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## **SURPRISING GTCC WOMEN'S TEAM HOLDING FIRST PLACE IN LEAGUE**

JAMESTOWN –The surprising Guilford Technical Community College's first-year women's basketball team is holding down first place in the Carolinas Junior College Conference Region X with a 6-1 league record and a 19-5 overall mark.

The Lady Titans will try to clinch the league championship in a 6 p.m. showdown Thursday (Feb. 19) with No. 2 Spartanburg Methodist College in Spartanburg.

Spartanburg, the defending league champion and perennial winner in the conference, handed GTCC its only league loss (75-65) on Jan. 14. GTCC avenged that loss with an overtime win (82-76) on Jan. 25.

GTCC's final three games of the regular season are on the road, starting with the Spartanburg contest and followed by a non-conference game with Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro and the last conference game against Clinton Junior College in Clinton. The league tournament will be held in Spartanburg Feb. 28-March 1.

The Lady Titans rolled past Lenoir Community College, 81-62 in their last outing, and gave Coach Treka McMillian her 100<sup>th</sup> victory as a head coach. She spent four seasons at Minneapolis Community and Technical College before coming to GTCC. Her record is 100-36, including a national championship at Minneapolis.

McMillian revived a dormant program at Minneapolis and led the team to the NJCAA Division II national championship in 2004. She was national coach of the year for Region XIII and coach of the year in her conference in 2001 and 2002.

At GTCC, McMillian is hoping to get her team successfully through the tournament and possibly get the Lady Titans a berth in the national tournament. That means having to win the Region X tournament and also defeat the regional champion from Georgia.

"A lot of teams put us on their schedule just to fill out the schedule, and didn't figure they would have any problems with a first year team," McMillian said. "Now, they know they have to at least plan how they are going to play against us."

Guards Teshymia Tillman and Lauren Beeson, both former High Point Central players, are leading the team in scoring. Tillman is averaging 15.2 points per game along with 6.2 rebounds per contest. Beeson has a 14.5 point average and leads the team in three-pointers and free throw percentage.

The team is carrying only eight players, having lost four at the end of the first semester. Three players had academic problems and one who was on the original roster never suited up for a game, McMillian said.

“Losing the girls from the team made the rest of the team come closer together,” she said. Tianna Hall, a freshman from Thomasville, has stepped into the starting guard spot vacated by Keeyama Williams of Greensboro. Williams, Ciera Chambers of Wingate, and Shadonne Marsh of El Paso are expected to return to the team next season, McMillian said.

“The team has lived up to the expectations we had when we started the season. For a first-year team, they have done very well,” McMillian said. “We’ve laid a good foundation for our program. I think the girls take a lot of pride in being a part of this first team,” she said.

McMillian said she doesn’t want to sound like the season is about over. “We’d still like to get in the national tournament,” she said. “That would be really good for a first-year team.”

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