



# Tracie Chong

5-6, Sr.-1L

Honolulu, Hawaii (Iolani/UNLV)

	Singles			Position						Doubles			Position		
	Tourn.	Dual	1	2	3	4	5	6	Tourn.	Dual	1	2	3		
2003-04	20-17	10-6	10-11	—	0-2	9-9	1-0	—	—	21-11	6-6	15-5	—	15-5	—
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20-17</b>	<b>10-6</b>	<b>10-11</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>0-2</b>	<b>9-9</b>	<b>1-0</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>21-11</b>	<b>6-6</b>	<b>15-5</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>15-5</b>	<b>—</b>

**Coach White Says...**

"As our lone senior Tracie's leadership in singles and doubles will be key in helping Rice achieve its goals. Tracie has already become one of the elite in college tennis with her national rank of 76 last year. The only question is how high she will go. She is a classic old school player always catching the ball on the rise and forcing the agenda. Tracie plays to win. With her lefty serve and mental toughness developed through experience, she will help lead her team to new highs."

**Rice - Fall 2004:** Led the team with a 9-7 singles record... Won five of final six matches... Advanced to the second round of the prequal bracket at Riviera/ITA All-American Championships... Advanced to the semifinals at the Baylor Fall Classic... Teamed with freshman **Dominique Karas** to go 3-2... Finished with a 5-9 doubles record with four different partners.

**2003-04:** Finished the season ranked 10th in the Southwest Region... Posted a 20-17 singles record and 21-11 in doubles... Opened the dual match season with two-straight wins... Finished with wins in three of final five matches... Teamed with **Karen Chao** to finish the dual match doubles season at 15-5... Entered the fall season with a preseason ranking of 76... Made an immediate impact for the Owls, winning eight of her first 10 singles matches... Advanced to the quarterfinals of the ITA Southwest Regional Championships as one of the nine seeds... Finalist in the blue Flight at the Rice Tennis Classic, falling to teammate **Lauren Archer** in the championship match... Went 6-6 in doubles with three different partners... Advanced to the doubles consolation semifinals at the regional tournament with Chao, finishing with a 3-2 mark.

**UNLV - 2001-03:** Spent two seasons with the Rebels, recording a 50-19 singles record... Was 26-10 during her sophomore campaign, including a 16-6 mark in dual-match play... Ranked 18th in the West Region... Played the two, three and four positions... Had an outstanding freshman year, posting a 24-9 record, including an 18-5 dual-match record at number four singles... Won 17 of her first 19 matches in the spring of 2002, including a 10-match winning streak.

**High School:** 2001 graduate of Iolani School in Honolulu, Hawaii... A four-year letterwinner for coach Mark Skillicorn and the Raiders... Won the state title in 2001 to go along with four city championships and team MVP honors... Led Raiders to the state title in 1999... Ranked number one in Hawaii among girls 18 and under... Named to the headmaster's list and the honor roll.



**Personal:** Full Name: Tracie Ann Chong. Born: Aug. 22, 1983, at Honolulu, Hawaii. Parents: Wesley and Marion Chong, Honolulu, Hawaii (one sister). College: Wiess.



# Blair DiSesa

5-5, Jr.-2L

Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. (The Kings Academy)

	Singles	Tourn.	Dual	Position						Doubles	Tourn.	Dual	Position		
				1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3
2002-03	19-15	7-5	12-11	6-7	6-3	—	—	—	—	15-16	5-4	10-12	9-12	—	1-0
2003-04	24-14	9-5	15-9	11-9	4-0	—	—	—	—	12-16	2-6	10-10	10-10	—	—
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43-29</b>	<b>16-10</b>	<b>27-20</b>	<b>17-16</b>	<b>10-3</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>27-32</b>	<b>7-10</b>	<b>20-22</b>	<b>19-22</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1-0</b>

**Coach White Says...**

"Achieving her first world ranking this summer (high of 794 in doubles) and this fall a collegiate high of 56 will serve as stepping stones for Blair as she strives for success this year with the Owls. Blair is one of the most driven and focused people I have ever met. She is an all-court player who can truly do it all. Her big serve, one-handed backhand that she can come over or under, and her transition game that is as good as anyone on the tour will all aid her as she strives for all-America status."

**Rice - Fall 2004:** Opened the season ranked 58th... Led the team with a 9-7 singles record and an 11-7 doubles mark... Faced four top-100 players, posting a record of 2-2... Advanced to the quarterfinals at the Wilson ITA Southwest Regionals... Advanced to the second round of the consolation bracket at the Riviera/ITA All-American Championships... Teamed with **Kimberley Patenaude** to post an 8-4 doubles mark.

**2003-04:** Finished the season ranked 89th by the ITA and 15th in the Southwest Region... Led the team with a 24-14 singles record... Was 15-9 in dual match action, playing primarily at the number-one ladder position... Named first-team all-Western Athletic Conference... Formed the Owls top doubles duo with **Lauren Archer**, finishing dual match action at 10-9... During the fall tournament season, advanced to the quarterfinals of the ITA Southwest Regional Championships as one of the number nine seeds... Recorded nine singles victories during the fall, with eight coming in straight sets.

**2002-03:** Named to the all-WAC second team in both singles and doubles, with partner Lauren Archer... Tied for second on the team in singles wins with **Karen Chao**, finishing the year 19-15... Was also second with her combined 15 doubles victories... Recorded 12 singles wins in dual-match action splitting time at the one and two ladder positions... Formed the Owls' top doubles team with Archer, going 9-12 in the number one ladder position... Had a solid start to her collegiate career, posting a 7-5 singles mark during fall action... Won four of her first five matches... Advanced to the round of 32 at the ITA Southwest Regional Championships.

**High School:** 2002 graduate of The Kings Academy in West Palm Beach, Fla... A three-year letterwinner for coach Matt Tomas and the Lions... Went 10-0 as a senior and finished with a 31-2 career mark... Named the Lions' MVP in 1999, 2000 and 2002... Finished junior career ranked 37th nationally.



**Personal:** Full Name: Blair Julie DiSesa. Born: Sept. 4, 1983, at Hilton Head, S.C. Parents: Bill and Julie DiSesa, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. (two brothers). Father played tennis at Georgetown in 1973. College: Martel.



# Amy Cao

5-4, Jr.-HS  
Houston  
(St. John's School)

**Coach White Says...**

*"This is Amy's first year as an Owl but she brings a lot to the table as a junior. An endless amount of drive, determination and a big forehand and serve. Her ability to stay focused and wait for her opportunities is what makes Amy a champion. She can apply pressure from all parts of the court and then take advantage of the opportunities she creates."*

**Rice — Fall 2004:** Finished the fall at 2-10 in singles and 5-10 in doubles... Posted wins at the Hilton Houston Plaza Rice Invitational and the season-ending Midwest Blast.

**Personal — Full Name:** Amy Thuy Cao. **Born:** Oct. 21, 1984 in Houston. **Parents:** Kim Son and Thuy Cao of Houston. **College:** Wiess.

**High School —** A 2002 graduate of St. John's School in Houston... A four-year letterwinner and starter for the Rebels... Named All-South Zone and All-SPC... Athletic Excellence honoree... Team finished first in the 2001 SPC and second at the state championships.



# Christine Dao

5-7, Fr.-HS  
Northridge, Calif.  
(Granada Hills Charter)

**Coach White Says...**

*"Christine as a junior was ranked as high as 27<sup>th</sup> in the nation. She was perhaps the most underrated recruit in the country last year. Christine understands how to bring pressure to her opponent and when she creates that opportunity she never lets it slip by. A huge backhand and ability to move that ball on a dime will be just some of the weapons that will let Christine become one of the top Rice players of all time."*

**Rice — Fall 2004:** Went 4-9 in fall tournament action... Finished the season with a win at the Midwest Blast... Was 6-9 in doubles with four different partners.

track and field... Member of the principal's honor roll each year... President of Northridge's community service club and member of Octagon Optimist club... Also recruited by Penn and Boston College.

**High School —** A 2004 graduate of Granada Hills Charter High School in Northridge, Calif. ... Three-year starter for the Highlanders... Twice named all-city... Named to the *Los Angeles Times* all-city team in 2002... also played volleyball and ran

**Personal — Full Name:** Christine Kylinh Dao. **Born:** July 17, 1986 in Northridge, Calif. **Parents:** Son and Holly Dao of Northridge, Calif. (one sister). **College:** Jones.



# Medeja Egic

5-7, Jr.-Tr.  
Ankaran, Slovenia  
(Lee College/Gimnasium Koper)

**Coach White Says...**

*"Medeja comes to us as a four time all-America selection from Lee Junior College. She is just a tough, smart competitor; one who understands what she needs to do to win. A baseliner, she has the ability to come in when needed. She has the ability to take apart any game with her angles and pace. Medeja adds a lot of depth and experience to a young team."*

**Rice** — Matriculated in January 2005.

**At Lee College** — 2003 and 2004 ITA all-American in singles and doubles... Finished 2004 ranked fourth in singles by the ITA... Team finished ranked second... Teamed with Loli Aguirre-Gomez to form the top doubles tandem, winning the national title... Lee College was the NJCAA runner up... As a freshman, posted a 20-match win streak... Finished second at the national tournament and was ranked second... Two-time

national small college championship participant... Team was two-time Southwest Junior College and Region XIV champions... In two years posted a 45-19 singles record and 38-38 doubles mark.

**Personal** — *Full Name:* Medeja Egic. *Born:* July 1, 1981 in Ljubljono, Slovenia. *Parents:* Milos and Marjela Egic of Ankaran, Slovenia (one brother). *College:* Lovett.



# Dominique Karas

5-8, Fr.-HS  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada  
(St. Patrick's)

**Coach White Says...**

*"Dominique comes to us with a third place finish at the Polish National. She is the best athlete on the team and this is reflected in her foot speed on the court and constantly setting the training mark for her teammates. Her work ethic and determination just add to her many gifts. With a big serve and a great volley she will get the job done every time she is called on. I believe that she will be one of the all-time best players to compete for the Owls."*

**Rice** — **Fall 2004:** Finished the fall with a 4-8 singles mark... Was 8-10 in doubles with five different partners.

**High School** — A 2003 graduate of St. Patrick's High School in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada... Three-time Nova Scotia tennis athlete of the year... 2004 Polish Open mixed doubles champion... Finished third at the 2004 U18 Polish Nationals... Won 2003 Polish National team championships... Also recruited by Georgia Tech, Virginia and Boise State.

**Personal** — *Full Name:* Dominique Jadwiga Karas. *Born:* Jan. 26, 1986 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. *Parents:* Roman Karas and Danuta Wtodarczyk-Karas of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada (one sister). *College:* Lovett.



# Kimberley Patenaude

5-6, Fr.-HS

Le Gardeur, Quebec, Canada  
(Georges Vanier)

**Coach White Says...**

*"Comes to us ranked in the top three out of Canada and is the most talented on the squad. Kimberley is very disciplined on the court and understands how to put a match together. With big groundies, relentless pressure and the heart of a champion this package will be hard to beat. When the last ball is struck in Kimberley's collegiate career, a lot of Rice records will lie in the dust."*

**Rice — Fall 2004:** Was 8-6 in singles and 9-7 in doubles action... Won final three matches at the Midwest Blast... Teamed with Blair DiSesa to go 8-4 in doubles.

**High School —** A 2004 graduate of Georges Vanier in Laval, Quebec, Canada... National 14 doubles champion... Ranked in the top three in Canada in singles and doubles... Member of the Canadian national team... Named the Georges Vanier school

student-athlete of the year... Also recruited by Pepperdine, Arizona State, Arizona and Northwestern.

**Personal — Full Name:** Kimberley Pantenaude. **Born:** Aug. 26, 1987 in Montreal, Canada. **Parents:** Jean-Francois Patenaude and Roxanne Turnblom of Le Gardeur, Quebec, Canada. **College:** Will Rice.



# Cleo Sham

5-7, So.-HS

Hong Kong

(The Cheltenham Ladies College)

**Coach White Says...**

*"A great addition to the squad. She brings a positive attitude every day and is always willing to go that extra mile when asked. Cleo is a quick learner and wants to be the best she can be in tennis. What she lacks in experience she is working hard to make up with training. Fearlessness, determination and focus are some of the weapons that will give Cleo success in the future."*

**Rice — Fall 2004:** Did not compete.

**High School —** A 2003 graduate of The Cheltenham Ladies College in Chettenham, England... A five-year starter and letterwinner for coach Suzie Matthews... Earned full colors for tennis and netball... Gloucestershire County team member for

netball... Second runner-up in 2003 at the HSBC U18 tournament... Netball team was U19 county champions.

**Personal — Full Name:** Cleo Sham. **Born:** Nov. 4, 1984 in Los Angeles, Calif. **Parents:** Joseph and Queenie Sham of Hong Kong (one sister). **College:** Sid Richardson.



# Roger White

## Head Coach

Abilene Christian, 2003

Rice Record: 32-42, Three Seasons

Career Record: 32-42, Three Seasons

After serving three years as an assistant coach, **Roger White** is now in his fourth season at the helm for the Rice women's tennis program, having taken the reins in June 2001.

The 2004 spring season saw the Owls open with four consecutive wins, including a 5-2 upset at 40th-ranked Minnesota. But the young team had a tough challenge ahead, facing another 15 ranked foes, including five in the top 20. At the end of the long road, White's squad advanced to the semifinals of the Western Athletic Conference championships, where **Blair DiSesa** earned first-team all-WAC singles honors. **Lauren Archer** was named to the singles second team, while **Tracie Chong** and **Karen Cao** earned all-WAC second team doubles recognition.

The fall of 2003 saw White's pupils put together one of the Owls' best showings at the ITA Southwest Regional Championships when Archer, Chong and DiSesa all advanced to the quarterfinals of the singles draw. Rice was the only program to have three players still playing among the final eight.

In spring 2003, White ran his charges through a demanding schedule, playing ranked opponents 14 times, including taking on the two-time defending national champions, Stanford, in Palo Alto, Calif. Only three of those matches were played at the Jake Hess Tennis Stadium. The young Owls were recognized for their efforts by the league coaches as Archer was named the WAC freshman of the year as well as receiving first-team all-conference honors in singles. DiSesa was named to the second team in singles and doubles, with Archer.

In 2001, his first fall at the helm was highlighted by the stellar performances of **Jeri Gonzales** and **Yasmin Fisher** at the ITA Southwest Regional Championships. The duo blasted through their opponents in the early going, advancing to the finals. Heading into the dual-match season, White quickly proved that he was willing to take on anyone, anywhere when his Owls faced fourth-ranked Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tenn., in their season opener. The same day, Rice took on 25th-ranked South Alabama for the first of seven doubleheaders during the year. The Owls hit their stride in April, winning five of their final seven matches.

White's teams have also continued the long-standing tradition of academic excellence. The Owls have been honored

by the ITA the past three years with all-Academic team status, while 11 players have received 16 ITA Scholar-Athlete awards.

White was named the Owls' assistant coach in 1998 and quickly helped Rice to a 15-6 record and its fourth consecutive NCAA regional bid. In the fall of 1999, the Owls qualified both a singles player and a doubles team for the Clay Court National Championships, a program first. In White's three years as assistant coach, the Rice women produced a 39-28 record and earned ITA team academic all-America honors each year.

Prior to joining the Owls, White was the assistant head tennis professional at the Houston Country Club after holding the position of director of tennis at Atascocita Country Club (1989-96). He began his career as head teaching professional at Kingwood Country Club in 1986, and in 1988 moved to Walden Golf and Country Club, where he served as director of tennis and racquet sports for two years.

White earned all-America honors as a collegian at Abilene Christian for the 1986 season, in which he was ranked as high as second in doubles and 23rd in singles nationally by the Intercollegiate Tennis Coaches Association.

A native of Miami, Okla., White lives in Houston with his wife, Suzanne, who played tennis for Trinity University from 1986-90. The newest addition to his family is Christopher Ryan, born Aug. 4, 2002.





# Elizabeth Schmidt

Assistant Coach

UCLA, 2000

A former UCLA standout **Elizabeth Schmidt** joined the Rice women's tennis family as assistant coach in July 2004.

A four-year letterwinner for the Bruins, Schmidt was an all-America doubles player and twice competed in the NCAA singles championship tournament. She was a three-time all-Pac-10 honoree and served as team captain from 1998-2000. During her time at UCLA, the Bruins reached the NCAA quarterfinals twice (1997 and 2000) and the round of 16 once (1998).

Schmidt was equally competitive in the classroom, receiving Pac-10 all-academic honors in 1998, 1999 and 2000. She was the 2000 recipient of the Pac-10 post graduate scholarship, awarded annually to the league's top male and female student-athletes. A two-time winner of the Arthur Ashe Leadership and Sportsmanship award, she also claimed the 1999 Intercollegiate Tennis Association's Cissie Leary Regional Sportsmanship award. Schmidt graduated from UCLA with honors in sociology in 2000.

After graduation, Schmidt joined the Women's Tennis Association's professional tour, ultimately achieving a top 140 international ranking in doubles and top 380 in singles. She was a doubles semifinalist at the WTA's Bell Challenge in Quebec City, Canada and the Tashkent Open in Uzbekistan, both in 2002. Last summer, Schmidt competed at Wimbledon in the doubles tournament. She owns a pair of Challenger international titles and advanced to the finals on three other occasions.

Schmidt is also a graduate of Westlake High School in Austin where she was a three time state singles champion and a Prince all-America honoree. She achieved national juniors rankings of seven in doubles and 26 in singles. She is currently working towards a master's degree in public administration at the University of Houston.





# Jennifer Russell

Volunteer Assistant Coach  
Purdue, 2000

Volunteering her time to the Rice women's tennis program this year is professional doubles standout **Jennifer Russell**.

Heading into the spring, Russell is ranked in the top 75 in the world for doubles. She won 13 doubles titles on the International Tennis Federation Tour prior to joining the Women's Tennis Association Tour last year. In October 2004, Russell, with partner Mara Santangelo of Italy, won her first-ever WTA Tour doubles title, winning the Gaz de France Stars event in Hasselt, Belgium. In summer 2004, Russell and Santangelo advanced to the third round at Wimbledon. The pair fell to Martina Navratilova and Lisa Raymond 7-5, 6-3.

The former Jennifer Embry was a three-time all-Big Ten honoree for Purdue. In 2000 was a finalist for the ITA senior player of the year award. Her sophomore season, Russell

qualified for the NCAA championships in singles and made school history with partner Mary Beth Maggart in 1999 as the duo became the Boilermakers' first doubles team to receive a bid. At the championships, the pair upset Stanford's top-ranked Teryn Ashley and Anne Kremer 6-4, 6-3. She went on to receive NCAA doubles bids again in 1999 and 2000 and a singles bid in 1999. She finished her collegiate career ranked 25th in doubles with Shannon Taheny, and held the school record for doubles wins with 79.

A native of Houston, Russell was a four-year letterwinner at Memorial High School, where she was the state doubles champion as a sophomore.

Jennifer and Jeff Russell were married on May 1, 2004.



**Vivek Gopalan**  
Student Manager  
Sophomore, Will Rice College



**Jim Russell**  
Strength Trainer  
Seventh Year