

Men's Basketball Wrap-up

Natalie Belva

Reaching the NCAA Tournament for the seventh year in a row, the Virginia Wesleyan Men's Basketball team lived up to many national, conference, and team expectations, but the young squad is not satisfied.

Assistant coach D'Juan Tucker stated, "We have to work very hard this offseason to become better players."

Jumping to a 16-0 start on the season, the marlins finished 25-4 overall and ranked tenth nationally. In a competitive Old Dominion Athletic Conference featuring other ranked opponents such as Randolph-Macon College and Eastern Mennonite University, the Virginia Wesleyan Marlins finished the season regular conference champs. Junior Donald Vaughn garnered Second Team All-ODAC honors, sophomore Chris Teasley earned All-ODAC Honorable Mention, and standout freshman D.J. Woodmore earned Second Team All-ODAC honors and ODAC Rookie of the Year.

In addition to Woodmore's ODAC honors, he received the prestigious National Rookie of the Year award, the first ever for Virginia Wesleyan. Woodmore was also awarded All-South Region Rookie of the Year and named to the D3 News All-Freshman Team.

After an upsetting semifinal conference tournament loss, the marlins advanced to the Sweet 16 with wins over Delaware Valley College and Franklin & Marshall College. Virginia Wesleyan battled hard against No. 4 Williams College but fell short 79-73.

Returning a strong junior and sophomore class, the marlins will look to pick up right where they left off next season.

"Next year we will have all had the experience to make an even greater run next season," said Woodmore. "Anything less than a final four appearances is unacceptable."

“We have enough weapons offensively, but defense wins championships,” said Woodmore. “We have to buy into our defensive principles.”

Junior captain Art Crew will carry forward his leadership roles into the offseason.

“Not only do I need to motivate our team to work hard in the offseason, but I need to set an example,” said Crew. “I need to make sure everyone does their part to make us a better team,” said Crew.

For Virginia Wesleyan Men’s Basketball, next year’s road to success and an NCAA Championship has already begun.