Lady Toppers

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Lady Topper basketball is the 24th best team in the nation, continuing a streak that has seen them win 13 straight and their last eleven games by double digits.

Amy Bingham has more on their exciting season in this week’s View from the Hill.

When Michelle Clark-Heard was hired to take the head coaching job at her alma mater less than three years ago, one of her top priorities was to get the program back in the top 25. Even she is surprised it happened as quickly as it did.

Chastity Gooch \ Senior Forward

Alexis Govan \ Senior Guard/Forward

Michelle Clark-Heard \ Head Coach

 “It’s a great feeling to be a part of this.”

Chastity Gooch is soaking up every minute of her senior season which is off to an unbelievable start.

 “I love being around the girls, they always make my day, the chemistry on this team is awesome.”

Senior Alexis Govan agrees, she doesn’t take any of it for granted.

 “The closer it gets to the end of the season it becomes more bitter than sweet because this is the last time you’ll play with this team here, there.”

But before they dwell on the end of the season, there’s a lot more noise for this Lady Topper team to make.

 “Sometimes we’ll sit around we’ll talk about it and be like woah, we’re special. We have a chance to do something special.”

Cracking the top 25 on January 5th marked the first time the Lady Toppers made the poll since the 1997-98 season.

 “Even when we wasn’t in the top 25 or talked about as a staff we always talked to our team that way. We always talked about the history of the program and what Western Kentucky Lady Topper basketball means.”

Govan, Gooch and fellow senior Illeana Johnson are happy they are still here to be a part of it.

 “Coach Heard talked about it from the beginning that this is where she wanted us to be, let ourselves be seen on a national level and to do this our last year, it’s really special.”

Also special is the connection Coach Heard has with her players.

 “One thing I pride myself on as a coach, I really try to get to know my players as individuals. I have a special relationship with every last one of them. They’re all different.”

Coach Heard says she may push them but she also loves them and, like her seniors, is relishing every moment with this team.

 “I just want to continue to be hungry and be excited about this opportunity because there’s a lot of people that want to be in my shoes and I understand that and I just look at it that way.”

Clark-Heard was part of four NCAA tournament teams during her Lady Topper career. In her first year as coach she took the team back to post season play at the WNIT and last year took them back to the NCAA tournament.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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