

Western Kentucky University

TopSCHOLAR®

---

WKU Archives Records

WKU Archives

---

11-2-2000

## UA12/2/1 Basketball Preview 2000 - Men

WKU Student Affairs

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc\\_ua\\_records](https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_ua_records)

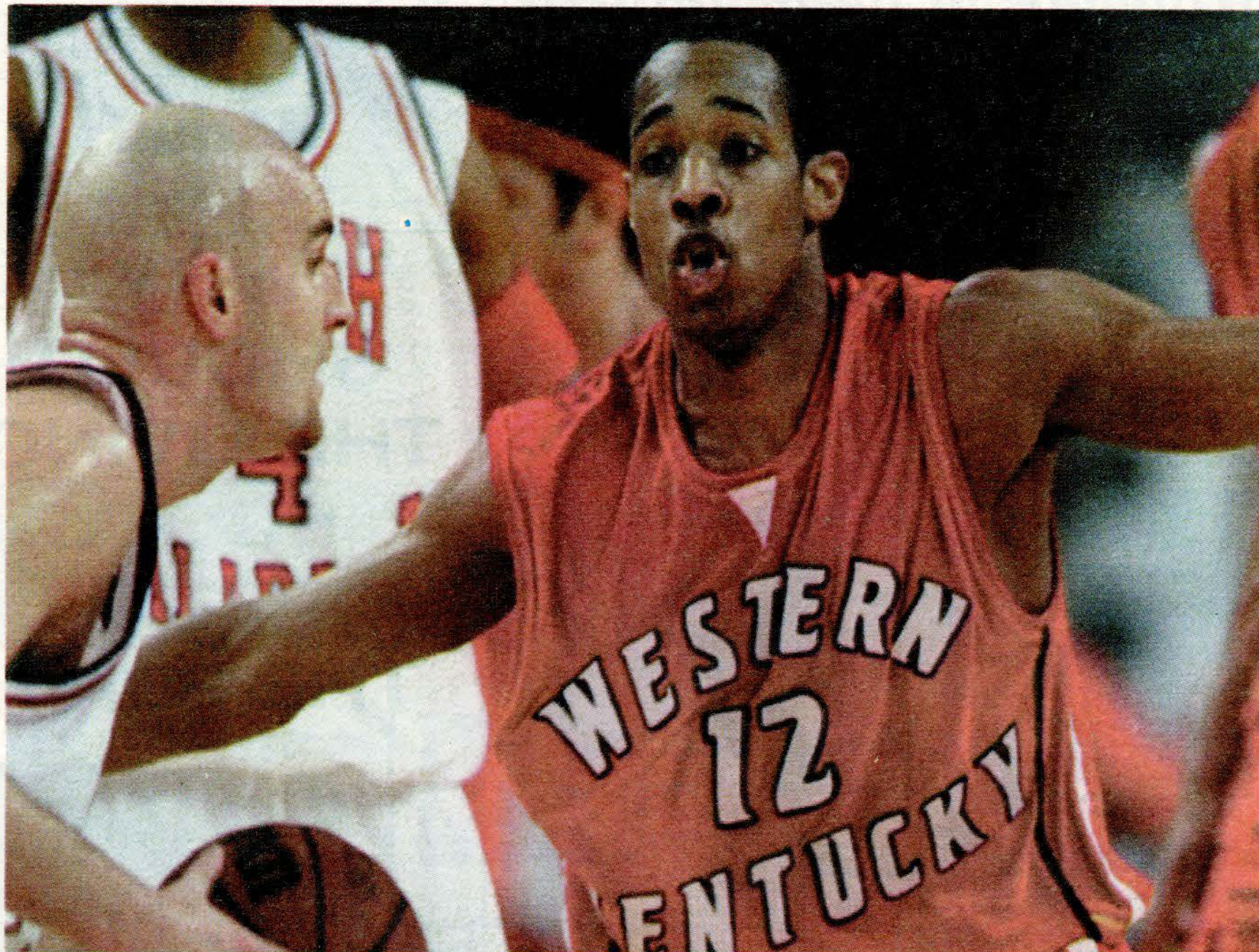


Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#), [Journalism Studies Commons](#), [Mass Communication Commons](#), [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#), [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#), and the [Sports Studies Commons](#)

---

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in WKU Archives Records by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact [topscholar@wku.edu](mailto:topscholar@wku.edu).





Andrew Otto/Herald

A native of Jamaica, N.Y., senior guard Nashon McPherson has played for two coaches during his time at Western and had 34 teammates in five years.

## The Last Man STANDING

BY TRAVIS WILLIAMS  
Herald reporter

Don't talk to senior guard Nashon McPherson about paying dues. He's paid his with interest.

Twice.

McPherson was here on the Hill before "The Fixer," the 7-1 center and a healthy wrist. McPherson was here when Western's only thought of the Big Dance was Homecoming. Losses piled up like dirty clothes, and players seemed to be shipped in and out everyday.

*After having 34 different teammates in five years, lone senior Nashon McPherson hopes to lead the Toppers to their first winning record in six years.*

### Wicked jump shot

New York rapper Notorious B.I.G. said "the streets is a short stop / Either you're slingin' crack rock or you got a wicked jump shot."

A New York hooper, McPherson chose the jump shot.

He grew up in Jamaica, N.Y. He's seen every kind of competition growing up in New York. He remembers playing against last year's first pick of the

National Basketball Association draft, Lamar Odom, before he was in posters and grew to 6-10.

McPherson spent his summers getting his skills together, playing AAU ball with the Queens-based team, the Gauchos. He played in the same backcourt as the Philadelphia 76er's Speedy Claxton. When he hit the

parks, McPherson was running the court with NBA players Anthony Mason, Khalid Reeves, Rafeal Alston, Elton Brand and Ron Artest.

Coming out of high school, the versatile 6-4 guard was heavily recruited. McPherson ripped defenses apart weekly in high school, usually for around 26 points a night. He once busted a whole team for 47 points.

Big-time coaches were calling to see the one-on-one wonder. He had all the individual moves that New York kids are known and loved for. All the tricks people see on television now and try in Preston, McPherson has had them down since he was 12. It was all going like clockwork: finish high school, go to the big school, play ball, hope for the best.

But the clock stopped when McPherson broke the wrist of his shooting hand in high school. All the plans for the future got cloudy and the letters and the calls stopped.

"This was the only school that stuck with me," McPherson said. "(The coaches) were like 'We'll stick with you. We'll get you through this.' My parents and I liked that."

So after being heavily recruited by major teams, McPherson found himself at Western, playing for head coach Matt Kilcullen. After a season and a half of losing records, the team almost fell apart. With three games left in the season, the team held a meeting with Athletics Director Lewis Mills. Two days later, Kilcullen was sent packing with a pink slip in hand.

"I never had a problem with Coach K," McPherson said. "I've never had a problem with any coach. He was in a situation where we weren't winning and you know around here you gotta win."

And Kilcullen definitely wasn't winning, posting a 7-16 record during the season before he was fired.

Change came in the form of Dennis Felton, a former assistant coach at Clemson. Felton was known for his recruiting and a record of helping teams improve, some-

thing for which the Toppers had plenty of room. Felton quickly made his presence felt.

There were 6 a.m. meetings, conditioning sessions, lifting weights and, maybe the worst, Felton's boot camp. The boot camp was a rigorous workout in full gear, similar to the boot camp ROTC recruits go through. The team's reward: Red T-shirts with "I survived" on the back.

"That's why you see us walking around with those T-shirts, wearing 'em with pride," McPherson said. "Forget a Tommy Hilfiger, I'm wearing my 'I survived' shirt."

McPherson wore his shirt and jumped right into the Felton program. However, some of his teammates failed to see the light. Before playing a single game for Felton, eight players left. Academic or personal reasons or dismissal caused Hilltoppers to vanish from the Hill. McPherson saw his teammates and more importantly, his friends, disappear.

The trend continued for the next two years. More players would leave or graduate.

And more would fill in. If you want to stump the senior, ask him to name every teammate he's had on the Hill.

"Ah man," he says as he looks up and pauses to think. "Lil' Rob, Rashon, Tony Lovan, Steve Bides to Melvin Adams to Greg Springfield, I could go on and on."

The final count: 34 teammates in five years.

"And they're all special to me," McPherson said. "I don't know how to put it, but they're real valuable to me. They were (part of) my first college experience."

As the players filed out, McPherson stayed behind to learn from Felton. Felton taught and McPherson listened. That's how things went. Felton broke down Nashon's game, all the way down to his awkward passing which Felton called "knuckleballs."

SEE LAST, PAGE 8B

### INSIDE

#### PLAYER PROFILES

Pages 4B-5B

#### THE RED GUARDS

Page 6B

#### TEAM EXPECTATIONS

Page 7B

#### PLAYGROUND NOTES

Page 3B



# Europeans at home on Hill

BY MICHEAL COMPTON  
Herald reporter

Playing college basketball away from home is not uncommon. Most players choose the chance to play somewhere else over starring for their home team.

But what makes Western's trio of freshman Raimonds Jumikis and sophomores Todor Pandov and Filip Videnov different is that they have chosen to come thousands of miles to another country to continue their playing careers.

Pandov and Videnov, both from Bulgaria, signed after one year of prep basketball at Washington College in Tennessee. Jumikis, originally from Latvia, chose the Hilltoppers over Atlantic 10 schools St. Bonaventure, St. Joseph's and Rhode Island. All three have hopes of being major contributors to Western's push for a Sun Belt Conference championship.

The transition is not easy. There is the obvious cultural difference along with a new language. But there is also a drastic change in style from the international game to the college game.

"It's a major transformation; some of them never make it," Coach Dennis Felton said. "The speed of the game is much faster here, the game is much more physical here. It's physical in a different way over there; it's different in a clumsy way.

"Here, the physical play is more predetermined. When we put it on you, we mean to put it on you."

The trio of players agree that they have worked hard to improve their physical game.

"When I came here I was only a perimeter player," said Pandov, a forward. "So, I changed my game to a more physical game to play the post."

Felton said that one of the first things a coach works on with an international recruit is his defense.

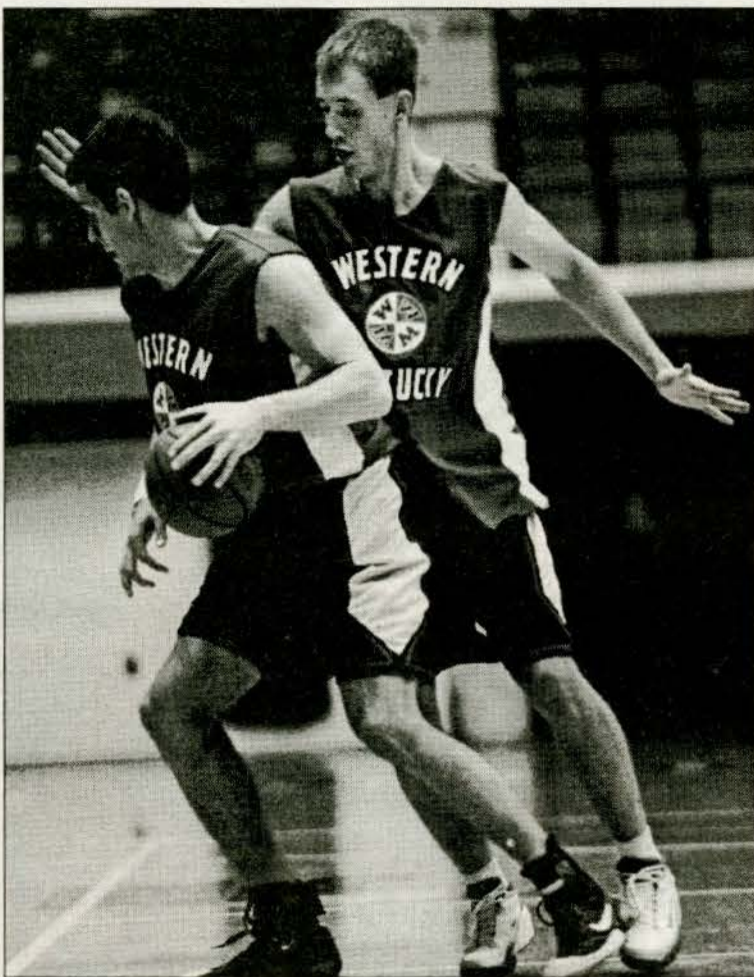
"The international game, they don't defend aggressively, they defend conservatively," Felton said. "Being under pressure and having the defense attack you when you have the ball, that is something they have to deal with for the first time."

Videnov can attest to Felton's analysis.

"I'm used to playing the two or three spot so, at the beginning of last year, I had to adjust to point guard," Videnov said. "I had to get rid of my turnovers."

Despite the adjustment, Felton said there is a significant upside to bringing an international player over to play the college game.

"Sometimes players with size overseas are more skillful, because the emphasis is put into



Jaclyn McCabe/Herald

Freshman forward Raimonds Jumikis, left, and junior center Brian Allenspach practice a drill. Jumikis has found the collegiate game to be more physical than the international game.

shooting the ball," Felton said. "Todor, at 6-9, can play all over the court. He can shoot the three very well, he can handle the ball well and all of those things.

"You find Americans that way now, more and more, but you are more likely to find like 6-11 guys that shoot the three, internationally. Some coaches don't like that. I do. The more skillful the player is, the more I like it."

The signing of the three European players is a testament to the strong connections that Felton and his staff have made with coaches and former Hilltopper players who now live overseas.

Felton said that one of the best ways to see potential recruits is to attend major all-star events.

"We find out about them by going to the junior world championship that might have 16 of the best European teams in the world playing in one place, and you can see all their players," Felton said. "(But) if you don't get to them early, they will have already become pro at 17 and 18 years old, and then they are not eligible."

Several factors contributed to the trio's decision to play at Western. While all agree that

they liked the atmosphere, some other factors stood out in each player's mind.

"I read a lot about Bowling Green. I read a lot about the fans. They like a lot of basketball," Pandov said. "I'm coming from a place that people like a lot of basketball. I wanna be in an environment where people love basketball."

While all love their experience at Western, they agree there are some tough times being so far away from home. Jumikis looks to Pandov and Videnov, since both have had two more years to adjust to life in the United States.

"From day to day it's better," said Jumikis, a forward. "They have told me some things that are different, but we mainly talk about basketball."

Despite the experience, Pandov and Videnov still have their difficulties too.

"Imagine being away from home eight and a half months," Videnov said. "It's hard but you get used to it."

When it comes down to it, though, Felton said it really doesn't matter where the players come from.

"Players are players," Felton said. "We recruited them because they are good."

Good luck Tops from the  
College Heights  
**Herald**

**WHY SHOULD THE LIVING ROOM HAVE ALL THE FUN?**



With Insight, every TV set in the house gets cable for one low price. Just try to do that with a satellite dish. Insight lets you choose what to watch on every set in your

home. So don't let a dish keep you captive to your living room. Let cable entertain you in every room.



Call today and give your whole house cable.

**782-0903**

These local businesses are proud

supporters of WKU Basketball!

Innerspace Scuba  
110 Vanderbilt Ct.  
745-7233

Baskin (31) Robbins.  
BY-PASS  
781-5684

JIM JOHNSON  
2200 Scottsville Rd.  
781-6770  
1900 Scottsville Rd.  
782-2000



# It's game over if Felton doesn't win this year

Meet Dennis Felton, Western's roundball savior.

He's a tall, confidently-mustached journeyman from the East who has proved himself a fixer of damaged programs. He can't turn water into wine without a few grapes and some yeast, but as an assistant coach, he helped Clemson make it to the NCAA tournament — a minor miracle.

However, if Felton doesn't produce a winning season or a postseason tournament appearance here at Western this year, the confidently-mustached journeyman may be sent packing into the cold sunset that blankets former Western coaches.

When Felton gave his sermon on the Hill two years ago, it was loud and clear, and a lot of people nodded their heads in agreement with almost everything he said.

He declared it would take three years to rebuild Western's winning basketball program — all the heads nodded.

And in the name of progress he laid down new rules — a lot of heads nodded.

He closed practices — most of the heads nodded.

He banished non-believers off his squad — about half of the heads nodded.

And in two years he lost 34 games.



## PLAYGROUND NOTES

John Darr

The previous coach, Matt Kilcullen, was fired after losing his 31st game in a span of two years.

Now, with Felton's third season fast approaching, the heads are turned toward the savior,

Western's fixer.

If you forget the first two seasons' losses and that Dillard's incident, it appears as if some miracles have occurred while he's been here — strong runs for a NCAA tournament bid, aggressive recruiting, television deals.







One of the heads glaring at Felton belongs to Athletics Director Wood Selig. He's demanding more money from students for better sports. He needs a basketball coach that keeps the students distracted with wins while they pay for Western's athletic independence.

If Felton can't win here Selig will find someone who can.

All that aside, the head that poses the biggest threat to Felton's career at Western is his own. This is his first and only real, big-time "head" coaching job. If things don't come together like Felton expects this year, the third year, that confidence he has in his voice may go and his credibility will tear away every time Western goes home under .500.

I don't think Felton has done a bad job here. He appears to have everything in place for at least an at-large bid into the NIT.

However, he required everyone else to be big time as soon as he got here. Now it's his turn.

<p><b>You must be 21 to enter our packaged liquors store</b></p>		<p><b>VETTE CITY LIQUORS</b></p> <p><b>"We Sell For Less"</b></p>		<p><b>I.D. Required for purchase</b></p>	
<p>Bud &amp; Bud Lt.</p> <p><b>\$12.59</b></p>  <p>22 oz NR Bottles 15pk</p>		<p><b>Lite BEER</b></p> <p><b>\$6.99</b></p> <p>12oz NR Bottles 12pk</p>		<p><b>Coors LIGHT ORIGINAL Coors</b></p> <p><b>\$12.99</b></p> <p>12 oz cans case</p>	
<p><b>MICHELOB</b></p> <p>Michelob &amp; Michelob Light</p> <p><b>\$3.99</b></p> <p>12 oz cans 12 pk</p>		<p></p> <p>Busch/ Busch Lt <b>\$24.99</b></p> <p>Bud/ Bud Lt <b>\$31.99</b></p> <p>Miller Lite <b>\$31.99</b></p>		<p><b>Natural Light</b></p> <p><b>\$9.99</b></p> <p>12 oz cans - case</p>	
<p></p> <p>Jim Beam</p> <p><b>\$9.49</b></p> <p>750ml</p>	<p><i>Established 1860</i></p> <p><b>EARLYTIMES</b></p> <p><b>\$6.99</b></p> <p>750 ml.</p>	<p><b>Marlboro &amp; Marlboro Lt.</b></p> <p><b>\$2.19 pack</b></p>		<p></p> <p>Seagram's Gin</p> <p><b>\$7.99</b></p> <p>750 ml.</p>	<p></p> <p>Bacardi</p> <p><b>\$8.99</b></p> <p>750 ml.</p>
<p><b>JACK DANIEL</b></p> <p>OLD TIME QUALITY</p> <p><b>\$14.99</b></p> <p>750ml</p>	<p><b>Boone's Farm Wines</b></p> <p>3/5.99</p> <p>750ml</p>	<p><i>We sell for less!</i></p> <p></p> <p><b>Vette City Liquors</b></p> <p>2037 Russellville Road, Bowling Green, KY</p>		<p>Hooper's Hooch</p> <p><b>\$5.99</b></p> <p>12oz NR 6pk</p>	<p>Rick's Spiked Lemonade</p> <p><b>\$5.99</b></p> <p>12oz NR 6 pk</p>

These local businesses are proud

supporters of WKU Basketball!

**Urgent Care**

1225 Fairway St.

**781-3910**

**Hyder's Shoes**

1525 31 W Bypass

**842-3344**

9am-8pm Mon.-Sat.

College Heights **Herald**

122 Garrett Center

**745-2653**



BASKETBALL PREVIEW 2000

# PLAYER PROFILES

Compiled by Travis Williams

## Senior



**Nashon McPherson, No. 12**

McPherson was a scoring machine in high school. He averaged 27 points a game including a 47-point outing. After redshirting his freshman year, McPherson showed signs of promise the following year, scoring 19 points in a win over New Orleans and 21 against Texas-Pan America. In his time on the Hill, Nashon has matured from an individual threat to a complete team player.

## Juniors



**Brian Allenspach, No. 55**

The 6-11 junior transferred to the Hill from Davidson College after the 97-98 season. At 245 lbs., the Illinois native adds depth to the Topper frontcourt. Allenspach was impressive early on last season, posting 10 points, seven rebounds and one block against Virginia Commonwealth. He averaged almost four rebounds a game during the Toppers' European Tour this summer. His twin brother plays for Clemson.



**Tremain Rowles, No. 42**

Rowles gained consistency last year as a sophomore by shooting 41 percent from behind the arc and leading the Toppers in three pointers. He had seven double-digit games last year and a career high against Louisville with 17 points. At Gwynn Lake Prep School, Rowles averaged 30 points on 45 percent shooting from the floor. He averaged nine points and three rebounds in the Toppers' tour of Europe.



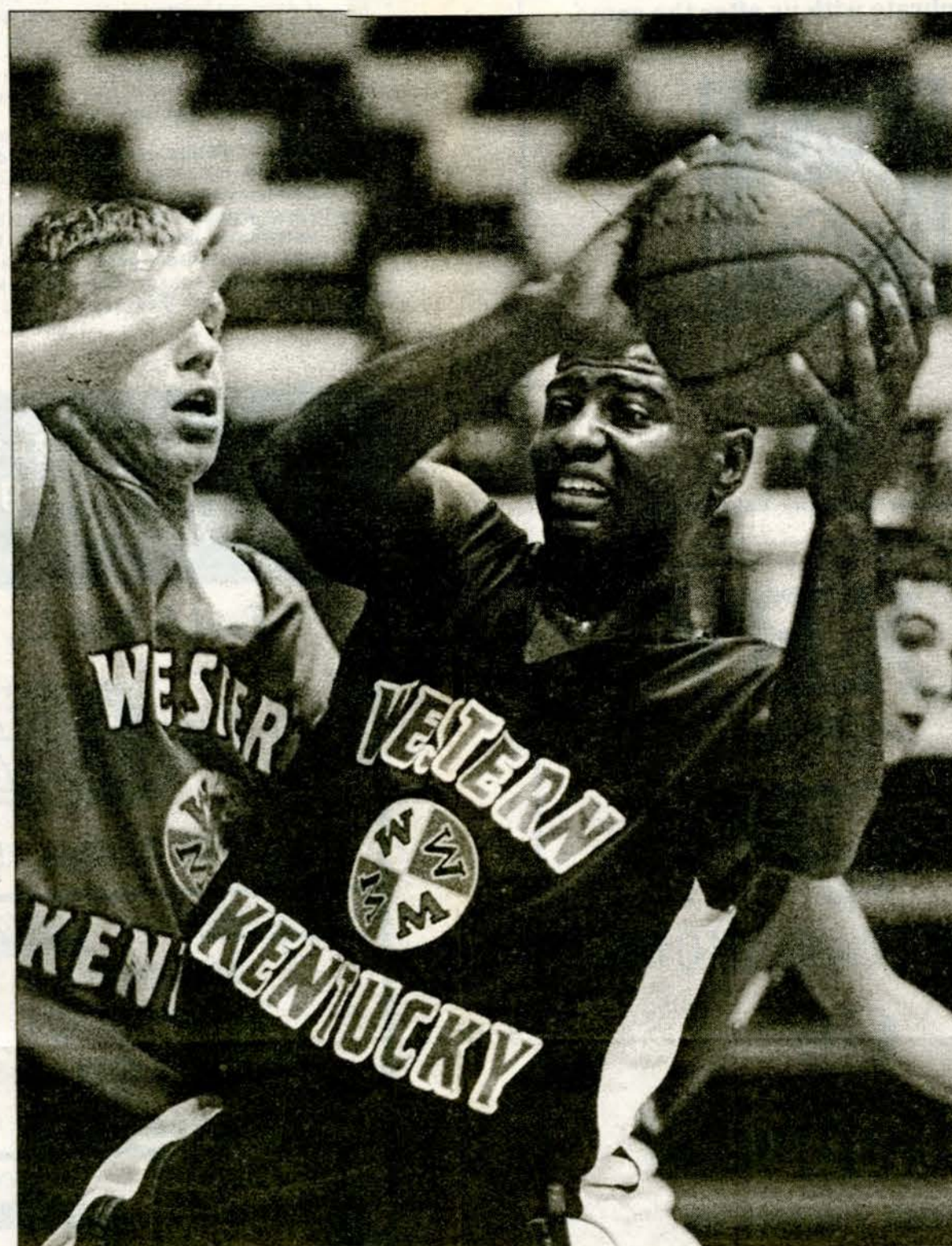
**Chris Marcus, No. 2**

Last year Marcus was said to be a baby in basketball years. If that's the case then Marcus skipped puberty over the summer and is a young man this year. As a sophomore, the 7-1 center led the Sun Belt Conference in rebounding and blocks. He was the conference's Newcomer of the Year and Defensive Player of the Year and made the All-Conference team and All-Conference Tournament team. He had 10 double-doubles last year along with 76 blocks, which is a school record. He played some football in junior high as quarterback and tight end.



**Derek Robinson, No. 23**

A scorer turned point guard, Robinson averaged 32 points a game in high school to lead the state of Kentucky in scoring. Robinson shot 51 percent from the field in his high school career and had two 40-plus point games. The Paris County native was moved into the role of point guard last year after Raynardo Curry was declared ineligible and Rashon Brown transferred. Robinson soon adapted and recorded a team-high 126 assists last season. During the Toppers' tour in Europe, Robinson continued to blossom, averaging seven assists per contest along with eight points.



Cassandra Shie/Herald

Sophomore guard Raynardo Curry was ineligible last season. Coach Dennis Felton said that adding Curry, a career point guard, to the lineup will make the Toppers a stronger ball-handling team.

## Sophomores



**Mike Wells, No. 15**

Wells sat out his first year on the Hill but was cleared to play with the Toppers in Europe. With few team practices, Wells averaged eight points a game and 2.5 boards in the undefeated campaign. Wells played high school ball at Todd County Central High School in Elkton, Ky. As a four-year starter, Wells was the first player in the school's history to score over 2,000 points.



**Nate Williams, No. 30**

Williams played his high school ball at Ravenscroft High School in North Carolina. There, Williams was a three-time all-state selection as well as a McDonald's All-American. He broke the school's records for points, rebounds and blocked shots. Last year, Williams was third on the team in blocked shots behind Chris Marcus and Lee Lampley. He totaled 51 rebounds last year including 21 offensive boards. Over the summer, Williams helped the Toppers to a perfect 4-0 record by averaging six rebounds a game.

## Freshmen



**Nathan Eisert, No. 4**

The first walk-on under coach Felton, Eisert is from Louisville, Ky. He played his high school ball at Seneca under Coach Tony Branch, where he led his team in scoring as a junior.



**Golden Ingle, No. 1**

The Utah native comes to the Hill after an impressive senior season at Timpanogos High School. As a senior, Ingle set a school record for points in a game with 19 along with four assists. He shot an incredible 91.9 percent from the free throw line as a junior, the highest in Utah history.



**Raimonds Jumikis, No. 31**

A native of Latvia, Jumikis played on the 19-and-under Latvian Junior National team for the last two years. There, Jumikis averaged 14 points and six rebounds an outing. In 1998 he helped his team to a fourth-place finish in the European Championship.

## Sophomores



**David Boyden, No. 34**

Boyden made significant contributions last season as a freshman. Starting 27 games, Boyden hit double-digits eight times, including 14 points against Denver and Belmont. He recorded his first double-double as a Hilltopper against Florida International with 10 points and 10 rebounds. At Hermitage High School in Richmond, Va., Boyden led his team to a 24-6 record by averaging 17 points and 12 rebounds a game.



**Raynardo Curry, No. 11**

Curry sat out last year due to academic ineligibility but was impressive in preseason exhibitions. He attended East High School in Memphis where he averaged 21 points and 6 assists on his way to becoming an all-state selection. Curry was cleared to play in the Toppers' European Tour, where he averaged 12 points and recorded a 20-point game against the Swiss All-Stars. Curry will battle for time at the point-guard spot with junior Derek Robinson and freshman Golden Ingle.



**Todor Pandov, No. 45**

Like most freshmen, Pandov struggled in his first few games, scoring only 10 points in his first 10 games. However, his pure athleticism and constant improvement definitely makes him a Topper to watch. He played one year of prep basketball at Washington College in Tennessee where he averaged 12 points a game. In the title game of the Hardee's Tip-Off Classic, Pandov went for 19 points, eight on dunks, and seven rebounds.



**Filip Videnov, No. 13**

Hailing from Bulgaria, Videnov also played prep ball at Washington College in Tennessee. While in prep school, Videnov torched an undefeated Oak Hill team for 26 points. He is only the second international athlete to start for Western. Videnov was second on the team in assists last season and dished out a career-high seven against Virginia Commonwealth. Videnov led the team in scoring this summer with 13 per game.

## HILLTOPPER 2000-2001 SCHEDULE

Month	Date	Opponent	Time
November	11/6 - Mon.	vs. Pump All-Stars (exhibition)	7:00 p.m.
	11/12 - Sun.	vs. Int'l Team (exhibition)	2:00 p.m.
	11/18 - Sat.	at Evansville	7:35 p.m.
	11/21 - Tues.	vs. Union (Ky.) College	7:00 p.m.
	11/25 - Sat.	vs. Tennessee State	4:00 p.m.
	11/28 - Tues.	vs. Vanderbilt**	7:00 p.m.
December	12/2 - Sat.	at New Mexico	8:00 p.m.
	12/5 - Sat.	at Murray State	7:00 p.m.
	12/9 - Sat.	at Louisville	1:00 p.m.
	12/16 - Sat.	vs. Akron	7:00 p.m.
	12/18 - Mon.	vs. Savannah State	7:00 p.m.
	12/21 - Thurs.	vs. St. Joseph's (Pa.)	7:00 p.m.
	12/28 - Thurs.	at New Orleans*	7:00 p.m.
	12/31 - Sun.	at Denver*	1:00 p.m.
January	1/3 - Wed.	vs. Asbury (Ky.) College	7:00 p.m.
	1/6 - Sat.	vs. Louisiana-Lafayette*	3:00 p.m.
	1/10 - Wed.	at South Alabama*	7:05 p.m.
	1/13 - Sat.	vs. Arkansas-Little Rock*	7:00 p.m.
	1/16 - Tues.	vs. New Mexico State*	7:00 p.m.
November	11/18 - Thurs.	vs. Louisiana Tech*	7:00 p.m.
	11/25 - Thurs.	vs. Arkansas State*	7:00 p.m.
	11/27 - Sat.	at Florida International*	6:30 p.m.
February	2/1 - Thurs.	at Middle Tennessee*	7:00 p.m.
	2/3 - Sat.	vs. North Texas*	7:00 p.m.
	2/10 - Sat.	at Louisiana Tech*	7:00 p.m.
	2/15 - Thurs.	vs. Florida International*	7:00 p.m.
	2/17 - Sat.	at Arkansas-Little Rock*	7:05 p.m.
	2/22 - Thurs.	at Arkansas State*	7:00 p.m.
2/24 - Sat.	vs. Middle Tennessee*	7:00 p.m.	
March	3/2-6 - Fri.-Tue.	at Sun Belt Conference Tournament in Mobile, Ala.	

\* Sun Belt Conference Game  
\*\* Area Bank Classic

## SUN BELT CONFERENCE PRESEASON POLLS

### East Division

1. Western
2. Louisiana Tech
3. Arkansas State
4. Middle Tennessee
5. Florida International
6. Arkansas-Little Rock

### West Division

1. Louisiana-Lafayette
2. South Alabama
3. New Mexico State
4. New Orleans
5. North Texas
6. Denver





# New point guards offer help

Curry will drive and dish,  
Ingle will spot and shoot

BY KYLE HIGHTOWER  
Herald reporter

When Western junior guard Derek Robinson showed up for practice Oct. 14, men's basketball coach Dennis Felton had a gift for him.

A little help.

Last season, Robinson, who was recruited to play shooting guard, was thrust into the point-guard role after the Toppers lost both of their projected point guards during the preseason. Rashon Brown transferred to Akron shortly before the start of the season for undisclosed personal reasons, and sophomore Raynardo Curry was ineligible last season.

"Derek Robinson was thrown into a very challenging situation last year," Felton said. "He went from playing his whole career and the whole preseason last year off the ball and then a week before the opening game he's told he has to play point and that there is nobody that can even back him up."

With both Robinson and Curry returning this year, Felton also recruited the services of Golden Ingle, a freshman guard from Orem, Utah, to help provide some longevity at the point guard position.

"We had a tough time taking care of the ball last year," Felton said. "Part of the reason was because of our instability at point guard — which had a lot to do with inexperience.

"It's hard to win any games when you turn the ball over as much as we did last year. We plan on being a better ball-handling team."

Felton said the additions of Curry and Ingle to the lineup provide the Toppers with two career point guards who are used to handling and distributing the ball. Curry and Ingle are a lot more knowledgeable and skillful at the position, too.

He characterized Curry as a slasher and creator and Ingle as more of a conservative setup guy. While he said Curry was a more explosive guard, Ingle was the better shooter and with that combination he feels the Toppers will have all bases covered.

Felton said, though, that it will be Robinson's job to lose as the returning starter, that all three players will compete for playing time.

A shooting guard playing point guard, Robinson has primarily a shooter's mentality, something Felton said he doesn't mind as long as Robinson is taking care of the ball and distributing it.

"All three of them have a great opportunity to step in and help us," Felton said. "I have more confidence in Derek now than I did a year ago. A year ago it wasn't even crossing my mind that Derek Robinson would play, point and there wasn't a need to with Curry and Rashon Brown there."

Robinson said that he feels he has improved volumes in comparison to last season and that he is beginning to think like a point guard on the court.

"I think the Europe trip helped me tremendously as far as being more poised, making more simple plays and getting my team organized — things

that a point guard does," Robinson said. "I've just been listening to coach and learning from my teammates and learning from my mistakes, and I think I've really improved since last year."

Robinson is keeping things simple.

"One of the things coach is always drilling into my head is to make simple plays," Robinson said. "You don't have to make any great plays, just make simple, easy plays — those are the best plays."

Curry said that even though he only got to practice with the team for part of the season last year, he did learn a lot from Felton and his teammates.

"I learned how to play defense, how to play as a team player and be a leader," Curry said. "This season, we're conditioning more, doing suicides and things every other day. Last season we had boot camp and this season I think we're a lot more conditioned and ready to win a lot of games."

Curry said that he and Robinson would make a good backcourt tandem because of their level of chemistry and ability to stifle defenses with

their quickness and trapping ability.

The newest Topper threat, Ingle, said the change from the high school game to the collegiate level has been major for him. He said that in high school he was "the man" and that coming to Western is like starting over.

"I haven't played any games yet, but just in practice I can see it's a lot more intense," Ingle said. "I like it, but it's just different and takes a little time to get used to."

Ingle lists his court awareness and ability to distribute as his main strengths but says he is still learning to play defense at this level. Even with the wide range of diversity at point guard, Felton remains optimistic about his backcourt leaders.

"This year I think (Robinson) can still play point because he has gone through it and is better at it now," Felton said. "But we also have two more guys that can play the position to, so we have three guys to choose from."

"I feel better now than I did a week before the opening game because we do have guys who are capable of playing that position."

Need to rent a place for a  
reception, banquet, organizational  
meeting or workshop?

**Carroll Knicely Institute**

WKU South Campus

2355 Nashville Road

Conference Facilities for:

- Receptions
- Banquets
- Dinners
- Meetings
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Retreats

Additional Services:

- Continuing Education
- On Site Employee Training
- Leadership Programs
- Small Business Development



Call (270)745-1908 for free consultation.

The best of luck to the  
WKU Hilltoppers and  
Lady Toppers.

Come celebrate with us after the game.



Home of the 99¢ Super Value Menu.

**ZAXBY'S**



CHICKEN FINGERS & BUFFALO WINGS

Go

**Hilltoppers!**

We wish you luck on  
your upcoming season!



Two great locations

1801 31W ByPass

796-8300

1651 Campbell Lane

846-0000

[www.wkuherald.com](http://www.wkuherald.com)



# Hilltoppers have high hopes with nine players returning

BY CHAD QUEEN  
Herald reporter

People can say whatever they want about the last two seasons of Western men's basketball. Coach Dennis Felton calls them stepping stones.

The Hilltoppers went 8-8 last year in the Sun Belt Conference, and the conference is just as strong this year. The team won only three times against non-conference opponents, and this year's schedule is just as grueling.

The Hilltoppers managed only three victories away from Diddle Arena and one of those was at a neutral location, not to mention losing last year's leading scorer, Lee Lampley.

So how is it that this year's Hilltopper squad has been picked by the league's coaches to win its division?

"When you see a team that plays smart, plays hard and has some good talent then you expect big things from them," Western coach Dennis Felton said.

Nine players have returned and all nine are hungry. Last year, they were inexperienced. This year they're seasoned veterans. They've taken the harsh bumps of a competitive season and are poised for a breakout.

"Winning depends on comfort level and confidence, and I expect that to be better for us this year, just because they are more comfortable, because they are more experienced players," Felton said.

The obstacles are still there, though — the tough conference, the even tougher non-conference foes, playing on the road, and the losing Lampley.

"The league is on an up-swing," Felton said. "It didn't lose much last year. I can see us winning it, but we have to go out and win the games."

The traveling is what bothers Felton the most.

"I like playing a tough schedule," the coach said. "I just don't want to be on the road all the time. You can't keep playing 11 home games and expect to win."

To fill the hole in the Hilltopper's scoring, Felton will look to 7-1 junior center, Chris Marcus.

"Chris Marcus is the guy," Felton said. "He's our best player."

Marcus is modest about his abilities but knows that he has a lot of hype to live up to.

"I don't know if I am the best player," he said. "I just go out there and try and play hard. I know a lot of people are expecting a lot from me this year, but I'm more concerned on what the team is doing."

Felton expects Marcus to be the solid rock that the other four men on the floor will stand on.

"Outside of Chris, we are a team of guys who on different nights, different guys can step up and make varying impacts," he said.

Guards Derek Robinson, a

junior, and senior Nashon McPherson will be two guys who will step up, but it all revolves around Marcus.

"Our primary objective is to get it inside," McPherson said. "We are complements of Chris. We get it inside and then kick it out. If you are 7-1 you are going to be our pri-

mary weapon."

Marcus may be the catalyst on the court, but off the court the team looks to McPherson.

"Nashon is very important," Marcus said. "A lot of the young guys go to him for advice."

Felton sees what McPherson means to this team and expects

more from him.

"I expect him to be more consistent than ever," Felton said. "A big thing is, I expect him to go out and be a leader."

Felton is going to need McPherson and Marcus to have big seasons and set the pace for this team. One of the goals for this year

is due recognition, and this team is not just hungry for it. It's starved.

"A lot of our successes we have had so far have not been quite as evident to the outside observer," Felton said.

"I think we are in a position to see our success be more outward in terms of winning games."

## Go Toppers & Lady Toppers



**Special for All Basketball Fans**  
**10% Discount on any WKU Basketball Tee Shirt, Sweatshirt, or Hat.**  
Valid through 11/22/00



### University Bookstore

**Store Hours**

Mon - Fri 7:45 am ~ 7:00 pm

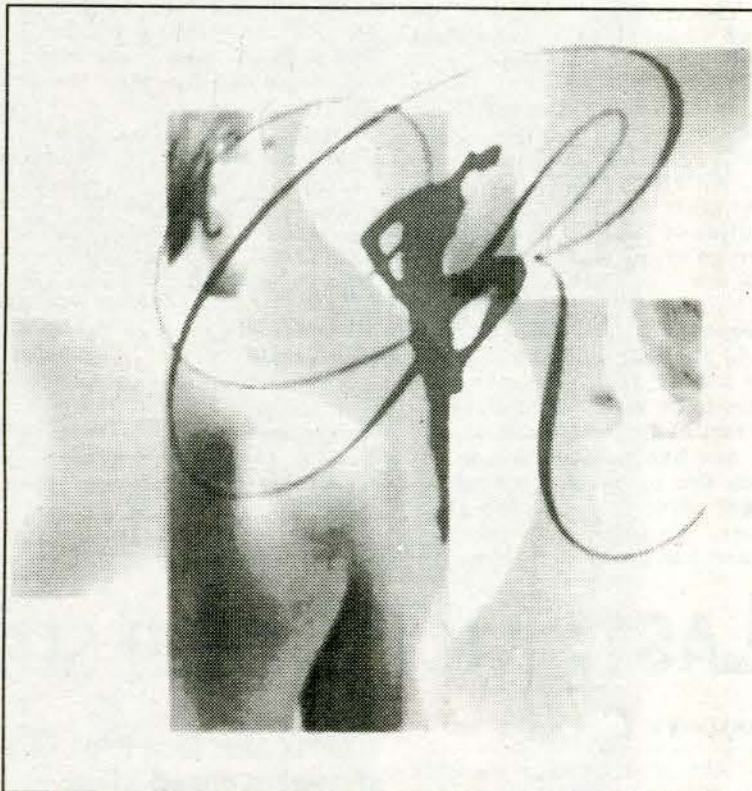
Sat. 10:00 am ~ 2:00 pm

www.wku.edu

Phone: (270)745-2467

1-800-444-5155

Fax: (270) 745-5336



## Experience the Ultimate.

SALON AND DAY SPA SERVICES

IMAGE

- Facial Analysis and Design Cutting
- Signature Hair Color & Texture
- Bridal & Special Occasion Hair
- Make-Up Application

BODY

- Facials & Massages
- Customized Body Treatments
- Spa Manicures & Pedicures

EXPERIENCE

- A Day of Beauty for Women
- A Great Escape for Men

**REGINA WEBB**

salon & spa

Gift Certificates Available

In Thoroughbred Square at 1945 Scottsville Road, Bowling Green 781-4676

**HOWARD'S**  
CYCLING & FITNESS  
604 Park Street  
782-7877

**Guthrie's**  
Golden Fried Chicken Fingers  
Bring in this ad on Sunday and receive a FREE drink with the purchase of a plate or box.  
846-9003

**YELLOW CAB CO.**  
843-3232

These local businesses are proud

supporters of WKU Basketball!



# Felton praises first walk-on

Eisert's height attractive to coach

BY LYNDSEY SUTTON  
Herald reporter

Nathan Eisert is a first for Dennis Felton.

The freshman guard is the men's basketball coach's first walk-on in his three years at Western. Walk-ons Kyle Chapman and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar were already here when Felton arrived.

"We always want walk-ons on our team," Felton said. "As a matter of fact, I'd like to have two on every year's team. Walk-ons are as important to us as our scholarship players, really. Because of that, we don't just take anybody who shows up to be a walk-on. We like to find guys to be walk-ons and really, to recruit guys to be walk-ons."

And like many recruiting stories, this is one of catching the right person's eye at the right time. Up until this summer Eisert had planned to attend the

University of Louisville in his hometown. But when Felton and his coaching staff saw Eisert play in an individual camp at Western, Eisert's plans changed. The assistant coaches approached Eisert on the third day of the camp about his ability to play college basketball.

"And then the fifth day, Coach Felton invited me to come talk to him in his office and just mentioned that he'd like me to walk on, and right then I decided I would," Eisert said.

Eisert's height and athleticism were attractive to Felton. Felton said Eisert's height equips him to compete for several different positions in practice. At 6-5, Eisert played forward at Louisville Seneca High School but he will most likely play shooting guard for the Hilltoppers.

As Eisert adapts to the college game and the position change, he said he is learning to feed the post more, be quicker off the dribble, improve his perimeter shooting and be more patient with the ball. Eisert only played basketball for two years

in high school; he didn't make the team his freshman year and he didn't try out as a sophomore.

Though he received letters from several Division III schools, Eisert decided to stay home because the other schools were too far away. And then along came Western, just two hours from home.

"I never thought I would be in Division I," Eisert said. "I knew I could play college somewhere but I never thought it would actually get to this level."

Felton said he thought Eisert would be the kind of player to accept his role as a walk-on.

"He seemed to be very humble, seemed to be a guy who would work hard, seemed to be a guy that would accept the idea of working as hard as anyone else on the team day after day with no expectation of playing because that really is the role of a walk-on," Felton said. "Now some walk-ons emerge and do play. And if they can play and help us, they're gonna play. I could care less whether they're on scholarship or not. Whoever can play is gonna play."

## Sports Briefs

### Men's basketball team plays Monday night

The Hilltoppers will open their season in Diddle Arena Monday night at 7 against the Pump All-Stars. Admission is free for students with a student ID.



When things get messy, it's usually time for a change.

Life can get messy...bad relationships, tough circumstances, lack of purpose. Fortunately God doesn't require us to deal with life in isolation. We can live our lives connected to him, actually receiving guidance from him. We can start over with a clean slate...start down a new road... and begin to really live.

Having a relationship with Jesus Christ doesn't mean life suddenly becomes smooth. Life has its challenges. But we don't walk it alone. Find out what God can do in your life. For your free article, The Source of a Changed Life,

call 1-800-236-9238.

there is a God. you should know. that's why we're here.

join us for :

**CCM**

every thursday night at 8:30pm  
in tate page auditorium

sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ

# LAST: McPherson still growing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B

"His chest passes weren't chest passes," Felton said. "They were one-handed passes, left-hand dominant. He had trouble hitting his target all the time."

McPherson didn't rely on passing coming out of high school. He broke defenders down off the dribble or knocked down jumpers. Passing wasn't that important. But that was in the past.

"He's actually changed the way he's seen himself as a player," Felton said. "When I first got here, he thought he was the typical New York one-on-one, shake-and-bake guy, and that was actually the exact opposite of what his strength was. His strength was shooting the ball."

McPherson said he is starting to realize that more now. He wants to turn shooting into his sixth sense during his last year on the Hill. He wants to gain that killer instinct, knowing he can score anytime he wants and going for that score whenever the time shows itself.

Good hoopsters have the killer instinct, but great ones know when to control it. All the great players know when to turn it up and when to get their team involved.

"I think over time I've started to develop that killer

**"I think over time I've started to develop that killer instinct. That was something I was lacking."**

— Nashon McPherson  
senior guard

instinct," McPherson said. "That was something I was lacking. It's like the game has slowed down to me to a certain extent. Now I'm not trying to go by everybody. Now I'm looking and trying to see what I can and what I can't do."

### Three the hard way

Last year McPherson and the Toppers had a chance to show the nation what they could do. In the conference semifinals last year the South Alabama Jaguars were the only obstacle standing in the path of a Western team on the verge of putting all its pieces together. The tight game came down to the last 30 seconds and like any other tight game, free throws played a key role.

With 5.4 seconds left on the clock, McPherson drew a foul on a three-point attempt. Three shots. Three misses, the third on purpose. Game over.

It was a reflection of the Hilltoppers' Shaq-like 10-22

from the charity stripe for the game. In a three-point loss, those kind of stats hurt. A thousand-and-one ifs came into play and ate at players' minds. Situations like that can cause players to fade into obscurity like childhood television stars, but for some, it only inspires them.

"Of course after the game I was disappointed in myself for not being able to step up," McPherson said. "But it's over now. So what do I have to do to improve upon that? I shot thousands and thousands of free throws, thousands and thousands of jumpers, so I think it worked in a positive way for me."

McPherson's work ethic and desire could make most athletes sick — with jealousy.

It's rare — Halley's comet rare — that you'll catch McPherson at a party. If he's not in his room, he's shooting ball. And if he's not shooting, he's studying or thinking of a way to get better. He still believes there's "a lot of room for improvement" in his game. And he's got Felton there with him to fill in the space.

He's more under control this year.

More patient.  
He's reloaded ...  
And he's the last man standing.

**Discount Mart**  
415 31W-By-Pass  
843-6000

**Toot's**  
Good Food & Fun  
Every Monday  
25¢ Wings  
25¢ Raw Oysters  
\$4.50 Pitchers  
and Monday Night Football  
843-2335  
Take-Out Avail.

**Nexus Hobbies**  
839 Broadway Ave.  
793 - 9886

These local businesses are proud

supporters of WKU Basketball!