmate Melissa Lechlitner, freshman guard Ashley Barlow averaged 20.0 points and 11.5 rebounds per game for the 2006 Indiana All-Star Team, helping the Hoosiers sweep a two-game series from their Kentucky counterparts.

## Roster Breakdowns

### By Class

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Seniors .....    | 2 |
| Juniors .....    | 4 |
| Sophomores ..... | 2 |
| Freshmen .....   | 4 |

### By Position

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Centers .....  | 2 |
| Guards .....   | 3 |
| Forwards ..... | 7 |

### By State

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Indiana .....        | 3 |
| Nevada .....         | 2 |
| California .....     | 1 |
| Georgia .....        | 1 |
| Illinois .....       | 1 |
| New York .....       | 1 |
| North Carolina ..... | 1 |
| Ohio .....           | 1 |
| Pennsylvania .....   | 1 |

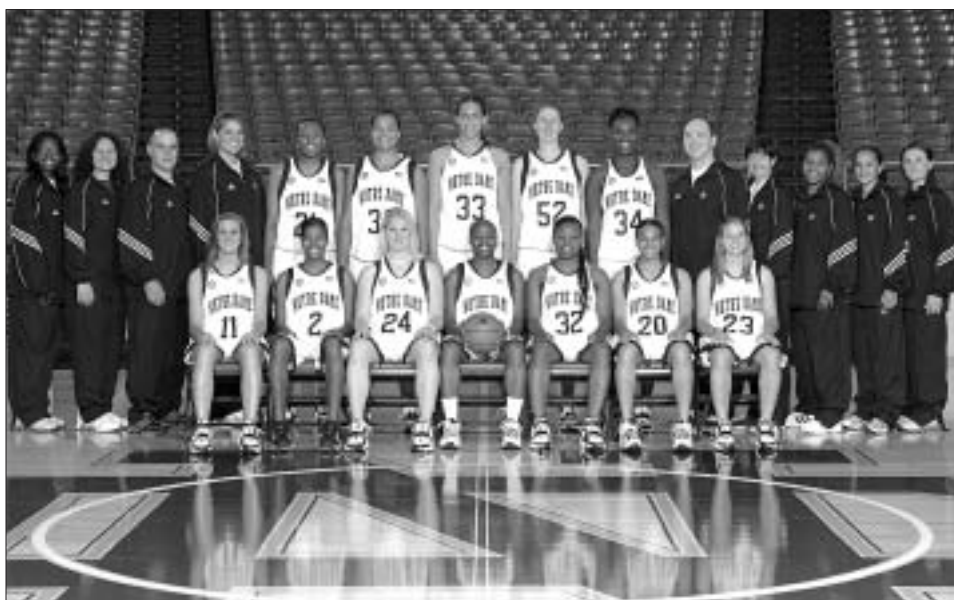
### By Height

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| D'Amico .....     | 6-5  |
| Williamson .....  | 6-4  |
| Ben-Tsvulun ..... | 6-3  |
| Erwin .....       | 6-2  |
| Smith .....       | 6-1  |
| Schrader .....    | 6-0  |
| Allen .....       | 5-11 |
| Barlow .....      | 5-9  |
| Gray .....        | 5-9  |
| Tsipis .....      | 5-9  |
| Gaines .....      | 5-7  |
| Lechlitner .....  | 5-7  |

## Pronunciation Guide

|                            |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Charel Allen .....         | shuh-RELL      |
| Danielle Ben-Tsvulun ..... | ben-SVOO-lun   |
| Melissa D'Amico .....      | duh-MEE-koh    |
| Tulyah Gaines .....        | tuh-LIE-uh     |
| Breona Gray .....          | bree-ON-uh     |
| Melissa Lechlitner .....   | LECK-light-ner |
| Stephanie Menio .....      | MANY-oh        |
| Chandrica Smith .....      | shan-DREE-kuh  |
| Amanda Tsipis .....        | SIP-iss        |
| Coquese Washington .....   | koh-KWEES      |

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Mishawaka .....        | MISH-uh-WALK-uh |
| Monessen .....         | moe-NESS-n      |
| Rancho Cucamonga ..... | KOO-kuh-MUN-guh |



Seated (left to right): Amanda Tsipis, Charel Allen, Lindsay Schrader, Tulyah Gaines, Breona Gray, Ashley Barlow and Melissa Lechlitner. Standing (left to right): senior manager Cheron Wilson, coordinator of basketball operations Stephanie Menio, associate director of strength & conditioning Tony Rolinski, assistant coach Angie Potthoff, Chandrica Smith, Danielle Ben-Tsvulun, Melissa D'Amico, Erica Williamson, Crystal Erwin, assistant coach Jonathan Tsipis, head coach Muffet McGraw, associate head coach Coquese Washington, assistant athletic trainer Anne Marquez and senior manager Alison Guengerich.

## Numerical

| No. | Name                 | Pos. | Ht.  | Yr-Exp. | Hometown (High School)                       |
|-----|----------------------|------|------|---------|--|
| 1   | Tulyah Gaines        | G    | 5-7  | Jr.-2V  | North Las Vegas, Nev. (Cheyenne)             |
| 2   | Charel Allen         | G    | 5-11 | Jr.-2V  | Monessen, Pa. (Monessen)                     |
| 11  | Amanda Tsipis        | G    | 5-9  | Jr.-2V  | Perry, Ohio (Perry)                          |
| 20  | Ashley Barlow        | G    | 5-9  | Fr.-HS  | Indianapolis, Ind. (Pike)                    |
| 21  | Chandrica Smith      | F    | 6-1  | So.-1V  | Stone Mountain, Ga. (Oak Hill Academy (Va.)) |
| 23  | Melissa Lechlitner   | G    | 5-7  | Fr.-HS  | Mishawaka, Ind. (South Bend St. Joseph's)    |
| 24  | Lindsay Schrader     | G    | 6-0  | So.-1V  | Bartlett, Ill. (Bartlett)                    |
| 31  | Danielle Ben-Tsvulun | F    | 6-3  | Fr.-HS  | Fort Wayne, Ind. (Harding)                   |
| 32  | Breona Gray          | G    | 5-9  | Sr.-3V  | Las Vegas, Nev. (Bishop Gorman)              |
| 33  | Melissa D'Amico      | C    | 6-5  | Jr.-2V  | Manorville, N.Y. (William Floyd)             |
| 34  | Crystal Erwin        | F    | 6-2  | Sr.-3V  | Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. (St. Paul)          |
| 52  | Erica Williamson     | C    | 6-4  | Fr.-HS  | Charlotte, N.C. (South Mecklenburg)          |

## Alphabetical

| No. | Name                 | Pos. | Ht.  | Yr-Exp. | Hometown (High School)                       |
|-----|----------------------|------|------|---------|--|
| 2   | Charel Allen         | G    | 5-11 | Jr.-2V  | Monessen, Pa. (Monessen)                     |
| 20  | Ashley Barlow        | G    | 5-9  | Fr.-HS  | Indianapolis, Ind. (Pike)                    |
| 31  | Danielle Ben-Tsvulun | F    | 6-3  | Fr.-HS  | Fort Wayne, Ind. (Harding)                   |
| 33  | Melissa D'Amico      | C    | 6-5  | Jr.-2V  | Manorville, N.Y. (William Floyd)             |
| 34  | Crystal Erwin        | F    | 6-2  | Sr.-3V  | Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. (St. Paul)          |
| 1   | Tulyah Gaines        | G    | 5-7  | Jr.-2V  | North Las Vegas, Nev. (Cheyenne)             |
| 32  | Breona Gray          | G    | 5-9  | Sr.-3V  | Las Vegas, Nev. (Bishop Gorman)              |
| 23  | Melissa Lechlitner   | G    | 5-7  | Fr.-HS  | Mishawaka, Ind. (South Bend St. Joseph's)    |
| 24  | Lindsay Schrader     | G    | 6-0  | So.-1V  | Bartlett, Ill. (Bartlett)                    |
| 21  | Chandrica Smith      | F    | 6-1  | So.-1V  | Stone Mountain, Ga. (Oak Hill Academy (Va.)) |
| 11  | Amanda Tsipis        | G    | 5-9  | Jr.-2V  | Perry, Ohio (Perry)                          |
| 52  | Erica Williamson     | C    | 6-4  | Fr.-HS  | Charlotte, N.C. (South Mecklenburg)          |

## Coaching Staff

| Name               | Position                | Year | Alma Mater               |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------|--------------------------|
| Muffet McGraw      | Head Coach              | 20th | Saint Joseph's (Pa.) '77 |
| Coquese Washington | Associate Head Coach    | 8th* | Notre Dame '92           |
| Jonathan Tsipis    | Assistant Coach         | 4th  | North Carolina '96       |
| Angie Potthoff     | Assistant Coach         | 2nd  | Penn State '97           |
| Stephanie Menio    | Dir. of Basketball Ops. | 2nd  | Pittsburgh '04           |

\* - Washington is in her eighth season at Notre Dame and her second as associate head coach.