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### 2005-2006 Roster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>Ht</th>
<th>Wt</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Ex</th>
<th>Hometown (Previous School)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tim Scheffler</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-4</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>1L</td>
<td>Lovell, Wyo. (Lovell HS ’03 &amp; Northwest JC, Wyo.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nick Livi</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Fr.</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>Sammamish, Wash. (Eastlake HS ’04)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Rodney Stuckey</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-4</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>Fr.</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>Kent, Wash. (Kentwood HS ’04)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Matt Penoncello</td>
<td>G/F</td>
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<td>210</td>
<td>Fr.</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>Moscow, Idaho (Moscow HS ’04)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>‘Deuce Smith</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-3</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>1L</td>
<td>Oakland, Calif. (Oakland Tech ’02 &amp; Tyler JC, Texas)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Henry Bekkering</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>So.</td>
<td>1L</td>
<td>Taber, Alberta (W.R. Myers HS ’03)</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>5-11</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>JC</td>
<td>Cheney, Wash. (Cheney HS ’02 &amp; Wenatchee Valley CC, Wash.)</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Neal Zumwalt</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-3</td>
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<td>Jr.</td>
<td>JC</td>
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<td>JC</td>
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<td>‘Jake Beiting</td>
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<td>Kellen Williams</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>JC</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>Paul Butorac</td>
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<td>Jr.</td>
<td>2L</td>
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<td>6-8</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>JC</td>
<td>Moreno Valley, Calif. (Canyon Springs HS ’03 &amp; Saddleback CC, Calif.)</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>Brandon Moore</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>Fr.</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>Graham, Wash. (Bethel HS ’05)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Starter in 2004-05

---

**Head Coach:** Mike Burns (Second Year at EWU; Central Washington ’99)

**Assistant:**
- Carl Howell (Third Year; Central Washington ’91)
- Brandon Rinta (Fifth Year; Central Washington ’01)
- Grant Leep (First Year, Washington ’02)

**Graduate Assistant:** Micah Rieke (Second Year; Pacific Lutheran ’03)

**Administrative Assistants:**
- Denny Humphrey (Fourth Year; Eastern Washington ’68); G.E. Coleman (First Year; Central Washington ’05)

**Athletic Trainer:** Donald Sims

Student Assistant: Travis Naught
QUICK FACTS

Location: Cheney, Wash.
Founded: 1882
President: Brian Levin-Stankevich (interim)
Enrollment: 9,868
Nickname/Colors: Eagles/Red and White
Affiliation: NCAA Division I
Conference: Big Sky Conference
Athletic Director: Pamela Parks (interim)
Senior Woman Administrator: Pamela Parks
Director of Communications: Frank Nelson
Asst. A.D. for Business Operations: Mike Allen
Sports Information Director: Dave Cook
Office/Phone/Fax: (509) 359-6334/235-4672/280-2502
E-Mail: DCOOK@MAIL.EWU.EDU
Web: WWW.GOEAGS.COM
Head Athletic Trainer: Brian Norton
Athletic Trainer (MBB): Donald Sims
Facilities Manager: Kerry Pease
Equipment Manager: Ginny Knox

Head Coach: Mike Burns
Office: (509) 359-2497
Alma Mater: Central Washington, 1999
Record at Eastern: 8-20; Second Year
Career Record: 8-20; Second Year
Assistant Coaches: Carl Howell (Third Year; Central Washington '91), Brandon Rinta (Fifth Year; Central Washington '01); Grant Leep (First Year; Washington '02)
Graduate Assistant: Micah Rieke (Second Year; Pacific Lutheran '03)
Administrative Assistant: Denny Humphrey (Third Year; Eastern Washington '88); G.E. Coleman (Central Washington '05)
2004-2005 Record: 8-20
Big Sky Record (place): 5-9 (sixth)
(Big Sky Tournament quarterfinals)

Other Letter-winners Returning: 3 (F - Henry Bekkering, F - Paul Butorac, G - Tim Scheffler)
Redshirts Returning: 1 (G/F - Matt Penoncello)
Junior College Recruits: 4 (G - Justin Bright; G - Rhett Humphrey, F - Derek Risper, G - Neal Zumwalt)
True Freshmen: 1 (F - Brandon Moore)
Other Newcomers: 3 (G - Rodney Stuckey, G - Nick Livi, F - Kellen Williams)
Starters Lost: 3 (F - Marc Axton, F - Matt Nelson, G - Danny Pariseau)

Other Letter-winners Lost: 5 (G - Eric Henkel, G - James Loe, F/C - Jeremy McCulloch, F - Khary Nicholas, G - Rachi Wortham)

Pronunciations
Jacob Beitinger: Bet-in-jur
Paul Butorac: Boot-er-ack
Nick Livi: Lee-vee
Matt Penoncello: Pen-en-cell-oh

Back Row (left to right): Rhett Humphrey, Tim Scheffler, Neal Zumwalt, Deuce Smith, Henry Bekkering, Brandon Moore, Paul Butorac, Jake Beitinger, Derek Risper, Matt Penoncello, Kellen Williams, Rodney Stuckey, Nick Livi.

Front Row: Graduate Assistant Micah Rieke, Administrative Assistant Denny Humphrey, Assistant Coach Grant Leep, Head Coach Mike Burns, Athletic Trainer Rhett Humphrey, Assistant Coach Carl Howell, Assistant Coach Brandon Rinta, Administrative Assistant G.E. Coleman.
Newcomers Hold Key for Eagles in 2005-06 Season

Eastern Washington University is hoping that winners produce winning.

With an influx of new talent from teams that have won the last three 4A Tournaments in the state of Washington, the Eagles are hoping to return to their winning ways of 2003 and 2004 when they made back-to-back post-season appearances.

But first, Eastern will have to overcome the loss of eight letter-winners with the addition of eight newcomers to a cast of five returning letter-winners and one 2004-05 redshirt. Five of the new players have junior college experience, while the other three have high school experience.

Best of all, three of the new players have been a part of teams that won the last three Washington State 4A titles. That has second year Eagle head coach Mike Burns excited about the possibilities as he grooms his team for another challenging non-conference schedule in the 2005-06 season before starting Big Sky Conference play in January.

“We have a very talented group coming in,” Burns said. “I’m very optimistic about their ability to contribute right away.”

Eastern is coming off a 2004-05 season that ended in the first round of the Big Sky Conference Tournament. After appearing in the NCAA Tournament in 2004 and the NIT in 2003, the Eagles fell to an 8-20 overall record and 5-9 mark in the Big Sky Conference.

Among the eight letter-winners lost, the player the Eagles will miss the most will be three-time All-Big Sky Conference forward Marc Axton. He set several school records, including career games played (119) and three-pointers made (184). He averaged 16.2 points as a senior and had 1,319 total points in his career as he led EWU to 60 victories in four seasons – 35 in Big Sky games alone.

Another shooting guard returning is Tim Scheffler, who averaged 3.0 points and made 23-of-66 three-point attempts (34.8 percent).

Smith can also play point guard, which gives the Eagles lots of options.

“Tim and Deuce were junior college transfers last year, so they have a year under their belts,” Burns said. “I think they are going to perform at a much higher level this year and it’s going to be exciting to watch them develop. And I’m very proud of the leadership Deuce has shown with this group in the spring and in the summer.”

Inside, the Eagles return 6-foot-8 returning starter Jake Beitinger, 6-10 Paul Butorac and 6-7 Henry Bekkering. Beitinger started 13 games and averaged 18.7 minutes, 7.3 points and 3.3 rebounds while making 46.4 percent of his field goal attempts. Butorac started just two games but averaged 15.9 minutes, 5.1 points and 3.0 rebounds in his second season as an Eagle.

“I don’t think you can replace a Marc Axton,” admitted Burns. “You can make an argument for him as one of the top two or three players to ever wear an Eagle uniform. But what we have this year is greater depth and versatility, especially on the offensive end.”

Returning Letter-winners Include Pair of Starters . . .

Eastern’s five returning letter-winners would be a solid starting unit even without the newcomers.

Heading the list is versatile guard Deuce Smith, who averaged 7.6 points, 3.9 rebounds, 1.3 steals and nearly one assist per game as mainly a shooting guard. He started 25 games and averaged 26.2 minutes per game while sinking 24-of-64 three-point attempts (37.5 percent).

Guard Deuce Smith is the team’s lone senior in the 2005-06 season. He started 25 games and averaged 7.6 points per game.

“But we have this year is greater depth and versatility, especially on the offensive end.”

Added size and strength – but still with a great deal of athletic ability – should allow Bekkering to play less on the wing and more inside. He’s an inch taller and 20 pounds heavier than last year when he started 15 games and averaged 16.2 minutes, 5.0 points and 2.6 rebounds.

“Henry has himself up to 245 pounds and should play more on the inside this year,” Burns said. “He gives us an element of athleticism on the inside that we haven’t had before.”

Guard/forward Matt Penoncello from Moscow, Idaho, will see his first action as an Eagle this season after redshirting in 2004-05. He missed about a third of the year with an early-season back injury that forced him to redshirt.
“I think the redshirt year benefited him greatly,” said Burns. “He has a tremendous work ethic, and has done an outstanding job this spring and summer. He will find his way onto the floor because he has worked that hard. He has his body in great condition coming back from a back injury last year.”

Newcomers include former State of Washington Player of the Year Rodney Stuckey . . .

Eastern’s list of newcomers is headed by a trio of players who have yet to hit the basketball court at EWU even though they attended classes during the entire 2004-05 season. Guard Rodney Stuckey, guard Nick Livi and forward Kellen Williams were all non-qualifiers out of high school, and as a result, couldn’t play or practice with the Eagles last year.

Academically, all three are off to great starts toward graduating from EWU and ensuring that they won’t have a year of eligibility taken away by the NCAA.

“The fact that is exciting for our coaching staff is that they have done extremely well in the classroom,” said Burns. “Rodney’s GPA in the spring quarter was 3.85, and he’s over a 3.3 accumulative with over 50 credits already at the college level. Nick is a 3.0 student with a 3.5 in the spring. And Kellen probably had the most difficult load of the bunch and he had a 3.3 spring quarter.

“They had a lot of hoops and hurdles placed in front of them,” added Burns, “and they not only survived them but they excelled. There is a direct correlation between excelling in the classroom and excelling on the basketball floor.”

Stuckey was the State of Washington Player of the Year in the 2003-04 school year when he led Kentwood in Kent, Wash., to the State 4A title. Livi is from Sammamish, Wash., and played for Eastlake High School as a senior in 2003-04. Williams led Franklin High School to the State 4A championship as a senior in 2002-03, then played one season at Highline Community College near his hometown of Seattle.

“They are all extremely talented, but there is going to be a learning curve regardless of how talented they are,” Burns said of the trio of Stuckey, Livi and Williams. “It’s difficult to put a time frame on that. But I do know worked extremely hard last year and through the off-season to get themselves ready. They are hungry for the opportunity to perform and get out there on the floor. I think they will adapt very quickly.”

The team’s lone true freshman is 6-9 Brandon Moore from Graham, Wash. He led Bethel High School to the State 4A title in the 2004-05 school year, and the year before had some epic battles inside versus Beitinger when he played for Narrows League rival South Kitsap. Already a solid 230 pounds, Burns expects him to see action for the Eagles in 2005-06.

“Brandon is physically ready to play right now,” Burns said. “The game is going to move a little quicker and the players he’ll compete against are going to be a little bigger and stronger. But I think he’ll adapt very quickly.”

Besides leading his team to a State title in 2005, Bethel placed third in his junior season. That same year, Beitinger’s South Kitsap squad was second behind Stuckey’s title team. What it all adds up to is lots of experience winning – including championships – for a handful of Eagle players.

“I don’t think you can quantify the value of knowing how to win like these guys do,” Burns commented. “They demand it of themselves and of their teammates. For a player like Rodney, it’s really unique to see a kid that is that talented but who also has the kind of feel needed to win games. It’s exciting.”

One of Eastern’s three junior college transfers is 6-foot-8 Derek Risper from Saddleback Community College in California. He averaged 10 points and seven rebounds as a sophomore in 2004-05.
when he helped lead Saddleback to a 28-3 record and a berth in the semifinals of the California Community College State Tournament. As a freshman, the Gauchos finished 22-7 overall and advanced to the second round of the playoffs.

Guard Neal Zumwalt, who for a time in the 2004-05 season ranked second in the National Junior College Athletic Association in three-point field goal accuracy, joins Eastern from Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colo. He averaged 9.3 points while making 73-of-139 three-point attempts for 52.5 percent to rank 10th nationally. He graduated in 2003 from Lincoln High School in Portland, Ore.

Burns also added to his roster a pair of walk-ons who will no doubt be hometown favorites – Rhett Humphrey and Justin Bright.

Humphrey graduated from Cheney, Wash., in 2002 and played at Whitworth and Wenatchee Valley Community College before joining the Eagles. His father, Denny Humphrey, is a former Hall of Fame coach at Cheney High School who enters his third season as an administrative assistant for the Eagles. Bright graduated in 2003 from Central Valley High School in Spokane, Wash., then played two seasons at Community Colleges of Spokane.

"There is a period of time to get acclimated to Division I basketball," Burns said of Risper, Zumwalt and Humphrey. "For the junior college players, it should be a little quicker because they are a little older and they have as many as 70 games under their belts."

Schedule features appearances in Great Alaska Shootout and ESPN Bracket Buster . . .

Needless to say, Eastern’s players annually look forward to Eastern’s challenging non-conference schedule a little more than the coaching staff does.

Eastern’s 2005-06 schedule once again includes some of the nation’s best teams, including appearances in the Carrs/Safeway Great Alaska Shootout in November and the ESPN Bracket Buster in February. In all, Eastern could play as many as four teams that reached the NCAA Tournament and three more that played in the NIT.

"From our perspective, it’s a tough schedule, but from the perspective of our players, it’s a great challenge," said Burns. "When I told them we were matched up against Marquette in the Great Alaska Shootout, they were excited about the opportunity. It’s a tough schedule but we enjoy playing that schedule. It’s exciting for our players and our program to play against Top 20 teams. Hopefully it brings out the best in us."

After opening the season at home against Dave Harshman-coached Pacific Lutheran on Nov. 19, the Eagles head for Alaska where they will open the Shootout against Marquette on Nov. 23. The Golden Eagles finished 19-12 a year ago and lost to Western Michigan 54-40 in the first round of the NIT.

In the second round in Alaska, Eastern will either face Tim Floyd-coached Southern California or Oral Roberts, which also advanced to the NIT last season. Other Alaska Shootout participants include South Carolina, Alaska-Anchorage, Monmouth and Southern Illinois. South Carolina beat St. Joe’s 60-57 to win the 2005 NIT championship, and Southern Illinois beat St. Mary’s 65-56 in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

Eastern’s non-conference opponents also include NCAA Tournament participants Washington (Sweet 16) and Gonzaga (second round). Also playing in the NCAA Tournament last season was Big Sky Tournament champion Montana.

Burns picks Montana State as the favorite in the Big Sky this season, based on MSU’s returning talent and the team’s 9-5 finish in the Big Sky that was good enough for second. Last year, third-seeded Montana knocked off the second-seeded Bobcats in the Big Sky Tournament semifinals, while regular season champion and host Portland State fell to fourth-seeded Weber State. The Grizzlies, who beat Eastern in the quarterfinal round, advanced to the NCAA Tournament with a 63-61 victory over the Wildcats in the title game.

"Trying to pick second through eighth in our league is really difficult," admitted Burns. "I think Montana State deserves to be picked as the preseason favorite because they finished second last year and return their top six players. They’ve earned that honor, but ranking everybody after that is difficult. I think it will come down to who is playing well, who is not injured and those sorts of things. It will be an exciting, exciting season in the Big Sky – I know that much."
After season of change, Eagles building toward second NCAA berth

After a debut season full of change, Eastern Washington University men’s basketball coach Mike Burns begins his second season the same as the first – pursuing the school’s second NCAA Tournament berth.

His first season at the helm yielded just an 8-20 record, and Eastern finished sixth in the Big Sky Conference with a 5-9 record. Eastern’s season ended with a 58-48 loss to eventual champion Montana in the first round of the conference tournament, but Burns fully expects the Eagles to return to their championship ways of 2003-04 (NCAA Tournament) and 2002-03 (NIT).

His 2005-06 squad will return a pair of starters and three other letter-winners from last year. Although eight letter-winners were lost – including three-time first team All-Big Sky forward Marc Axton – he is reloading with seven newcomers. Those newcomers are expected to make an immediate splash in the Big Sky Conference, thanks to an abundance of players from the state of Washington. Eastern’s 13-player roster includes seven players from within Washington, and two more that played high school basketball just a few minutes away from the state’s borders.

Burns himself has deep roots in the state of Washington, having graduated from Tyee High School and Central Washington University. He had coaching stints at both of his alma maters, as well as Highline Community College in Des Moines, Wash.

Known for his humor off the court and intensity on the court, Burns has a reputation for creating and motivating outstanding defensive squads. His 2004-05 team led the Big Sky in scoring defense in league games only, allowing just 62.9 points per game. Overall, Eastern allowed 67.6 to rank third in the conference – less than a point per game out of first.

Having spent three previous years as an assistant coach at EWU, the 42-year-old Burns returned to Cheney, Wash, to be named as Eastern’s 15th men’s basketball coach on April 1, 2004. Burns spent the 2003-04 season as an assistant at Washington State University under first-year Cougar head coach Dick Bennett. But the prior three years he spent at EWU on the staff of Ray Giacoletti, who left Eastern on March 31, 2004, to become the head coach at the University of Utah.

Under Giacoletti, Burns served as the team’s recruiting coordinator, coached perimeter players and was responsible for team defense. Eastern was 17-11, 17-13 and 18-13 in his three previous seasons as an Eagle as the school advanced to the Big Sky Conference Tournament title game each year. Eastern won 58 percent of its games overall (52-37) and 68 percent in conference play (30-14). In that three-year stretch en route to garnering the school’s first-ever berth in the National Invitation Tournament in 2003 and first-ever NCAA Tournament berth the following season.

Burns Promoted to EWU Assistant Head Coach in 2002 . . .

In April 2002, following his second season at the helm of the Eagles, Giacoletti promoted Burns to associate head coach and had this to say about him:

“Mike deserves the promotion because of his hard work and loyalty in helping us build the program at Eastern

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MIKE BURNS COACHING CAREER (4-Year Schools) . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School/Team</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Overall</th>
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<td>1996-97</td>
<td>Central Washington</td>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
<td>$18-13</td>
<td>9-1 Pacific NW</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>Central Washington</td>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
<td>$19-11</td>
<td>7-3 Pacific NW</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>Central Washington</td>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
<td>*24-5</td>
<td>17-1 PacWest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-00</td>
<td>Stephen F. Austin</td>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
<td>6-21</td>
<td>3-15 Southland</td>
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<td>2000-01</td>
<td>Eastern Washington</td>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
<td>17-11</td>
<td>11-5 Big Sky</td>
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<td>2001-02</td>
<td>Eastern Washington</td>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
<td>17-13</td>
<td>10-4 Big Sky</td>
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<td>2002-03</td>
<td>Eastern Washington</td>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
<td>#18-13</td>
<td>9-5 Big Sky</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>Washington State</td>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>7-11 Pacific 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>Eastern Washington</td>
<td>Head Coach</td>
<td>8-20</td>
<td>5-9 Big Sky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals as Head Coach at Eastern Washington (1 season)</td>
<td>8-20 (.266)</td>
<td>5-9 (.357)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals as Assistant at Eastern Washington (3 seasons)</td>
<td>52-37 (.584)</td>
<td>30-14 (.682)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals as an Assistant at 4-Year Colleges (8 seasons)</td>
<td>132-103 (.562)</td>
<td>73-45 (.619)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$Won the Pacific Northwest Athletic Conference (PNAC) regular season and tournament titles and advanced to the quarterfinal round of the NAIA Tournament.

*Won the PacWest Conference regular season and tournament titles and ranked No. 1 in the West Region of NCAA Division II.

#Appeared in the National Invitation Tournament (NIT).
Coach Mike Burns

2005-06
EAGLE
BASKETBALL

over the last two years. Mike’s next opportunity will be as a head coach, and we wanted to give him an added exposure to the responsibilities involved so he can take the next step."

As recruiting coordinator three seasons at EWU, he helped the Eagles recruit heavily in the Northwest, particularly from inside Washington. Eastern’s recruits during that time included three transfers from Tacoma Community College, one from Edmonds CC, six in-state high school players and one from Portland.

With Burns coordinating the defense for three seasons, Eastern was one of the most aggressive teams in the Big Sky Conference by allowing just 68.1 points per game while forcing 17.7 turnovers each outing. All three years Eastern ranked in the top three in both scoring defense and turnovers forced.

In 2002-03, Eastern ranked third in scoring defense (66.9) and was second in turnovers forced (16.8). In the 2001-2002 season, Eastern ranked third in scoring defense (68.9) and was first in turnovers forced (17.4).

He left Eastern to join Bennett at WSU for the 2003-04 season, and the Cougars finished the year 13-16 overall and 7-11 in the Pacific 10 Conference. Washington State finished with six more victories than the previous season, and the Cougars qualified for the conference tournament for the first time since 1990, when all 10 schools qualified.

At Washington State, the Cougars allowed an average of just 59.7 points per game while scoring at a 57.9 clip, and forced 13.9 turnovers per game while committing just 12.1 per game themselves.

“I’m grateful to Washington State, Coach Bennett and everybody there who gave me the opportunity in Pullman,” Burns said. “My year there was a blessing. Professionally it was an experience I can’t begin to quantify how valuable it was for me.”

College Coaching Stops Also Include Central Washington . . .

An assistant in 1999-2000 at Stephen F. Austin in Nacogdoches, Texas, Burns spent three seasons from 1996-99 under Greg Sparling at Central Washington University. The Wildcats, fierce basketball rivals with Eastern Washington in the mid-1970s, were 61-29 and won three conference regular season titles and three conference tournament championships in his three seasons there.

The Wildcats advanced to the NAIA Tournament his first two seasons, knocking off the No. 5 seed and reaching the quarterfinal round (final eight) both years. In 1998-99, Central was 24-5 and earned the No. 1 ranking in the NCAA Division II West Region.

Burns coordinated Central’s defense, and in all three seasons, the Wildcats led their conference in turnovers forced and in turnover margin. In 1998-99, the Wildcats forced an average of 24.2 per game, better than eight per game more than they committed. Five times Central opponents had 30 or more turnovers. In his three seasons in Ellensburg, Central forced 21.2 turnovers per game.

Prior to joining the CWU coaching staff, Burns served as co-head coach of his alma mater Tyee High School in the 1995-96 season. Prior to coaching at Tyee, Burns spent three seasons as an assistant at Highline Community College in Des Moines, Wash. He also managed the West Coast All-Star Basketball Camp in Los Angeles, Calif., in 1996.

Burns is a 1980 graduate of Tyee High School where he earned six total letters in basketball, cross country and track and field. He attended Idaho State University and finished his bachelor’s degree in health and athletic management at Central Washington in 1999.

Burns was born on May 14, 1962, in Tacoma, Wash. His wife’s name is Mary.
Carl Howell enters his third season on the Eagle coaching staff, and serves as the team's recruiting coordinator. Until last season, the previous five teams he was involved with won league or region championships, including the Big Sky Conference title and NCAA Tournament appearance by EWU in 2003-04.

Before coming to EWU for the 2003-04 season, Howell was a highly-successful head coach at Tacoma, Wash., Community College for 11 seasons. He coached there from the 1992-93 season through 2002-03, winning the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges championship in 2002. Five of his players joined EWU's program, including Khary Nicholas, Rachi Wortham, Brendon Merritt, Josh Barnard and Keith Browne.

Howell coached the Titans to 239 victories, including 138 in his last five seasons alone for an average of more than 27 wins per year. His overall record in 11 years at the helm was 239-83 (74.1 percent).

Besides his 2002 NWAACC title, his Tacoma teams appeared in two championship games, the semifinals three times and the quarterfinals on five occasions in a total of 10 post-season appearances. In addition, his team won four-straight NWAACC Western Region championships from 1998-2002, and he is only the second coach in NWAACC history to have two 30-win seasons to his credit.

In the 1999-2000 season, the Titans went 30-4 and placed fourth at the NWAACC Tournament. Tacoma was led by Merritt, Barnard and Browne. That trio led Tacoma to a runner-up finish the following season, finishing with a 28-5 record. Nicholas was also a member of that squad, then he and Wortham helped lead Tacoma's run to the title in the 2001-02 season as the Titans finished 30-3. Ranked second in the NWAACC, Howell's squad beat top-ranked Big Bend 88-78 in the championship game. Wortham helped Howell's final TCC team finish 26-5 and fifth at the NWAACC Tournament in the 2002-03 season.

Howell's squads were known for their defense. Tacoma ranked first in the NWAACC in scoring defense in 2002-03 (66.9 points per game) and 2001-02 (67.8) seasons, and a year earlier ranked second (69.8).

Howell was selected as NWAACC Coach of the Year once, and was the Western Region Coach of the Year three times. He also was a head coach in the NWAACC All-Star Game on five occasions. Approximately 75 percent of his players at TCC earned their associate degrees.

Howell and the coach he replaced at EWU — Mike Burns — both served as assistant coaches at Central Washington University. Howell, who helped coach Central to a 31-5 record in 1989 and a fifth-place finish in the NAIA Tournament, was at Central from 1989-92 while Burns served from 1996-99.

Howell received his bachelor's degree in physical education from Central in 1991 after playing and coaching under legendary coach Dean Nicholson and the late Gil Coleman. Prior to transferring to CUW, he played basketball at Skagit Valley College in Mt. Vernon, Wash. Howell graduated from Morton, Wash., High School in 1984 where he played both basketball and football.

Howell was born Oct. 26, 1965, in Silver Springs, Md. He and his wife, Jeri Lynn, are the parents of two sons — Cameron (12) and Connor (8).

A graduate of both Central Washington University and Eastern Washington University, Brandon Rinta is in his fifth season in the EWU basketball program. This is his third season as an assistant coach after spending the previous two years as an administrative assistant.

Rinta, a 1995 graduate of W.F. West High School in Chehalis, Wash., played basketball two years at Yakima Valley Community College before transferring to Central where he was recruited by current EWU head coach Mike Burns. Rinta graduated from CWU in 2001 with a degree in health fitness education and a 3.50 grade point average.

He joined Burns and then-head coach Ray Giacoletti at Eastern in the 2001-02 season. When Burns left for an assistant position at Washington State University for the 2003-04 season, Rinta received a promotion to assistant coach. Meanwhile, Rinta earned his master's degree in athletic administration from EWU in June 2003.

Rinta started all 53 games during his two-year stay as a guard at Central, helping lead the Wildcats to a 39-17 record. Both seasons he was the recipient of the team's Hustle Award and was a team co-captain, and as a senior, he won the Gil Coleman Most Inspirational Award. He finished his career with 444 points (8.4 per game), 211 rebounds (4.0), 115 assists (2.2) and 82 steals (1.5). As a senior in the 2000-01 season, Central finished 18-10 and advanced to the NCAA Division II West Regional. He started all 28 games and averaged 9.5 points, 4.6 rebounds, 2.6 assists and 1.6 steals per game. He made 45.8 percent of his field goals (87-for-190), including 35.3 percent of his three-point attempts (30-for-85). He scored in double figures in 14 games, and had a career-high 25 points on 6-of-11 shooting against Saint Martin's on Nov. 28, 2000.

As a junior in the 1999-2000 season, Central finished 21-7 and advanced to the second round of the NCAA Division II West Regional after winning the Pacific West Conference regular season championship. He averaged 7.1 points, 3.8 rebounds, 1.8 assists and 1.5 steals. He made 45.9 percent of his field goals (67-for-146), including 35.6 percent of his treys (16-of-45). An elbow injury sidelined him during the 1998-99 season at CWU, which was Burns’ last season there as the Wildcats finished 24-5.

Rinta played two seasons from 1996-98 at Yakima Valley Community College for legendary CUW coach Dean Nicholson and current Gonzaga assistant Leon Rice. Rinta earned first team All-NWAACC honors as a sophomore in 1997-98 when he averaged 13.3 points and 7.2 rebounds per game. He also led YVCC in steals (69) and blocked shots (30), and finished with 74 assists. He was named team MVP, team captain, and Most Inspirational during his final year at YVCC. As a freshman he won the team’s Most Inspirational Award and earned honorable mention All-NWAACC accolades.

At W.F. West, he lettered four times in basketball and twice in football for the Bearcats. He was an All-State selection as a senior and was named the Black Hills League Player of the Year. He also added team captain, team MVP and first team all-league accolades to his résumé during his junior and senior campaigns. As a running back and wide receiver in football, he earned second team all-league honors as a senior and was his team’s MVP.

Rinta was born Feb. 3, 1977, in Olympia, Wash.

Responsibilities:
- Recruiting Coordinator
- Player development
- Perimeter players
- Team defense and scouting

Responsibilities:
- Player development
- Post players
- Admin. duties including scouting
- Recruiting
Former University of Washington sharpshooter Grant Leep, who has spent the past two seasons as an assistant coach at Community Colleges of Spokane, enters his first season on the Eagle coaching staff.

Leep graduated from the UW with a political science degree in 2002, and spent one season as an assistant at North Seattle Community College before moving to Spokane. The Sasquatch were 40-22 in two seasons with Leep on the staff of head coach Eric Hughes, who was an assistant coach at Washington when Leep played there.

Spokane finished 24-9 in the 2004-05 season en route to winning the Eastern Region title and placing fourth at the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges (NWAACC) Tournament. In his first year at the school, the Sasquatch finished 16-13.

A four-year letterman for the Huskies (1999-02), Leep was a freshman on Washington’s 1999 NCAA Tournament team. He was team captain as a senior in the 2001-02 season when he averaged 7.8 points and 4.1 rebounds per game as a starter at small forward. He led the Pac-10 Conference in three-point field goal percentage that season as he made a school-record 52.7 percent (39-of-74). He also holds the school record for career three-point shooting at 42.9 percent (60-of-140).

In his senior season, Leep was honored as winner of the Hec Edmundson Award (most inspirational) and the Wurster Award (top hustler). He also received recognition for Tyee Sports Council Community Service and 101 Club Scholar/Athlete Award.

Leep earned honorable mention All-America accolades while at Mount Vernon, Wash., High School, and three times was honored as an All-State selection. As a senior in the 1997-98 school year, he averaged 17.3 points per game to lead his team to a 25-2 record and a third-place finish at the State 3A Tournament. He scored 28 points and had 13 rebounds in the final game of his high school career in a 70-56 victory over Mercer Island. Before joining the Huskies, he scored 13 points and had 12 rebounds for a group of all-stars from the state of Washington in a 68-67 loss to Oregon in the Northwest Shootout.

As a junior, Mount Vernon finished 28-1 and lost to Mercer Island in the title game of the State 3A Tournament. He averaged 18.2 points and 8.5 rebounds that season, and 20.1 points and 9.0 rebounds as a sophomore.

Leep was born Sept. 30, 1979, in Bozeman, Mont. He is married to the former Allison Richardson, who was a standout volleyball player at Washington who now works as a sports reporter and anchor for KXLY TV in Spokane.

Donald Sims
Assistant Athletic Trainer

Donald Sims was hired as an assistant athletic trainer at Eastern in July 2005. He provides athletic training services for the men’s basketball team as well as the men’s and women’s tennis teams at EWU. In addition, Donald oversees the administration of the concussion management software utilized by the athletic training department.

Sims received his bachelor’s degree in athletic training from Eastern in 2001 and a master’s degree in advanced athletic training and sport sciences at Long Island University in 2003. Prior to returning to his alma mater, Donald was an assistant athletic trainer at Wagner College in Staten Island, N.Y. He worked with the football, men’s basketball, and baseball teams during his two-year stint at the school.

Donald is single and resides in Spokane. He enjoys sports, reading, classic movies, as well as spending time with family.