

freshmen a coach initially inherited have graduated; the only person a coach can blame for lack of discipline and leadership in the program is himself. Hemphill's fourth year was 1999.

"That year," Hemphill said, "we started two juniors, two sophomores and a freshman. I felt like we finally had a team with what I refer to as 'my players.'" A talented team, but young. By midseason that youth had been exposed, the Lady 'Riders struggling with a 5-10 record.

"Our players were beginning to have doubts," Hemphill said. "They were frustrated. We told them to hang in there, to be patient." The Lady 'Riders proved patient enough to win 10 of their next 14 games.

Then, on February 1, they beat a strong Morenci team (47-37) to advance to the state tournament. A watershed moment for Hemphill and the program; not just a state tournament birth, but a victory over a team that had beaten them twice that season. The Lady 'Riders had emerged from the dark valley

of doubt with a marquee win; they gained invaluable tournament experience they would use the following year.

"That was a big moment for us," Hemphill said. "All they needed was the confidence that comes from game experience; they gutted it out down the stretch and saw what they

The Lady 'Riders

#5	Laurissa Beus	Senior guard	(5'4")
#10	JayAnn Kieffer	Senior guard	(5'4")
#11	Nicole Schmidt	Junior guard	(5'7")
#12	Megan Sherwood	Sophomore guard	(5'6")
#13	Delaney Norton	Junior guard	(5'9")
#14	Corley Lines	Senior center	(5'9")
#20	Janea Hancock	Freshman guard	(5'3")
#22	Marlen Murrieta	Senior forward	(5'5")
#23	Shayla Hancock	Sophomore forward	(5'8")
#32	Tausha Schysm	Senior center	(5'10")
#41	Kitt Bryce	Senior center	(6'0")

