

# 2006-07 SEASON PREVIEW

# SEASON OUTLOOK

## WILLIAMS TO BLEND SIX SENIORS WITH FIVE NEWCOMERS

The challenge for head coach **Gary Williams** and the 2006-07 Maryland Terrapins will be to combine the experience of six seniors with a talented incoming class of five newcomers. Williams, who enters his 18th season at Maryland, is excited about the unique blend the team offers and is looking forward to the upcoming campaign.

"It's an interesting team with a number of veteran players who have a lot of experience, but they're going to be pushed by some of our new guys for playing time and starting positions," said Williams. "That usually leads to some intense practices which I expect will make us a better team."

Maryland returns eight lettermen who have combined for 469 career games and 148 starts. The Terps return 58 percent of their scoring and 63 percent of their rebounding from last season. Four starters return off last year's 19-13 squad which finished 5-1 in league games decided by four points or less. Williams knows that experience can pay dividends in the Atlantic Coast Conference this season.

"Our upperclassmen know what it takes to win and beat good teams and how to close out tight games," remarked Williams. "That's where their experience pays off and where they can be leaders for our younger players. It's not about just having the talent, but being willing to put in the work each day."

In addition to their on-court abilities, Williams will rely on his seniors to mentor a talented incoming class that is making the transition to collegiate basketball in the ACC. "College is a different game than what they're used to in high school, and



that's where the leadership from the upperclassmen and the coaching staff can help expedite their learning curve," said Williams. "Until you get them in practice and game situations, you really don't know what you have."

If the Terps are to extend their current streak of 13 consecutive post-season appearances, Williams knows they'll have to address a few key areas which hurt them a year ago. "We have always been able to score since I've been here, but last year we took a step back defensively," noted Williams. "We need to regain that defensive intensity and take care of the ball at the offensive end of the floor. Those two areas will be key to our success this season."

Despite the setback in scoring defense and field goal percentage allowed, the Terps continued their dominance defending in front of the rim. Maryland averaging 6.0 blocked shots per game, which led the league and was 13th best in the country. It was the eighth consecutive season in which Maryland finished either first or second in the ACC in blocked shots.

With depth and talent at every position, combined with a renewed effort on defense, the Terrapins are looking to make a move up the conference ladder. After narrowly missing the NCAA Tournament the past two seasons, the hard-charging Williams expects the Terps to be a force this season. "All of our guys put in a lot of work over the summer to get better individually and collectively as a team, and I expect it to pay off for us this season."

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1 TEAM



EKENE IBEKWE ■ ■ ■

FRONTCOURT

Maryland boasts one of the most athletic and experienced frontcourts in the league. Veteran starters figure to see the bulk of the minutes up front, but a few newcomers will be expected to provide depth and contribute off the bench.

Senior **Ekene Ibekwe** returns for his senior season after leading the team in rebounding as a junior. He was third on the team in scoring with 11.1 points per game and finished seventh in the ACC in blocked shots per game (1.34). Ibekwe enters his senior year seventh on the school's all-time blocked shots list (142). After opting out of the NBA draft this summer, he participated in the 2006 FIBA World Championships as a member of the Nigerian national team.

"Ikene had a great summer playing against international competition, including a solid performance against Dirk Nowitzki and other top-flight opponents," said Williams. "He's one of the most talented and experienced players in all of college basketball, and I expect big things from him this season."

Ibekwe teamed with **James Gist** to form one of the most formidable defensive front lines in all of college basketball last season. Gist was fifth in the ACC, with 1.59 blocks per contest. He came on late in the season, starting 15 of Maryland's final 17 contests and is looking build upon a sophomore campaign in which he averaged 8.4 points and 4.8 rebounds per contest.

Senior **Will Bowers** is another experienced frontcourt performer who will figure into the Terps' success this season. A physical presence with a soft shooting touch around the rim, Bowers has shown improvement in each of the past three seasons and his coach expects that trend to continue.

"Will is one of the biggest players in the ACC," noted Williams. "He contributed in a backup role for us last year and I look for him to push for increased playing time. He is a guy who can really help us up front and make us a better team."

**Gini Chukura** and **Dave Neal** provide experienced depth up front. Chukura, a senior, enters his third year in the program after joining the club as a walk-on in 2004-05. He played in 11 games as a junior and displays a great feel for the game. Chukura has made his presence felt on the glass and provides the Terps with a solid post defender.

Neal was the only freshman on the team last year and saw action in 13 contests. A versatile performer at the offensive end of the floor, Neal will vie for increased playing time this season.

Three newcomers are also in the mix up front for Maryland. Junior **Bambale Osby** along with freshmen **Jerome Burney**, and **Landon Milbourne** will give Williams plenty of options along the front line. After spending his freshman season at New Mexico, Osby played for Paris junior college in Texas in 2005-06. He is expected to give the team another physical option in the paint.

Milbourne is a slasher with the ability to get to the basket. Burney makes his mark on the defensive end. He has the ability to use his size to match up against taller opponents, but can utilize his quickness to cover quicker players as well. All three newcomers should figure into the rotation up front this season.



WILL BOWERS ■ ■ ■



D.J. STRAWBERRY ■ ■ ■

BACKCOURT

Three seniors will anchor an experienced backcourt, while two highly-touted freshmen will push for playing time at guard. The versatility of the unit provides Williams with the ability to utilize a number of combinations in the backcourt.

Despite playing out of position at point guard last year, senior **D.J. Strawberry** averaged 10.3 points per game and led the squad with 128 assists. He earned Honorable Mention All-ACC Defensive Team plaudits last season, ranking sixth in the conference with 1.6 steals per contest. Strawberry was just the eighth Terp in the last 20 years to lead the team in both steals and assists. His 4.0 steals per game ranked seventh in the ACC and he ranks 14th all-time at Maryland with 133 career thefts.

"D.J. gave us everything that he had last year," said Williams. "We asked him to play the point guard position and it may have taken away from his natural slashing ability, but in the end it has made him a better all-around player."

Senior **Mike Jones** came on late last year, starting the last 15 games for Maryland. Jones averaged 13.7 points and 4.4 rebounds during that span. He led the team with 61 three-pointers, including seven against Temple. Jones enters his senior season ninth at UMD with 122 career triples. He shot a team-best 41 percent from three-point range and led the Terps as he connected on 90 percent of his free throw attempts. He scored in double figures 17 times and knocked down at least one triple in 28 games.

"Mike became a starter in January and showed everyone that he is a great shooter," noted Williams. "He worked on his conditioning over the summer which will help maintain that same energy at the defensive end of the floor."

**Parrish Brown** made an impact in his first season with Maryland, quickly providing a spark off the bench for Williams. Brown played in 29 games and proved to be a very valuable reserve for the Terps who saw his playing time steadily increase as the season progressed. He dished out at least five assists on three different occasions and scored in double figures twice from the point guard position.

Freshmen **Eric Hayes** and **Greivis Vasquez** are expected to help steady the point for the Terps and help cut down on turnovers that hurt the team last year. Both players enjoyed decorated prep careers and are looking to make the transition to the college game. Their ability to contribute this season will be a big factor in determining the Terps' long-term success.

## COACHING STAFF

The theme of returning performers and fresh faces applies to the coaching staff, where a familiar individual has returned to College Park. Chuck Driesell, a four-year letterwinner (1981-85) who played under his father "Lefty", joined the staff this offseason. He brings 16 years of collegiate coaching experience to the Terrapin staff. "Chuck saw the game as a player from a coach's perspective and has established himself as a proven recruiter," said Williams.

Michael Adams returns for his second season on staff with Williams, as does former Terrapin standout Keith Booth. "Michael and Keith are seasoned college coaches who were both great college players," noted Williams. "They are both well-rounded coaches who have made an impact in recruiting, scouting, and on the floor."

The combination on the bench has Williams excited about the future. "Any time you assemble a coaching staff you want to find individuals who bring something unique to the program," he said. "Whenever we have success on the court or with our recruiting efforts, it's because of our entire staff, and I'm excited about what this group can do."

## SCHEDULE

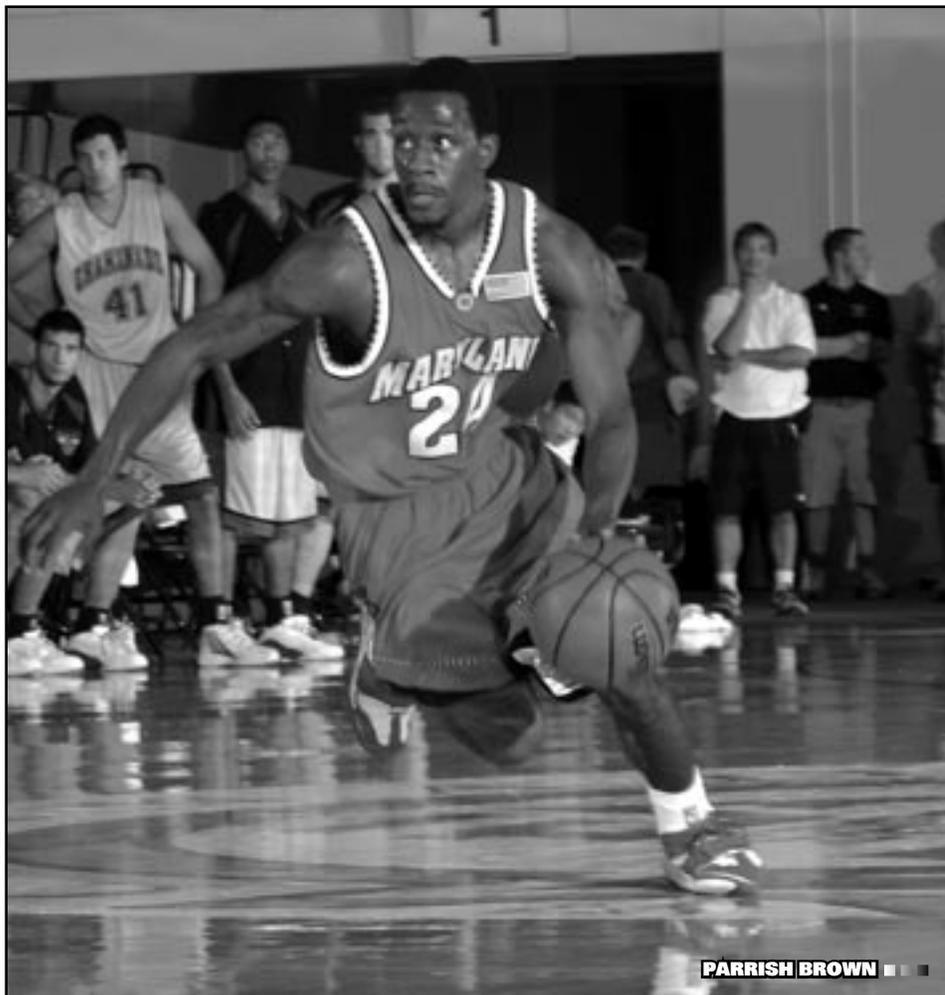
As a member of the Atlantic Coast Conference, the Maryland schedule is once again one of the most difficult in the country. The Terps will face 13 opponents who participated in postseason play last year. The schedule also puts the Terrapins in the national spotlight, as 13 games will be televised nationally.

"We're coming off a 19-win season against a very difficult schedule, and this year's challenge is no different," said Williams. "With the early start to the year we're going to get better as we move along, but I expect us to find out a lot about our team in November and December because of the quality of our schedule."

Maryland's first game against Hampton on November 7 marks the earliest start in school history. That game in



MIKE JONES ■ ■ ■



PARRISH BROWN ■ ■ ■

College Park is part of the 2006 2K Sports College Hoops Classic. The Terrapins host the College Park Regional, which also includes the University of New Orleans and Vermont, November 7, and 8. The winner of the two-day regional will advance to Madison Square Garden for the championship rounds on November 16 and 17. Michigan State, Texas, and St. John's join Maryland as regional hosts of the 16-team tournament.

The Terrapins visit Illinois on November 28 as part of the annual ACC/Big 10 Challenge, before taking on Notre Dame in the BB&T Classic at Verizon Center. Maryland opens the ACC schedule with a December 10 matchup at Boston College. After visiting the Eagles, the Terrapins will enjoy a seven-game homestand, their longest since the 1976-77 season. Other non-conference opponents include American, Fordham, High Point, Iona, Missouri-Kansas City, Mount St. Mary's, Siena, and Winthrop.

In the 16-game ACC schedule, the Terrapins will have home-and-home matchups with Clemson, Duke, Florida State, N.C. State, and Virginia. In league action the Terrapins will entertain Georgia Tech, Miami, and North Carolina at Comcast Center. Maryland will play its only regular-season meetings against Boston College, Virginia Tech, and Wake Forest on the road.

# ROSTER INFORMATION

## ALPHABETICAL

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.-Exp.	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
31	Will Bowers	C	7-1	262	Sr.-3V	Hanover, Md. (Archbishop Spalding)
24	Parrish Brown	G	6-1	175	Sr.-1V	Chicago, Ill. (Thorndridge/Kennedy King C.C.)
32	Jerome Burney	F	6-9	210	Fr.-HS	Atlanta, Ga. (Westlake)
33	Gini Chukura	F	6-5	210	Sr.-2V	Silver Spring, Md. (Good Counsel)
15	James Gist	F	6-8	223	Jr.-2V	Silver Spring, Md. (Good Counsel)
5	Eric Hayes	G	6-3	175	Fr.-HS	Dumfries, Va. (Potomac)
25	Ekene Ibekwe	F	6-9	220	Sr.-3V	Carson, Calif. (Carson)
23	Mike Jones	G	6-5	204	Sr.-3V	Dorchester, Mass. (Thayer Academy)
1	Landon Milbourne	F	6-7	205	Fr.-HS	Roswell, Ga. (Oak Hill Academy)
35	Dave Neal	F	6-7	255	So.-1V	McLean, Va. (Bishop O'Connell)
50	Bambale Osby	F	6-8	250	Jr.-TR	Richmond, Va. (Benedictine/Paris JC)
2	D.J. Strawberry	G	6-5	201	Sr.-3V	Corona, Calif. (Mater Dei)
21	Greivis Vasquez	G	6-5	195	Fr.-HS	Caracas, Venezuela (Montrose Christian)

## NUMERICAL

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.-Exp.	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
1	Landon Milbourne	F	6-7	205	Fr.-HS	Roswell, Ga. (Oak Hill Academy)
2	D.J. Strawberry	G	6-5	201	Sr.-3V	Corona, Calif. (Mater Dei)
5	Eric Hayes	G	6-3	175	Fr.-HS	Dumfries, Va. (Potomac)
15	James Gist	F	6-8	223	Jr.-2V	Silver Spring, Md. (Good Counsel)
21	Greivis Vasquez	G	6-5	195	Fr.-HS	Caracas, Venezuela (Montrose Christian)
23	Mike Jones	G	6-5	204	Sr.-3V	Dorchester, Mass. (Thayer Academy)
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50	Bambale Osby	F	6-8	250	Jr.-TR	Richmond, Va. (Benedictine/Paris JC)

**Head Coach:** Gary Williams, 18th Year at Maryland (Maryland '68)

**Assistant Coaches:** Michael Adams, 2nd Year at Maryland (Boston College '85), Chuck Driesell, 1st Year at Maryland (Maryland, '85), Keith Booth, 3rd Year at Maryland (Maryland '03)

**Director of Basketball Operations:** Troy Wainwright, 11th Year at Maryland (UMUC '04)

**Athletic Trainer:** J.J. Bush, 35th Year at Maryland (Florida State '69)

## SQUAD BREAKDOWN TERPS BY CLASS

**Seniors (6):** Bowers, Brown, Chukura, Ibekwe, Jones, Strawberry

**Juniors (2):** Gist, Osby

**Sophomores (1):** Neal

**Freshmen (4):** Burney, Hayes, Milbourne, Vasquez

## TERPS BY STATE

**California (2):** Ibekwe, Strawberry

**Georgia (2):** Burney, Milbourne

**Illinois (1):** Brown

**Maryland (3):** Bowers, Chukura, Gist

**Massachusetts (1):** Jones

**Virginia (3):** Hayes, Neal, Osby

**Venezuela (1):** Vasquez

## TERPS BY HEIGHT

**7-1 (1):** Bowers

**6-9 (2):** Burney, Ibekwe

**6-8 (2):** Gist, Osby

**6-7 (2):** Milbourne, Neal

**6-5 (4):** Chukura, Jones, Strawberry, Vasquez

**6-3 (1):** Hayes

**6-1 (1):** Brown



# PRESEASON HONORS

With six seniors and eight returning lettermen, the Terrapins have garnered some national attention from those in the know about college basketball. With a veteran squad and an experienced coach known for brining the best out of individual talent, the Terrapins are picked among the nation's best teams entering the 2006-07 season.



## TERPS IN ACC PRESEASON RANKINGS

Lindy's	5th
Sporting News	6th
Street & Smith's	6th
Athlon Sports	8th

## INDIVIDUAL PRESEASON HONORS JAMES GIST

ACC Preseason Player on the Rise, Sporting News  
No. 24 power forward in the nation, Lindy's

## EKENE IBEKWE

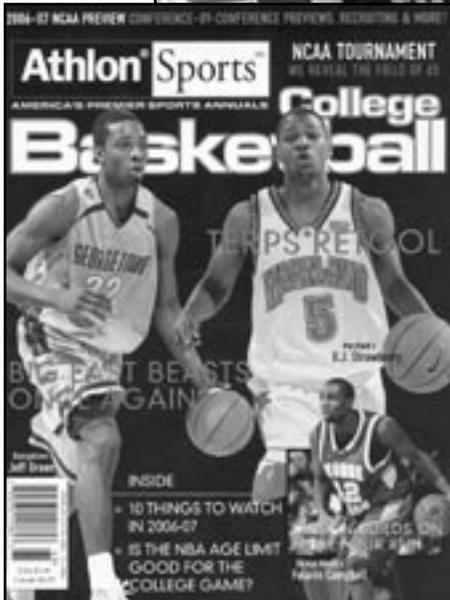
Preseason Third Team All-ACC, Athlon Sports

## MIKE JONES

Preseason Third Team All-ACC, ACC Handbook

## D.J. STRAWBERRY

ACC "Best Defender", Sporting News  
ACC "Top Defender", Lindy's



**"NO WAY DOES GARY WILLIAMS LET THIS SQUAD GO THREE SEASONS WITHOUT AN NCAA BID. WE CANNOT SEE IT HAPPENING, NOT WITH A SOLID NUCLEUS RETURNING."**

**ANDY KATZ, ESPN.COM**

**"FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, COACH GARY WILLIAMS WILL HAVE A TALENTED POINT GUARD. HE WILL ALSO HAVE MORE ABLE BODIES TO PLAY THE AGGRESSIVE FULL-COURT DEFENSE THAT WILLIAMS IDEALLY WOULD LIKE TO EMPLOY. THIS SEASON, WITH AN EXPERIENCED SQUAD, MARYLAND WILL BE IN POSITION TO RETURN TO THE NCAA TOURNAMENT."**

**ATHLON SPORTS**

**"COACH WILLIAMS HAS LONG BEEN COMMITTED TO RACEHORSE BASKETBALL, AND THIS TEAM MAY HAVE THE ATHLETICISM AND DEPTH TO THRIVE AT THAT PACE."**

**SPORTING NEWS**

**"THE TERPS' NCAA TOURNAMENT DROUGHT IS ABOUT TO BE REMEDIED BY AN UNDERRATED GROUP OF VETERANS."**

**LINDY'S**