



Wittenberg University Women's Basketball

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Tigers host Denison with first place, home court advantage on the line

Wittenberg University (18-5, 13-2 NCAC) vs. Denison University (16-7, 11-4 NCAC)

Saturday, Feb. 16, 2002 • 2 p.m. • HPER Center (3,000 cap.)

Probable DU Starters:	Yr.	Ht.	PPG	RPG	APG	Hometown/High School
G Michelle Mehling	Jr.	5-7	11.1	6.2	2.3	Columbus, Ohio/Grandview
G Kendra Tolford	Sr.	5-8	8.3	2.4	2.3	Findlay, Ohio/Liberty Benton
G Jessica McConnell	So.	5-6	7.3	2.8	2.0	Newark, Ohio/Lakewood
C Laci Ford	Sr.	6-2	6.9	7.4	0.3	Farrell, Pa./Farrell
F Lindsay Baldauf	Jr.	5-10	4.3	3.7	1.0	Akron, Ohio/Revere
Probable WU Starters:	Yr.	Ht.	PPG	RPG	APG	Hometown/High School
G Meghan Gaydos	Sr.	5-5	4.0	1.4	1.6	Concord, Ohio/Mentor Lake Catholic
G Stephanie Campbell	Jr.	5-7	11.5	4.1	2.4	South Charleston, Ohio/Southeastern
G Kate Rolf	Jr.	5-7	13.3	4.9	2.1	Ft. Wayne, Ind./Carroll
F Jill Swary	Sr.	5-10	5.0	3.7	0.4	Columbus, Ohio/Grandview
F Tiffany Keller	Jr.	5-10	9.3	3.7	0.8	Massillon, Ohio/Tuslaw

SETTING THE SCENE:

The Wittenberg University Tigers return home for a very important Senior Recognition Day game against visiting Denison University. The Tigers, sporting an 18-5 overall record and a mark of 13-2 in the NCAC, are alone in first place, a slim one game ahead of three-time defending champion Ohio Wesleyan and two ahead of Denison, which lost to Wittenberg on Dec. 8 by a score of 85-63 in Granville.

The Tigers have played well against a difficult schedule, losing to Wisconsin-Oshkosh by 12 points, Capital on the road by six, Defiance on the road by five, defending NCAC titlist Ohio Wesleyan on the road by two, and defending NCAC regular season co-champion Allegheny by nine. The combined record of those five opponents is 83-33 and all five teams are contenders for conference championships and NCAA tournament berths.

Wittenberg is led by junior guard **Kate Rolf**, who tops the team in scoring for a second straight year with a 13.3 points per game average while averaging a team-best 24.0 minutes per game. The balanced team — 12 players are averaging at least 10 minutes per game — is led in rebounding by sophomore forward **Geri Woessner** and Rolf with 4.9 per game. As a team, Wittenberg is topping its opponents by 9.9 boards per game, good for first in the NCAC and ninth in the nation.

The Big Red are an amazingly balanced team that came on in the middle of the season to briefly tie Wittenberg for the conference lead before losing their last two games. Nine players average at least four points per game, but just one is in double figures. Denison does a number of little things better than anyone else in the conference as the Big Red lead in assists, assist-turnover ratio and three-point field goals. Coaches always say that little things win games.

THE COACHES:

A 1982 Wittenberg graduate, **Pam Smith** is

in her 16th season as the Tigers' head coach with a record of 297-128 (.699), all with her alma mater. Smith's teams have made six NCAA Division III tournament appearances and have won seven NCAC regular season titles and five NCAC tournament championships to her credit. She has been named NCAC Coach of the Year three times (1991, '92 and '95) and Converse District Coach of the Year in 1993.

Joining her on the sidelines tonight is Denison Head Coach **Sara Lee**, who is in her 13th season leading the Big Red. Also the school's tremendously successful volleyball coach, Lee has compiled a Denison record of 150-167 and an overall mark of 151-193, including one season at Lake Erie (1988-89).

TOUGH AT HOME:

The Tigers are a perfect 11-0 in the HPER Center, including a 7-0 mark in NCAC action. They go for a perfect regular season home record today against the Big Red, something done on two previous occasions in school history — 1989-90 and 1994-95.

COACHING MILESTONE:

Head Coach **Pam Smith** has 298 career wins. With one regular season game and at least one NCAC tournament game remaining, Smith has a good chance of reaching that historic plateau this year. No other coach in Wittenberg history has won more than 50 games in a career.

REGIONAL RANKING:

In the most recent Great Lakes Regional rankings released by the NCAA on Feb. 4, Wittenberg was No. 6 out of eight ranked teams. Ohio Athletic Conference leader Wilmington tops the rankings.

WITTENBERG/DENISON SERIES:

Wittenberg holds a 34-5 edge in this series, which dates back to the 1981 season. The Tigers' lead Denison 28-3 since Wittenberg joined the NCAC in 1989. Last year, the two teams split the regular season meetings with each winning

at home before the Tigers, seeded No. 4, defeated the Big Red, the fifth seed, in the first round of the NCAC tournament. This season, Wittenberg won Round 1 by an 85-63 margin at Denison on Dec. 8.

POSTSEASON SCENARIOS:

The Wittenberg men's and women's basketball teams both enter today's action in a similarly intriguing situation. Both teams can win outright NCAC championships by defeating today's opponents. But a loss by either team could result in a first-place tie, which then would create the need for tiebreaker criteria to be used to determine tournament seedings.

For the men, the scenario is simple, as a loss to Wooster leads to three separate tiebreakers, none of which solves the problem. Then it will be left to a coin flip.

For the women, the scenario is slightly more complicated. A loss to Denison must be coupled with an Ohio Wesleyan win over a streaking Allegheny team at home today for a tie to be created. If that happens, the initial tiebreaker criteria also does not appear to determine a winner, which may also lead to a coin flip.

RADIO:

WBLY (AM 1600) carries selected Wittenberg women's basketball games during the season, with **Scott Leo** calling the action. He is scheduled to be on hand for every remaining Wittenberg game this season.

ON THE WEB:

Wittenberg's World Wide Web site offers up-to-date information on all Tiger athletic teams. Scores, results, statistics, news releases and boxscores are available by visiting Wittenberg's athletics home page www5.wittenberg.edu/news/athletics. Wittenberg also offers Internet broadcasts of various sporting events carried by WBLY. Just click on www5.wittenberg.edu/news/athletics/broadcast.shtml.