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Evaluating college basketball recruiting involves many factors. It is not unlike fitting together all of the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.

Important, of course, is the overall quality of the incoming group. Even more vital, however, is how the prospects figure to fit into the school's long-range plans.

Take Madison College, for example, which played last year as a Division I school. They were in the hunt for All-Americans, and they will play under a new name—James Madison University.

Madison was 17-9 a year ago, but not under the circumstances, which were that star Sheran Dillard suffered an injury prior to the season and was held out for the entire year.

As a result, Madison did not return its entire starting lineup next year, but also scoring king Dillard.

Thus the Dukes would have been in very good shape without recruiting a single player (although obviously the future would have been shaky).

Coach Lou Campanelli signed three prospects, fewest among all the state's DI-I schools. All three figure to be good players, perhaps even this year. The important thing for Madison is that it can build a nucleus around them. It's recruitment show. They will not be thrown into the breech early.

Madison's signees were Curies Boone, a 6-6 forward from Brunswick who will be a starter in the mold of last year's freshman sensation, Steve Stieger, plus two products from the Washington, D.C., area, Steve Blackmon and 6-5 Tyrone Shoul- 

ders. Our Washington source say both are excellent prospects.

EVALUATION: Madison obviously has improved its recruiting. The Dukes figure to have a shot at 20 wins.

VIRGINIA (12-17 last year): There is no question which state school signed the most heralded prospect. The Cavaliers won that honor when they signed the state's first four-star freshman from Lou- 

isville. UVa Coach Terry Holland not only got Lamp, Mr. Basketball in Kentucky, but also unsigned four-star teammates, Erek Johnson and the Ballard coach as well, Richard Schmidt. Baker should provide excellent backup for Lamp this year. Miller obviously is a star. Schmidt might be the biggest catch of all.

One of the top juniors in the nation is 6-3 guard Avery Evans, considered the next John Lucas. He played at Ballard and, yes, UVa will recruit him hard next year. Guess who will do the recruiting?

The Cavaliers also signed 6-5 Jeff Klein out of Ohio, who could provide front court depth.

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Top Virginia recruit is 6-5 Guy Courage, brother of Matt, this year's graduating center.

The others are Bobby Boyd, a playmaker from Washington, 6-5 Tim Wagner from Scranton, Pa., and 6-4 Scott Whitley from Union, N.J.

EVALUATION: Considering W&M's lossers—Baliles, the star guard and Ron Salterthwaite and top reserve Tom McDonough, the Cavaliers could spend a long season in their first year outside of the Southern Conference.

VCU (13-13): Second year Coach Dana Kilkirk desperately needed to play the numbers game. VCU had just seven players last year; this season, with five recruits, the figures jump to 10.

The best prospect is Edmund Sharpe, the state AA scoring champion from John Marshall High. Also highly touted is 6-6 Danny Kottak from Louisiana, Ky., and 6-4 guard Preston Thomas.

The other recruits are 6-6 Tony Ehlert (yes, he's a brother) from Virginia and 6-7 Thomas Murray from Tennessee.

EVALUATION: Kilkirk's rebuilding job is under way, but he still has a long way to go. The Rams should be slightly improved with the added depth.