TIPOFF 2012
WOMEN'S BIOGRAPHIES & NOTES

ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE

Ericka Russell
Sr. • G • 5-7
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Three time SEC Academic Honor Roll member... A member of the SEC All-Freshman team for the 2008-09 season... Received the team's defensive award the past two seasons... Last season, she tied the school record for three pointers in a single game with eight at Arkansas ... Also allied double-digit points in 19 of the Tide's games last season... She was named SEC Player of the Week on Feb. 21... Had a game-high 18 points, 12 of which came from three-point range, in addition to three rebounds, two steals and one assists in season opener against Tennessee State... Posted a new career-high with 30 points connecting on 6-of-11 from behind the arc, in addition to grabbing four rebounds and two steals against Georgia in the SEC Tournament during her sophomore season... As a freshman, named to the Alpha Lambda Delta honor society, Phi Eta Sigma freshman honor society, National Society of Collegiate Scholars and recognized for the Black Scholars Award... Earned her undergraduate degree in business administration in three years ... Currently pursuing a master's degree in sport management.

Noting The Crimson Tide...

- Alabama made its first postseason appearance in eight years as it advanced to the WNIT round of 16 in 2011 and hopes to build off that success in the coming season.
- Alabama returns senior Ericka Russell, who has been one of the Tide's best scorers and defenders since arriving at the Capstone in 2008.
- There will also be a number of new faces on the Alabama sideline as it welcomes six newcomers, four of which are eligible to play this season.
- Among the fresh faces are junior college standouts Kyra Crosby, Jessica Merritt and Meghan Perkins as well as true freshman Aneesah Daniels.
- In addition, the Tide added a pair of transfers from Rutgers in Briana Hutchen and Daisha Simmons, who will have to sit out the 2011-12 season.
- For the fourth year, Alabama will be under the direction of Wendell Hudson. He is assisted by associate head coach Ty Evans, as well as Leah Drury and Robert Mosley.

ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS

Ashley Daniels
Sr. • F • 6-2
Coldwater, Miss.

A bit undersized for a post player, Ashley Daniels didn't let size stop her as she battled against some of the nation's best interior players in 2010-11... Daniels recorded 13 double-digit games, had eight double-figure rebounding games and recorded seven double-doubles as a junior... Daniels posted a career-best 22 points against Auburn and grabbed a season-best 13 boards three times last year... Daniels was a regular in the starting lineup missing just one start due to injury and she was tough to keep off the floor, averaging nearly 30 minutes per game... Daniels finished the year ranked fourth on the team with 8.3 ppg and led the team with 7.5 rpg... She bettered those numbers in the post season with 7.8 ppg and 7.8 rpg for the four-game WNIT run leading Arkansas into the quarterfinal round... Daniels was recognized off the court for her commitment to the Razorback community earning selection to the SEC Community Service team... Born Ashley Breanna Rashae Daniels on Dec. 6, 1989, she is the daughter of Roy and Carolyn Daniels of Coldwater, Miss... She is the youngest of three Daniels, with older brothers Royrick and Brandon... Royrick is a first sergeant in the Army.

Noting The Razorbacks...

- The University of Arkansas women's basketball team finds itself in new territory for the 2011-12 season. For the first time in head coach Tom Collen's tenure, the Razorbacks are a veteran team with senior leadership.
- This year's team returns a recognizable corps of players paced by senior three-year starting guards C'eira Ricketts and Lyndsay Harris.
- Although Harris suffered a season-ending knee injury in the first round of the SEC Tournament, she is expected to be ready for the season.
- In addition to the guards, Arkansas returns senior starters Jamesha Townsend and Ashley Daniels along with junior post Sarah Watkins for what could be one of the only teams to welcome back all five starters.
- Collen paced the Razorbacks to a 12-win start last year, got the team back into the top 25 rankings in both polls and finished up with a solid run to the WNIT Quarterfinals in the postseason.
- With nearly all of his scoring and defense returning, Arkansas is a team who could challenge for bragging rights this year.

TIPOFF 2012
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AUBURN TIGERS

Blanche Alverson
Jr. • F/G • 6-3
Andalusia, Ala.

Has been honored with several awards including the Capital One Academic All-District IV, SEC Academic Honor Roll, SEC Community Service Team, and Auburn Academic Top Tiger... Enters her junior season tied with Tamela McCorvey (2006-08) for eighth all-time in career 3-pointers with 90... Scored Auburn's first field goal in the new Auburn Arena, a 3-pointer that came 56 seconds into the game against Mercer... Was second on the team in scoring, tallying 327 points for 10.2 per game, a mark that ranked 26th in the SEC... Averaged 10.7 points per game in SEC play, a mark that ranked in a tie for 24th in the league... Hit a team-high 50 three-pointers, a mark that ranks in a tie for ninth all-time at Auburn in single-season 3-pointers with Nitasha Brown (2005-06)... Finished the season ranked 11th in the SEC in 3-pointers per game with 1.6, also ranked ninth in SEC-only games with 1.6... Pulled down 151 rebounds and was second on the team with 4.7 per game... Was tied for 10th in SEC-only games with 4.3 defensive rebounds per game... Also tallied 33 assists, 27 steals and 17 blocks on the season.

Noting The Tigers...

- The Auburn women's basketball team returns 10 letterwinners and seven players that saw time last season as a starter for the 2011-12 season.
- The Tigers are coming off a season that saw the team advance to the second round of the WNIT, giving the team its fourth post-season appearance in the last five years.
- The top returning Tiger is junior Blanche Alverson, the only player to start in all 32 games last season, averaging 10.2 points and 4.7 rebounds along the way.
- She also knocked down a team-high 50 three-pointers, enough to tie for ninth all-time at Auburn in single-season three-pointers.
- Right behind Alverson is Chantel Hilliard, one of three seniors on the Auburn roster.
- Hilliard scored 6.4 points along with 3.5 rebounds per game, playing in all 32 while starting in 10.

FLORIDA GATORS

Azania Stewart
Jr. • C • 6-4
Woodgreen, England

Stewart is a true center who gives Florida a big presence in the paint ... at 6-foot-4, is the tallest of all 208 female Gator student-athletes on any 2011-12 roster ... Led the Southeastern Conference in field goal percentage (all games) during the 2009-10 season, hitting 61.9 percent (91-147) of her attempts and became the fifth different Gator to lead the league in shooting efficiency ... Had her left kidney removed on Sept. 10, 2008, when it was discovered that it was a non-functioning kidney that had an infection ... 1 of 12 finalists for the 2009 V Foundation Comeback Award (included men, women and teams) ... The first Gator from Europe ... Began playing basketball when she was 15 years old when she was spotted while competing in netball, a 7-on-7 game similar to basketball, but the players don't dribble and the hoop does not have a backboard ... Played for one of the top U.S. high school basketball programs and summer travel leagues in the country... Spent the 2009, 2010 and 2011 summers in Europe, playing for different teams with her native Great Britain with the hopes of strengthening her changes of making the 2012 Great Britain Olympic Team and suiting up for her country, which plays host to the Games.

Noting The Gators...

- For the third time since the 1990-91 season – and the first time since the 2003-04 campaign - the Gators return all five starters from the previous year.
- Florida's 2011-12 roster features five seniors, each of whom boasts starting experience, as 11 returning letterwinners welcome three talented newcomers aiming to build upon last year's 20-win season and earn a fifth consecutive postseason berth under fifth-year head coach Amanda Butler.
- Senior guard Jordan Jones led last year's extremely balanced offense that had nine different players contribute at least 5.0 points per game.
- Senior center Azania Stewart collected a team-leading 6.1 rebounds last season, along with blocking 1.8 shots per game, the second-highest average among all SEC players last year.

GEORGIA LADY BULLDOGS

Jasmine Hassell
Jr. • F • 6-2
Lebanon, Tenn.

Among SEC statistical leaders for conference games only, finished 2010-11 ranked No. 16 in rebounding (5.6 rpg)... Paced Georgia's offensive output in six contests – versus Chattanooga, against Denver, at Georgia Tech, against High Point, at LSU and against Tennessee in the SEC Tournament... Named to the All-Tournament team at the Courtyard Marriott L.A. Westside LMU Thanksgiving Classic after averaging 16.0 ppg and hitting 75.0 percent of her FGs versus Denver and LMU... Averaged 13.3 points and 8.7 rebounds in Georgia's three outings against Vanderbilt, Ole Miss and Kentucky between Feb. 10-17, including a career-high 33 minutes of action at Ole Miss... Stepped up her rebounding efforts at the end of the regular season. After averaging 3.5 rpg in non-conference and 3.8 rpg in the first six SEC outings, garnered 6.6 rpg in the last 10 games... Named to the 2010 All-SEC Freshman team in balloting of league coaches... As a freshman, led UGA in field goal percentage in SEC play (.533), a mark that ranked No. 5 among league leaders... Named SEC Freshman of the Week on Jan. 25, 2010, largely due to career-high tallies of 20 points, seven rebounds and 30 minutes played a day earlier vs. Ole Miss... Was the 17th future Lady Bulldog to play in the WBCA All-America game since its inception in 1992, and the seventh signee to play in the McDonald's contest since it began in 2002... Her mother, Gail, played collegiately at Belmont from 1981-84 and was the Bruins' career scoring leader at the end of her career with 1,814 points.

Noting The Lady Bulldogs...

- The 2011-12 edition of the Georgia Lady Bulldogs returns four starters and three additional letterwinners from last year's squad, which finished 23-11 and advanced to the "Sweet 16" round of the NCAA Tournament.
- Georgia also will welcome five newcomers to the roster this winter.
- Junior Jasmine James headlines the Lady Bulldogs' returnees.
- She was a second-team All-SEC performer a year ago after leading the team in scoring, assists and steals.
- Also back are guards Meredith Mitchell, an All-SEC Defensive choice, and Khaalidah Miller, an All-SEC Freshman performer, as well as forward Jasmine Hassell.
- Head coach Andy Landers embarks on his 33rd season in Athens looking to post his 27th 20-win season at UGA.

KENTUCKY WILDCATS

A'dia Mathies
Jr. • G • 5-9
Louisville, Ky.

Mathies is one of the key cogs in the Wildcats' success over the last two years... She has started in 69-of-70 career games... Also has netted double-figures in 51-of-70 games... Has scored at least five points in all 70 games... UK's top returning scorer and third-leading rebounder from last season with an average of 12.8 points and 4.7 rebounds per game... Led the team in assists (89) and ranked second in steals (71) after moving to the point guard position midway through her sophomore season... Two-time All-SEC second team selection... Named to the 2011 SEC All-Defensive Team... Just 74 points away from becoming the 28th member of UK's 1,000-point club... 2010 SEC Freshman of the Year... UK's first freshman All-American since 1980.

Noting The Wildcats...

- Kentucky enters the 2011-12 season with high expectations coming off back-to-back trips to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since the 1981-82 and 1982-83 seasons.
- The Wildcats, led by head coach Matthew Mitchell who is entering his fifth year at UK, return 10 letter- winners, including four starters from last year.
- Senior point guard Amber Smith also returns to the hardwood after sitting out the 2010-11 season with a knee injury.
- One of the nation's top recruiting classes is comprised of three freshmen in Bria Goss, Azia Bishop and Bra'Shey Ali.
- Also joining the Wildcats will be sophomore forward Samarie Walker.
- Walker will be eligible following the 2011 fall semester after transferring from Connecticut in December of 2010.

LSU LADY TIGERS

Courtney Jones
Sr. • F • 6-2
Midfield, Ala.

Solid, all-around forward who is one of the Lady Tigers' top finishers around the basket... Provided depth as a freshman and was a key member of the starting lineup as a sophomore... Served as one of the top "sixth women" off the bench in the SEC as a junior... Has played in 93 games with 24 starts... A career 5.7 point per game scorer... Recorded 344 career rebounds and two double-doubles (both as a junior)... Owns 17 career double-figure scoring games... Last season, came off the bench in all 32 contests where she was the team's fourth-leading scorer with 5.8 points per game ... Produced two double-doubles and six double-figure scoring games.

Noting The Lady Tigers...

- The Nikki Caldwell era begins for LSU, who returns 10 letterwinners from a team that posted a 19-13 mark and finished fifth in the SEC in 2011.
- Caldwell, a former player and assistant coach at Tennessee, comes to LSU after turning UCLA into a national power with a 72-26 (.735) overall mark in three seasons.
- Of the 10 returning letterwinners who make up the 2011-12 Lady Tiger roster, five of them are seniors highlighted by All-SEC forward and Wade Trophy watch list member LaSondra Barrett.
- Barrett posted a team-high 6.3 rebounds per contest to go along with 12.2 points per game last season.
- Barrett is one of only 17 players in school history with 1,000 points and 500 rebounds.
- LSU also welcomes back its top returning scorer in second-team All-SEC guard Adrienne Webb, who averaged 12.8 points per game as a sophomore.

OLE MISS REBELS

Nikki Byrd
Sr. • F • 6-4
Brookhaven, Miss.

Played in 29 games and made 10 starts last season... Named to the Inn at Ole Miss Classic All-Tournament team in 2010... Ended the year averaging 7.3 points per game and was tied for third on the team with 5.3 boards per game ... Second on the team in field goal percentage (.485) and blocks (14) ... Third on the team in steals (22) ... Recorded two double-doubles on the year: 15 points and 10 rebounds in a 85-51 win against SELA (Dec. 11) and 16 points and a career-high 18 boards at Alabama (Feb. 20) ... Scored in double figures in nine games ... grabbed double-digit rebounds in three games (18 at Alabama Feb. 20, 13 vs. Gonzaga Nov. 26 and 10 vs. SELA Dec. 11) ... Scored a season-high 18 points against Arkansas (Feb. 17) ... Scored 16 points on three occasions during the year ... Scored 13 points against South Carolina in the SEC Tournament (March 3) ... Shot at least 75 percent from the free throw line in eight games.

Noting The Rebels...

- Ole Miss returns four starters and nine letterwinners from last year's team that finished 10-19 overall and 3-13 in the SEC.
- The Rebels return All-SEC Freshman team honoree Valencia McFarland.
- McFarland was second on the team in scoring (13.3) and led the team in assists (123) and steals (43).
- Ole Miss also returns its top rebounders in sophomore Pa'Sonna Hope (6.6) and junior Courtney Marbra (5.4).
- Ole Miss' incoming class was ranked 40th in the nation in November by ESPN HoopGurlz.
- Four of the team's five signees were either ranked by the publication in the top 100 overall players or in the top 100 players for their position.
- After having nine underclassmen on the roster last season, Ole Miss will again have a young team this year as 11 of the team's 15 players this season are underclassmen.
- Renee Ladner enters her fifth season as head coach at Ole Miss. Ladner enters 2011-12 with a career record of 58-65 (.472).

MISSISSIPPI STATE LADY BULLDOGS

Diamber Johnson
Sr. • G • 5-7
Pontotoc, Miss.

Last season, led the Lady Bulldogs with a personal-best 12.8 scoring average. Also set career highs in rebounds (97), assists (127), blocks (9) and steals (32)... Played in all 30 games, starting all but two contests and leading the Lady Bulldogs in scoring 10 times... Claimed the third-most assists by a Bulldog junior and the fourth-most in the SEC last season... Went 8-for-8 at the line en route to a 14-point, five-rebound, three-assist outing against North Texas...Scored a career-high 24 points in a win over Utah...Led the team with 16 points in an SEC Tournament win against Auburn... She also paced MSU against Vanderbilt in the second round, scoring 20 points (on 9 field goals) and adding six assists.

Noting The Lady Bulldogs...

- Having to replace four starters and nine letterwinners from the 2009-10 Sweet 16 team, last season's Lady Bulldogs endured some growing pains before ending the season by winning three of the year's final four games.
- That strong close to the season gives MSU head coach Sharon Fanning-Otis great optimism as her 2011-12 edition returns four starters from that squad.
- State brings back 77-percent of its scoring production, including leading scorer Diamber Johnson.
- The senior averaged 12.8 points last season while dishing out a team-high 127 assists and grabbing 3.2 rebounds per game.
- Fellow senior Porsha Porter averaged 9.8 points in her inaugural season wearing the Maroon & White, but she was fantastic down the stretch, scoring at an 11.1 clip in the season's final 10 games.
- The veteran core of returnees will help mentor a talented group of newcomers that look to make an immediate impact.
- State inked Clarion Ledger Dandy Dozen selections Shamia Robinson and Kendra Grant to go along with Arkansas standout Jerica James and Martha Alwal, a 6-4 center from Minnesota.

SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS

Markeshia Grant
Sr. • G • 5-6
Tampa, Fla.

Started every game last season... Closed the season with four straight double-figure scoring games and was team's top scorer in postseason play with 12.3 ppg... Was one of two Gamecocks last season who led the team in both points and rebounds in a game – 13 points, six rebounds vs. Georgia (March 4)... Led the team with 13.0 points and 7.5 rebounds per game in the SEC Tournament... Great defensive spark off the bench throughout the season, keying several comeback victories, including Mississippi State and LSU... Attended Point Guard College camp over the summer... Transferred from College of Central Florida, earning third-team NJCAA All-America honors.

Noting The Gamecocks...

- While much has changed with six newcomers, much has stayed the same for South Carolina in that the Gamecocks bring back eight returners – all juniors and seniors – who spent the summer and preseason preparing the six newcomers for what lay ahead.
- With that early start forging a strong team bond, South Carolina is poised to continue the program's steady improvement under fourth-year head coach Dawn Staley.
- The Gamecocks bring back three starters among their eight upperclassmen, a group that includes last season's top two in points, rebounds and assists.
- In fact, Staley has 74.5 percent of scoring, 81.4 percent of assists and 63.1 percent of rebounds from last year's WNIT squad coming back for 2011-12.
- South Carolina has added four wins to its total each year since Staley's debut at the helm, and the soon-to-be Women's Basketball Hall of Fame inductee is looking for her squad to take another step forward this season.

TENNESSEE LADY VOLUNTEERS

Vicki Baugh
Gr. • F/C • 6-4
Sacramento, Calif.

After missing nearly 21 months of game action because of injuries to her left knee, Baugh played in 24 games in 2010-11, while serving as one of the Lady Vols' most respected and vocal team leaders... Best game of the season was her 12-point (4-of-4 shooting) and five-board performance at Ole Miss on Feb. 24... Played a season-best 18 minutes in Tennessee's Dayton Regional Final loss to Notre Dame on March 28, scoring eight points and grabbing five boards...Averaged 5.0 ppg and 4.3 rpg in 10.8 mpg in four games in the 2011 NCAA Tournament... Has been named to the SEC Academic Honor Roll the past three seasons... Earned gold medals as a member of the 2007 USA U19 World Championship Team and the 2006 FIBA Americas U18 Championship... On the AAU circuit, she played for the Nor-Cal Elite in 2004, 2005 and 2006, where she was honored as the MVP... Is currently in UT grad school pursuing a M.S. degree in Kinesiology with a concentration in Sport Psychology... Received her B.A. in psychology in May 2011.

Noting The Lady Volunteers...

- The 2011-12 University of Tennessee Lady Vols, reigning 2011 SEC Champions, take to the court this season with their collective focus set on cutting down nets.
- Stopped one step short of reaching the NCAA Final Four in 2011, they are dialed in for 2012 to reach their goal.
- UT head coach Pat Summitt starts her 38th year at the helm of the Lady Vols sporting a 1,071-199 overall record.
- Tennessee returns the bulk of the team despite losing guards Angie Bjorklund (10.3 ppg, 2.6 rpg), Sydney Smallbone (1.4 ppg, 0.8 rpg) and center Kelley Cain (7.0 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 2.1 bpg) to graduation.
- A six member senior-laden squad, UT will be led by 2011 State Farm All-American and SEC MVP 6-2 guard/forward Shekinna Stricklen (12.8 ppg, 7.3 rpg) and 6-3 post Glory Johnson (12.0 ppg, 9.7 rpg).

VANDERBILT COMMODORES

Tiffany Clarke
Jr. • F • 6-0
Duluth, Ga.

Named to SEC All-Tournament Team last season... Four games of 20-plus points ... Six double-doubles... Averaged 7.6 points and 5.4 rebounds while shooting 56.0% from the floor... Second on the team with 26 blocks... Had 18 points and career-best 17 rebounds in SEC semifinals against Kentucky... 17 rebounds tied for 16th most in school history and most since Carla Thomas had 16 in 2005... First player since Jenni Benningfield in 2003 to score 20-plus points and grab 10-plus rebounds in consecutive games... Was named to the SEC All-Freshmen Team in 2009-10 season... Averaged 7.5 points and 5.3 rebounds per game as a freshman.

Noting The Commodores...

- Coming off its 12th straight NCAA Tournament appearance and 20-win season, Vanderbilt will look to continue its success this season with the return of three starters from one of the youngest squads in the SEC last season.
- Last year the Commodores finished 20-12 overall and third in the Southeastern Conference.
- Led by 10th-year Head Coach Melanie Balcomb, the Commodores will again boast one of the league's youngest squads with just one senior on their roster.
- Vanderbilt must replace two of its top three scorers from last year with the graduation of Jence Rhoads and Hannah Tuomi.
- On the flip side, three of the team's five leading scorers were freshmen last year.
- Two of the freshmen, Jasmine Lister (guard) and Stephanie Holzer (center) were named to the SEC All-Freshmen team.
- Lister led the team in scoring last year, while Holzer tied for the team lead in rebounding and also averaged double figures in scoring.
- Also returning is junior forward Tiffany Clarke, who was named to the SEC All-Tournament team and finished the season averaging 13.3 points and 9.0 rebounds in her last 12 games.