

# 2013-2014 Women's Basketball Preview

By Greg Kaszubowski

Coming off of a 23-win season and NCAA postseason appearance, the Concordia women's basketball team returns nine student-athletes, including four starters to the court in 2013-14, and are poised for a return to the national stage. This winter will be the fourteenth on the sidelines for Head Coach Paul Fessler, with a record of 278 - 119 as Golden Bear's Head Coach.

After losing key player Amanda Poke, the Golden Bears have been active on the recruiting trail bringing in three transfer guards Ameshia Kearney, Diamond Lane, and Voneisha Harris as well as two freshmen recruits, guards Mishayla Jones and Lauren Shifflett.

## Backcourt:

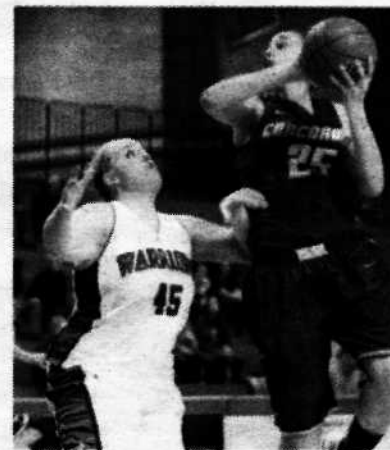
Back to run the point for the Golden Bears is senior Rachel Hansen. Hansen led the Golden Bears with 5.3 assists per game and a 1.5 assist-to-turnover ratio. She was the Golden Bears second-leading scorer at 10.9 points per game while shooting 40.3 percent from the field and 78.3 percent from the free-throw line. Hansen, who rounded out her stat line with 5.3 rebounds per outing, was a Second Team Academic All-NCIS-10 selection in 2012-13.

Senior Carissa Wolyniek will join Hansen in the starting backcourt scoring 10.1 points per game last season. An NSIC All-Academic started 28 of 30 games draining 39.1 percent of her attempts from distance in 2012-13 while knocking down 38.0 percent of three pointers and shot 83.8 percent from the charity stripe. Wolyniec added 3.4 rebounds and 1.3 assists per game for the Golden Bears last winter.

Tierra Bender played in three games last season, starting two before an injury ended her season early. Up and coming guard Jordyn Dudley appeared in ten games last season as a freshman for the Golden Bears.

## Frontcourt:

The anchor of the Golden Bears frontcourt is junior Anika Whiting. Last season Whiting was a Bulletin All-American Fourth Team, Daktronics All-America honorable mention, NSIC Player of the Year, Daktronics All-Central Region First Team, All-NSIC First Team, NSIC All-Academic, ranked third in the NSIC in scoring at 17.6 per game, 11th in the league in rebounding at 7.2 and eighth in blocked shots with 31, shot 53.1 percent from the field and 75.2 percent from the free throw line, finished second on the team with 43 steals, scored a career high 29 points against SMSU, scored in double figures in 29 of 30 games and scored 20+ points in ten games, finishing with seven double-doubles on the season. Whiting has been selected by the league



coaches as the NSIC South Division Preseason Player of the Year.

Kionda Nicks will also return to the frontcourt for her sophomore year in 2013-14. Nicks averaged 4.9 points and 4.9 rebounds per game in her first season as a member of the Golden Bears starting five. She also led the team with 53 blocked shots and shot 38.9 percent from the field along with 33 steals.

Forward Amanda Barton returns to the Golden Bears for the 2013-14 season. Last season Barton appeared in all 30 games. Amanda Barton was third on the team in blocked shots and shot 38.2 percent from the field and 26.1 percent from beyond the three point arch. Barton also scored in double digits in eight games last season.

Junior Jodi Batzel is returning after only appearing in one game last season due to injury, joined by fellow junior, Asha Knight who played in 11 games last season for the Golden Bears.

## Coaching Staff:

The theme of continuity runs from the court to the sidelines. Head Coach Paul Fessler welcomes Assistant Coaches Kachine Alexander and Deb Hyde back to the bench for their second season. Additionally, Amanda Behnke will join the staff as a graduate assistant after a four-year career at Concordia as one of the top post players in Concordia basketball history.

## Rankings:

Leading into the 2013 - 2014 season, the Golden Bears are ranked 23 overall in the Coaches Poll and 1 in the NSIC. Fessler says, "The rankings are fun, and the girls have fun with it." On the subject of the team's schedule Fessler said, "There are no easy games this season. The division looks tough from top to bottom."

