

GREAT NORTHWEST ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

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Men's Basketball: UAA, SPU Expected To Slug It Out For GNAC Title

2010-11 GNAC Coaches Poll	2010-11 Records	Pts
1. Alaska Anchorage (4)	24-10 13-5, 2nd	95
2. Seattle Pacific (4)	20-10 12-6, 3rd	94
3. Western Washington (2)	16-11 11-7, 4th	86
4. Central Washington	26-4 16-2, 1st	75
5. Western Oregon	13-16 8-10, 6 th	54
6. Saint Martin's	14-15 7-11, 7 th	44
7. Montana State Billings	8-18 6-12, 8 th	36
8. Alaska Fairbanks	8-17 5-13, 9 th	33
9. Northwest Nazarene	15-12 10-8, 5 th	31
10. Simon Fraser	3-21 2-16, 10 th	12

(Note: First-place votes in parenthesis. Points awarded on 11-9-8-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis.)

SPOKANE, Wash. – Alaska Anchorage and Seattle Pacific, which both added outstanding players to already strong casts, are expected to slug it out for the 2011-12 Great Northwest Athletic Conference men's basketball title this winter.

The championship will be decided with a six-team tournament at Saint Martin's University's Marcus Pavilion beginning Wednesday, Feb. 29.

The No. 1 and No. 2 regular-season finishers will earn first-round byes and will play Wednesday's winners in semifinal game on Friday, Mar. 2. The championship game will be played Saturday, Mar. 3.

UAA, which won its only GNAC title in 2008 when it advanced to the NCAA Division II national semifinals, edged Seattle Pacific by just one point in the GNAC pre-season coaches poll.

Both the Seawolves and Falcons, who won GNAC titles in 2002, 2006, 2007 and 2010 and have qualified for the NAAs in seven consecutive seasons, each received four first-place votes.

Western Washington and Central Washington also could contend for the GNAC title and NCAA regional invitations.

The three-time conference champion Vikings (2002, 2005, 2009) received a pair of first-place votes in the balloting and finished third. Central Washington came in a solid fourth.

Among the six remaining schools, four will be led by first-year coaches – Brady Bergeson at Western Oregon, Jamie Stevens at Montana State Billings, Mick Durham at Alaska Fairbanks and Dave Daniels at Northwest Nazarene.

Western Oregon, which returns a league-best five starters including guard Blair Wheadon, may have the best opportunity to break up the domination of the top four.

Wheadon averaged 18.2 points per game and led the conference in steals last season (2.1).

Alaska Anchorage and Western Washington each return two all-stars. Back to lead UAA is forward Taylor Rohde, who is the lone returning GNAC first team all-star.

Rohde averaged 16.1 points and 6.5 rebounds after transferring from Arizona State.

Also back among nine returning letter winners for the Seawolves is guard Mario Gill.

Gill lead the GNAC in three-point percentage last season (46.3) in earning honorable mention honors and then had a breakout regional tournament scoring 44 points and grabbing 17 rebounds in two contests.

Eighth-year coach Rusty Osborne also added three Division I transfers including guard Marcus Jackson from Arizona State.

Seattle Pacific returns eight players led by honorable mention all-star Andy Poling. Poling scored 14.5 points and grabbed seven rebounds per game last season.

Coach Ryan Looney may also have the leading candidate for *GNAC Newcomer-of-the-Year* in Jobi Wall, who was a first-team Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference all-star two years ago at Colorado Christian when he averaged 16.6 points and 7.7 rebounds.

Western Washington returns four starters including second-team all-league guard John Allen and honorable mention all-league forward Rory Blanche and has a league-best 11 lettermen.

Central Washington graduated all but one starter, but returns its top subs from each of the past two seasons in forward Jody Johnson and guard Toussaint Tyler.

Johnson scored 10 points and grabbed 6.1 rebounds a game last season, while Tyler averaged 11.6 points in 2009-10 before taking an injury redshirt season last winter.

Saint Martin's, which came in sixth in the coaches' poll, has 10 letter winners (the second most in the conference) and three starters back led by honorable mention pick

Jeremy Green. Green scored 15.9 points and grabbed 6.3 rebounds per contest.

Jaxon Myaer, who led the conference in assists (5.0) in earning honorable mention honors returns at MSUB, to lead the Yellowjackets who are projected to finish seventh.

At Alaska Fairbanks, Durham, who won 246 games in 16 seasons at Montana State, returns four players on a team that is picked eighth in the poll.

Northwest Nazarene returns only three players and is the only team without a returning starter.

The Crusaders finished ninth in the poll ahead of Simon Fraser, which will complete its NCAA provisional year this season before becoming fully eligible for the NCAA playoffs next season.

AROUND THE GNAC: The GNAC coaches poll looks a little bit like the old children's game "musical chairs" compared to last year's conference standings with CWU falling from first to fourth and UAA, SPU and WWU all moving up one spot from their 2011 finish. Similarly last year's fifth-place finisher Northwest Nazarene is projected to drop to ninth with Western Oregon, Saint Martin's, MSU Billings and Alaska Fairbanks each climbing one spot to fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth, respectively. . .In addition to Gill (three-point percentage), Myaer (assists) and Wheadon (steals), the only other returning 2010-11 GNAC statistical champion is Alaska Fairbanks guard Jarrett Miller, who led the GNAC with a 93.5 free throw percentage mark. . .Twenty-six of last year's 50 starters and a total of 74 lettermen are back for another season. . .Just four of last year's Top 10 scorers – Justin Brown of Simon Fraser (3rd), Wheadon (5th), Rohde (9th) and Green (10th) – and five of last year's Top 10 rebounders – Tarance Glynn of Western Oregon (4th), Poling (6th), Blanche (7th), Rohde (8th) and Green (9th) – are back for another season.

TEAM CAPSULES

ALASKA ANCHORAGE Seawolves

Head Coach: Rusty Osborne, Texas '88 (134-77, 7 years)

Assistants: Ryan Orton

Grad Assistant: Cameron Turner

2010-11 Record: 24-10

Conference: 13-5, 2nd

Returning Letter Winners: 9

Returning Starters: Taylor Rohde (F, 6-9, Sr., 16.1 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 0.68 bpg, 61.4 FG PCT., 2nd team Daktronics West Region, 1st team GNAC); Mario Gill (G, 6-2, Sr., 10.3 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 57-123 3-pointers, HM GNAC)

Other Returnees: Lonnie Ridgeway (G, 6-3, Sr., 6.8 ppg, 3.6 rpg); Travis Thompson (G, 6-1, So., 5.9 ppg, 1.3 rpg); Steve White (G, 6-0, Sr., 4.3 ppg, 1.9 rpg, 3.4 app, 0.9 spg); Matt Peterson (C, 6-7, Sr., 2.3 ppg, 1.2 rpg); Kyle Fossman (G, 6-0, So., 2.2 ppg, 0.5 rpg); Liam Gibcus (F/C, 6-10, Jr., 1.9 ppg, 1.4 rpg); Phillip Hearn (G/F, 6-6, Sr., 1.2 ppg, 0.7 rpg)

Transfers: Marcus Jackson (G, 6-2, Jr., Sacramento, CA – Arizona State); Colton Lauwers (G, 6-3, So., Anchorage, AK –

Adams State); Chris Weitzel (F/C, 6-7, Jr., Gresham, OR – Mt. Hood); Abebe Demissie (F, 6-6, Jr., Seattle, WA – EWU/North Idaho)

OUTLOOK

Though the Seawolves return just two starters both were all-stars and are among nine returning lettermen for eighth-year head coach Rusty Osborne.

And they both might be among the best players in the conference.

Forward Taylor Rohde (6-9, Sr., Phoenix, AZ - Pinnacle) is a legitimate All-American candidate after earning first team all-league honors in his first season in Anchorage after transferring from Arizona State.

Rohde led UAA to a West Region playoff berth last season leading the Seawolves in scoring (16.1), rebounding (6.5), blocked shots (23) and field goal percentage (61.4) and ranking in the Top 10 in the GNAC in all four categories.

His scoring and rebounding averages ranked ninth and eighth. He finished fifth in shooting percentage and 10th in rejections.

Gill averaged 10.3 points and 5.1 rebounds to earn honorable mention all-league honors, but played like an All-American candidate at regionals, scoring 44 points and hauling in 17 rebounds in two contests.

Three other returnees also averaged four or more points per game last season. Osborne also added a trio of four-year transfers including another player from Arizona State.

Guard Lonnie Ridgeway (6-3, Sr., Anchorage, AK – Heritage Christian), who made five starts in 25 appearances, averaged 6.8 points and 3.6 rebounds.

Travis Thompson (6-1, So., Anchorage, AK – Dimond) was the GNAC's third most efficient three-pointer shooter making 44 percent (37 of 84) in his freshman season and scoring 5.9 points per contest.

Steve White (6-0, Sr., Manly, Australia) made just four starts but was the team's No. 2 playmaker finishing 10th in the GNAC in assists with 117 (3.4 per contest) in addition to contributing 4.3 points per game and a team-high 30 steals.

Other returnees include center Matt Peterson (6-7, Sr., Yakima, WA – Eisenhower), who had 72 points and 36 rebounds in 31 games, Kyle Fossman (6-0, So., Haines, AK) who scored 43 points in 20 contests, forward Liam Gibcus (6-10, Jr., Lysterfield, Australia) who had 54 points and 40 rebounds in 29 appearances and guard/forward Phillip Hearn (6-6, Sr., Anchorage, AK – West) who had 21 points in 18 games.

From Arizona State the Seawolves added guard Marcus Jackson (6-2, Jr., Sacramento, CA – Sheldon). Joining

UAA from Adams State is guard Colton Lauwers (6-3, So., Anchorage, AK – Dimond).

Forward Abebe Demissie (6-6, Jr., Seattle, WA – Rainier Beach) played last season at North Idaho after spending the previous year at Eastern Washington.

Jackson played in 16 games in two seasons for the Sun Devils contributing 15 points and 11 assists.

“(Marcus) has good skill and his size and leadership will be very valuable,” Osborne said. “We expect him to have an immediate impact on both ends of the floor.”

Lauwers, a former Alaska 4A Player of the Year at Dimond, started 15 of 26 games at Adams State in 2009-10 averaging 3.3 points before redshirting last season.

Demissie averaged 6.8 points and 4.3 rebounds at NIJC. In 2009-10, he played in 12 games and averaged 4.3 points, 3.8 rebounds and 1.6 assists for EWU.

The Seawolves also added Alaska 3A Player-of-the-Year Christian Leckband (6-5, Fr., Nome, AK – Nome-Beltz) and also have available two redshirts from a year ago – forward Chris Weitzel (6-7, Jr., Gresham, OR) who posted averages of 8.2 points and 4.9 rebounds in two seasons at Mt. Hood CC, and freshman Bloomer Blossom (6-2, Soldotna, AK).

SEATTLE PACIFIC Falcons

Head Coach: Ryan Looney, Eastern Oregon '98 (42-16, 2 years; Overall, 137-71, 7 years)

Assistants: Grant Leep, George Parker, Adriaan Wakefield, Chris Filios, Dan Downs

2010-11 Record: 20-10

Conference: 12-6, 3rd

Returning Letter Winners: 8

Returning Starter: Andy Poling (P, 6-11, Jr., 14.5 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 1.0 bpg, HM GNAC); David Downs (PG, 6-2, So., 6.9 ppg, 2.1 rpg, 4.3 apg, GNAC Co-Freshman-of-the-Year); Scott Morse (W, 6-7, Jr., 4.1 ppg, 4.0 rpg)

Other Returnees: Jake Anderson (W, 6-6, Sr., 5.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg); Modou Niang (P, 6-10, Sr., 4.8 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 1.0 bpg); Jeff Dorman (W, 6-2, Sr., 2.3 ppg, 1.1 rpg); Kellan Moll (P, 6-8, Jr., 1.9 ppg, 1.3 rpg); Riley Carel (PG, 6-2, So., 1.0 ppg, 1.1 rpg)

Transfers: Jobi Wall (W, 6-7, Jr., Arvada, CO – Colorado Christian)

OUTLOOK

Andy Poling, who earned honorable mention GNAC honors helping lead the Falcons into the semifinals of the NCAA West Regionals and *GNAC Freshman of the Year* David Downs are among eight letter winners back for Seattle Pacific.

Poling (6-11, 230, Jr., Portland, OR – Westview) averaged 14.5 points and 7.0 rebounds ranking sixth in the conference in his first season at SPU after transferring from Gonzaga.

He also had 30 blocks in 30 contests to tie for fifth in the conference.

Downs (6-2, So., Bellevue, WA – Bellevue Christian), who averaged 6.9 points per game, ranked second in the conference in assists (4.3) and 10th in three-point percentage making 35 of 86 (40.7) including five of seven in a NCAA playoff win against Central Washington.

Also back from last year's starting lineup is Scott Morse (6-7, Jr., Central Point, OR – Cascade Christian), who scored 4.1 points and 4.0 rebounds.

Jack Anderson (6-6, Sr., Burlington, WA – Burlington-Edison) also returns after averaging 5.8 points and 3.2 rebounds. Anderson started six of 17 games before missing SPU's final 11 games with an injury.

Four other players played in 21 or more games last year including post Modou Niang (6-10, Sr., Richard-Toll, Senegal), wing Jeff Dorman (6-2, Sr., Vancouver, WA – Prairie), post Kellan Moll (6-8, Jr., Anchorage, AK – Grace Christian) and Riley Carel (6-2, So., Enumclaw, WA).

Niang scored 4.8 points and averaged 2.6 rebounds in 29 contests. He also tied for fifth in the GNAC claiming one blocked shot per game.

Dorman scored 2.3 points per contest, while Moll had 49 points in 26 games and Carel had 20 points in 21 contests.

Colorado Christian transfer Jobi Wall (6-7, Jr., Arvada, CO) and five freshmen will also be available this winter for coach Ryan Looney, who has led SPU to a 42-16 record in two seasons.

That doesn't count the three wins the Falcons had in the Bahamas in September. Poling had 58 points and 34 rebounds and Wall had 45 points and 25 rebounds on the three-game tour.

Wall didn't play last season, but was a first-team RMAC selection in 2009-10 when he averaged 16.6 points and a league-best 7.7 rebounds for Colorado Christian. He had 28 points and 13 rebounds in a 73-69 win over Seattle Pacific on Dec. 30, 2009.

He also led the league in three-pointers with 98, shooting 44 percent from the arc.

“Jobi's ability to rebound, shoot a high percentage from the three-point line and play multiple positions will really improve our team,” Looney said.

Among SPU's freshmen is Riley Stockton (6-4, Spokane, WA – Ferris) who is the nephew of NBA Hall-of-Famer John Stockton.

Stockton was SPU's assist leader in two of its three games to the Bahamas.

WESTERN WASHINGTON Vikings

Head Coach: Brad Jackson, Washington State '75 (487-274, 26 years)

Assistants: Tony Dominguez, Rob Visser

2010-11 Record: 16-11

Conference: 11-7, 4th

Returning Letter Winners 11 (2 from 2009-10)

Returning Starters: John Allen (G, 6-0, Jr., 14.3 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 4.1 apg, 1.7 spg, 2nd team GNAC); Rory Blanche (F, 6-6, Sr., 14.3 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 2.0 apg, HM GNAC); Zach Henifin (F, 6-5, Sr., 9.5 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 2.2 apg, 1.6 spg); Chris Mitchell (C, 6-8, Jr., 6.8 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 0.6 bpg)

Other Returnees: Shedrick Nelson (G, 6-3, Sr., 8.7 ppg, 2.1 rpg); Dan Young (C, 6-10, Sr., 4.5 ppg, 3.2 rpg); Anthony Wiederkehr (G, 5-11, Sr., 1.8 ppg, 0.9 rpg); Dane Thorpe (G, 6-3, So., 1.7 ppg, 1.6 rpg); Bryce McPhee (F, 6-6, So., 1.3 ppg, 0.7 rpg); Cameron Severson (G, 6-4, Jr., 4.4 ppg, 1.8 rpg in 2009-10); Richard Woodworth (G, 6-3, So., 2.0 ppg, 0.8 rpg in 2009-10); Rico Wilkins (G, 6-0, *Jr., 7.6 ppg, 2.0 rpg, 4.4 apg in 5 games) *Granted hardship

Transfers: Alfred Davis (G, 6-0, Jr., Tacoma, WA – Pierce CC); Paul Jones (F, 6-4, So., Kent, WA – Whatcom CC); Damien Fisher (F, 6-7, Jr., Fife – Centralia CC)

OUTLOOK

Western Washington graduated Michael Duty, but returns virtually every one else from last year's team that was in position to earn a NCAA regional berth before losing its final four games.

Duty was the team's leading scorer averaging 16.4 points and 5.9 rebounds while shooting 52.3 percent from the floor.

In addition to Alaska Anchorage, the Vikings are the only team in the conference with two returning all-stars.

Guard John Allen (6-0, Jr., Brier, WA – Mountlake Terrace) earned second team accolades last season after averaging 14.3 points and 4.1 assists. His assist average ranked fifth in the GNAC.

He also led WWU in steals and ranked sixth in the conference with a 1.7 average and ranked second in the conference in free throw percentage missing just six of 71 opportunities (91.5).

Forward Rory Blanche (6-6, Sr., Ashland, OR), who averaged 14.3 points, a team-best 6.8 rebounds and two assists, earned honorable mention honors. His rebound total ranked seventh in the conference.

Also back from last year's starting lineup are forward Zach Henifin (6-5, Sr., Bellingham, WA) and center Chris Mitchell (6-8, Jr., Everson, WA – Nooksack Valley).

Henifin averaged 9.5 points and 4.5 rebounds a contest last year ago and also had the second highest steal (41) and assist (56) totals on the club.

Mitchell chipped in with 6.8 points and 4.3 rebounds and ranked second on the squad with 16 blocks.

Shedrick Nelson (6-3, Sr., Tacoma, WA – Wilson) was also a key contributor averaging 8.7 points and 2.1 rebounds. He shot 38.8 percent (38-98) from the three-point line and 81.4 from the foul line (35-43).

Of the six other returning lettermen, guard Cameron Severson (6-4, Jr., Petersburg, AK) has the best numbers. Severson averaged 4.4 points and 1.8 rebounds in 2009-10 before redshirting last season.

Another 2010-11 redshirt is guard Richard Woodworth (6-3, So., Bellevue, WA - Newport) who averaged two points per contest in 2009-10.

Other returnees include center Dan Young (6-10, Sr., Federal Way, WA – Lakewood), who started five of 26 games; guards Anthony Wiederkehr (5-11, Sr., Lakewood, WA) and Dane Thorpe (6-3, So., Bellingham, WA – Sehome) and forward Bryce McPhee (6-6, So., Normandy Park, WA – Mount Rainier).

Young scored 4 ½ points per contest and grabbed 3.2 rebounds. Wiederkehr had 34 points and 24 assists in 18 games. Thorpe had 45 points and 42 rebounds in 26 contests and McPhee tallied 12 points in nine contests.

Rico Wilkins (6-0, Jr., Dallas, TX – DeSoto), who was the NWAACC Eastern Region MVP in 2009-10 at Yakima Valley, started three games and was averaging 7.6 points before an injury ended his season after five games and will also earn a second shot at his junior season.

Also available will be JC transfers Paul Jones (6-4, So., Kent, WA – Kent-Meridian) and Damien Fisher (6-7, Jr., Fife, WA).

Jones was a first team NWAACC Northern Region all-star in 2009-10 at Whatcom CC before sitting out last year. Fisher averaged 15.5 points at Centralia.

Another JC addition is Alfred Davis (6-0, Jr., Tacoma, WA) who played at Pierce earning second team NWAACC honors.

Two freshmen complete the roster – 6-3 guard Kyle Impero from Nooksack Valley and 6-6 center Eric Fongue from Zurich, Switzerland who has played for the U16, U18 and U20 Swiss national teams.

CENTRAL WASHINGTON Wildcats

Head Coach: Greg Sparling, Central Washington '93 (280-171, 16 years)

Associate Head Coach: G.E. Coleman

Graduate Assistant Coach: Jon Cliff

2010-11 Record: 26-4

Conference: 16-2, 1st

Returning Letter Winners: 5 (1 from 2009-10)

Returning Starters: Roby Clyde (F/C, 6-5, Sr., 3.9 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 0.8 bpg)

Other Returnees: Toussaint Tyler (G, 6-1, Sr., 11.6 ppg, 2.3 rpg, 2.1 apg in 2009-10); Ted Nelson (C, 7-0, Sr., 1.6 ppg, 1.5 rpg); Jody Johnson (F, 6-4, Sr., 10.0 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 1.1 spg); Philipp Lieser (G, 6-4, So., 3.0 ppg, 1.1 rpg)

Transfers: Trey Gross (G, 6-3, Jr., Stockton, CA – Eastern Washington); Jordan Starr (G, 5-10, Jr., Yakima, WA - Bellevue); Jordan Coby (G, 6-1, Jr., Tacoma, WA - Tacoma CC); Kevin Davis (F/C, 6-9, So., Federal Way, WA - Tacoma CC); Lacy Haddock (G, 6-1, 185, So., Las Vegas, NV - Yavapai College); Chris Holmes (G, 6-3, Jr., Seattle, WA - Tacoma CC); Brandon Magee (G/F, 6-4, 215, Jr., Spanaway, WA - Tacoma CC)

OUTLOOK

The Wildcats return just one starter – forward Roby Clyde (6-5, Sr., Connell, WA) off their first conference championship team in more than a decade.

But that doesn't mean, 17th year head coach Greg Sparling, who needs 20 wins to reach 300, doesn't have the firepower to go back-to-back.

Sparling will, however, have to do it with almost a new cast.

Clyde started all 30 games last season but ranked just eighth on the team in minutes played (17.7 per contest) and scoring (3.9). He did rank third on the team *and* in the GNAC in blocked shots with 34.

Forward Jody Johnson (6-4, Sr., Seattle, WA – Franklin) is CWU's top returning 2010-11 scorer. He came off the bench to average 10 points per game and lead CWU in rebounding (6.1) and free throw percentage (85.4).

Also back are guard Philipp Lieser (6-4, So., Berlin, Germany) and center Ted Nelson (7-0, Sr., Hoquiam, WA) who averaged 3.9 and 3.0 points, respectively.

Guard Toussaint Tyler (6-1, Sr., Kent, WA - Kentwood) is also available after redshirting last season. He was CWU's fourth leading scorer two years ago contributing 11.6 points and 2.1 assists per game.

One Division I transfer and six former junior college standouts will be counted on heavily if CWU is to make a fifth consecutive NCAA tournament.

Trey Gross (6-3, Jr., Stockton, CA – Edison) played in 42 games in two seasons at Eastern Washington averaging 6.5 points and 2.0 rebounds before redshirting last season.

Among the JC recruits is Lacy Haddock (6-1, So., Las Vegas, NV) from Yavapai College in Prescott, Ariz., and three NWAACC all-stars from Tacoma CC.

Haddock played in just three games at Yavapai in 2009-10 before sustaining a season-ending injury. He scored 24 points in one of the contests.

"Lacy is a very athletic point guard who can shoot the ball and really contribute offensively," CWU associate head coach G.E. Coleman said.

"He fits into what we look for in perimeter players with his athleticism, his ability to defend and his ability to be a two-way player. (At 6-2), he gives us a little more size and versatility in the backcourt.

Joining the Wildcats from Tacoma CC is West Region MVP Chris Holmes (6-3, Jr., Seattle, WA) along with first team NWAACC all-stars Jordan Coby (6-1, Jr., Tacoma, WA) and Brandon Magee (6-4, Jr., Spanaway, WA).

A fourth Tacoma CC product Kevin Davis (6-9, So., Federal Way, WA) will also play for the Wildcats giving CWU five TCC products as Tyler also began his collegiate career there.

Holmes earned MVP honors by averaging 14.6 points and 6.9 rebounds leading Tacoma to a 26-3 record including a perfect 16-0 conference mark.

Coby, who is the nephew of former CWU standout Steve Pudists who averaged 11 points and six rebounds for the Wildcats during the 1980-81 and 1981-82 seasons, scored 12.8 points a game last season for Tacoma.

Magee scored 16 points per game and pulled down 6.2 rebounds.

Another JC addition is guard Jordan Starr (5-10, Jr., Yakima, WA – Davis) from Bellevue CC. Starr averaged 10.4 points two seasons ago at Bellevue.

WESTERN OREGON Wolves

Head Coach: Brady Bergeson, Chapman '00 (First year)

Assistants: Jerod Gibson, Joe Schaumberg, Matt Fischer

2010-11 Record: 13-16

Conference: 8-10, 6th

Returning Letter Winners: 8

Returning Starters: Blair Wheadon (G, 6-2, 180, Sr., 18.2 ppg, 2.7 rpg, 3.7 apg, 2.1 spg, 70-185 3-pointers, 2nd team GNAC); Kyle Long (G, 6-3, Sr., 13.0 ppg, 2.7 rpg, 2.8 apg, 46-131 3-pointers); Tarance Glynn (F, 6-6, Jr., 12.8 ppg, 7.8 rpg, 1.5 spg); Kolton Nelson (C, 6-8, Jr., 9.7 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 0.6 bpg); Jordan Freeland (G, 6-0, Sr., 7.4 ppg, 1.1 rpg)

Other Returnees: Kris White (C, 6-4, Sr., 4.6 ppg, 2.6 rpg); Jamaal Veal (G, 6-5, Sr., 4.4 ppg, 2.9 rpg); Brian Mahuna (F, 6-8, So., 0.8 ppg, 0.9 rpg)

Transfers: Brandon Troxel (F, 6-5, Jr., Tualatin, OR - Clackamas); Andrew Carter (F, 6-3, Sr., Astoria, OR – Linn Benton CC); Cody Peters (F, 6-6, Jr., Coupeville, WA – Whatcom CC)

OUTLOOK

Western Oregon is the only team in the conference that returns its starting lineup intact and may have the best opportunity to break up the domination of the top four teams.

First-year coach Brady Bergeson has eight letter winners led by 2010-11 GNAC steal champion Blair Wheadon.

Wheadon (6-2, Sr., Junction City, OR), who had 61 steals, earned second team all-conference honors last season when he ranked fifth in the conference in scoring (18.2).

He also finished eighth in assists (3.7) and third in three-pointers made (2.4). Wheadon, who has career totals of 1,206 points, 286 assists and 155 steals, also had 79 rebounds and blocked 16 shots from his guard slot.

Also returning from last year's lineup are guards Kyle Long (6-3, Sr., McMinnville, OR) and Jordan Frelander (6-0, Sr., Portland, OR – Central Catholic), forward Tarance Glynn (6-6, Jr., Molalla, OR) and center Kolton Nelson (6-8, Jr., Klamath Falls, OR – Mazama).

Long scored 13 points per game and ranked second to Wheadon on the team in assists with 82 and in three-pointers, making 46 of 131.

Frelander scored 7.4 points per contest, making nearly half of his shots (81 of 168).

Glynn was the conference's fourth ranked rebounder grabbing 7.8 per contest in addition to averaging 12.8 points per game.

Nelson, who shot 51.5 percent, averaged 9.7 points and 5.6 rebounds per contest.

Kris White (6-4, Sr., Birmingham, AL – Parkway), Jamaal Veal (6-5, Sr., Rancho Cucamonga, CA – Alta Loma) and Brian Mahuna (6-8, So., Central Point, OR – Hidden Valley) also return for another season.

White scored 4.6 points per contest converting on 45 of 87 shots (51.7 percent), while Veal averaged 4.4. Mahuna played in just 10 games, scoring eight points.

Two JC transfers and three freshmen fill out the roster. Forward Brandon Troxel (6-5, Jr., Tualatin, OR) averaged 10.6 points per game last season at Clackamas CC, while Cody Peters (6-6, Jr., Coupeville, WA) scored 8.6 per contest at Whatcom CC.

The freshman additions are Nathaniel Carter (5-10, Portland, OR - Benson), Ryan Hoeft (6-1, Newport, OR) and Andrey Avgi (6-6, Woodburn, OR – Woodburn).

SAINT MARTIN'S Saints

Head Coach: Keith Cooper, Seattle Pacific '88 (96-125, 8 years)

Assistants: Dan Barfoot, Charlie Severs

2010-11 Record: 14-15

Conference: 7-11, 7th

Returning Letter Winners: 10 (1 from 2009-10)

Returning Starters: Jeremy Green (F, 6-8, Sr., 15.9 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 1.2 spg, HM GNAC); Roger O'Neill (F, 6-5, Jr., 10.7 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 2.0 apg); Brady Bomber (G, 5-10, Jr., 3.3 ppg, 1.9 rpg, 2.8 apg)

Other Returnees: Brok Pendleton (F, 6-7, Sr., 5.6 ppg, 2.5 rpg); Eric Taylor (G, 6-2, Jr., 4.0 ppg, 0.7 rpg); Michael Russo (F, 6-6, So., 3.8 ppg, 1.6 rpg); Ryan Votaw (G, 6-2, Sr., 2.6 ppg, 0.8 rpg); Kyle Karnofski (G, 6-0, So., 0.5 ppg, 0.3 rpg); Brad Norman (F, 6-4, So., 0.4 ppg, 0.4 rpg); Matt Dodson (C, 6-11, So., 2.6 ppg, 3.0 rpg in 2009-10); Alex Williams (C, 6-8, *Fr., 1.5 ppg, 0.8 rpg in 6 games) *Granted hardship

Transfers: None

OUTLOOK

Saint Martin's, along with Western Washington, is the only team in the conference which returns double-digit letter winners.

Three starters are among 10 veterans back for head coach Keith Cooper.

The Saints, however, did lose All-American Blake Poole, who finished his career as the GNAC's 10th all-time leading scorer (1,764) and No. 2 all-time rebounder (1,104).

Also gone is Galen Squiers, who averaged 10.1 points and was the team's main three-point threat, making 60 of 169.

But everyone else returns including forward Jeremy Green (6-8, Sr., Kent, WA – Kentwood) and Roger O'Neill (6-5, Jr., Lynnwood, WA – Meadowdale) and guard Brady Bomber (5-10, Jr., Lynden, WA).

Green ranked 10th in the conference in scoring averaging 15.9 points per game and ninth in rebounding (6.3) in earning honorable mention all-conference honors.

O'Neill was the team's No. 3 scorer chipping in with double-digit numbers (10.7). He also grabbed 3.8 rebounds per contest and had 57 assists.

Bomber scored 3.3 points and had 80 assists starting all 29 games.

Other players who made significant contributions off the bench a year ago were forwards Brok Pendleton (6-7, Sr., Auburn, WA) and Michael Russo (6-6, So., Sammamish, WA – East Lake) and guards Eric Taylor (6-2, Jr., Seattle, WA – Ballard) and Ryan Votaw (6-2, Sr., Toledo, WA).

Pendleton scored 5.6 points per game and had 72 rebounds while Taylor chipped in with 4.0 points per game and had 21 steals.

Russo scored 3.8 points per contest and had 42 rebounds, 23 at the offensive end. Votaw contributed 3.3 points per contest.

Matt Dodson (6-11, So., Eugene, OR – Willamette) who averaged 2.6 points and 3.0 rebounds in 2009-10 is also available.

Other returnees are guard Kyle Karnofski (6-0, 175, So., Castle Rock, WA) and forward Brad Norman (6-4, So., Eatonville, WA), who played in 10 and nine games, respectively, and freshman center Alex Williams (6-8, Olympia, WA – Capital), who played in six games before missing the rest of the season with an injury.

Williams will be one of three players on the Saint roster with freshman eligibility this season, including Will Bond (6-4, Troutdale, OR – Central Catholic) and Garrett Stoney (6-2, Elma, WA).

MONTANA STATE Billings

Head Coach: Jamie Stevens, MSU Billings '99 (First year)

Assistants: Justin Wetzel, Marty Birky, Mikel Kosich

2010-11 Record: 8-18

Conference: 6-12, 8th

Returning Letter Winners: 5

Returning Starters: Jaxon Myaer (G, 5-10, Sr., 11.6 ppg, 2.3 rpg, 5.0 apg, 45-109 3-pointers, HM GNAC); Robert Mayes (F, 6-7, Sr., 11.5 ppg, 5.5 rpg); Emery Henning (C, 6-11, Sr., 8.7 ppg, 4.2 rpg)

Other Returnees: Andrew Hickman (C, 6-7, Jr., 2.1 ppg, 1.3 rpg); Robby Trabling (G, 6-3, So., 0.8 ppg, 1.2 rpg)

Transfers: Chase Richards (G, 6-2, Sr., Sandy, UT – UC-Colorado Springs); Antoine Proctor (G, 6-3, Sr., Washington, DC – Sacramento State); Jimmy Hook (G, 6-2, So., Belgrade, MT – Palomar CC); David Arnold (G, 6-2, Jr., Highlands Ranch, CO – Northern Colorado); Cameron Cusworth (F, 6-7, Jr., Aurora, CO – Central Wyoming); Preston Richards (G, 6-3, So., Sandy, UT – Central Wyoming); Taylor Stevens (F, 6-7, Sr., Maryville, WA – Seattle University); Nick Mandic (C, 6-7, Jr., Belgrade, Serbia – Gillette)

OUTLOOK

Three starters including honorable mention GNAC all-star Jaxon Myaer are available this winter for first-year Montana State Billing coach Jamie Stevens.

Stevens returns to his alma mater where he was a standout point guard in the late 1990s setting records for most assists in a game (16) and in a career (805) and in career steals (167).

For the past three seasons Stevens, who has added three former Division I players to his 2011-12 roster, coached at Central Wyoming.

Myaer was MSUB's second-leading scorer last year, averaging 11.6 points and making 45 of 109 three-pointers to rank ninth in the conference in percentage (41.3). He also led the GNAC in assists (5.0).

Also returning from last year's starting lineup are forward Robert Mayes (6-7, Sr., Houston, TX) and center Emery Henning (6-11, Sr., Great Falls, MT).

Mayes averaged 11 ½ points and 5 ½ rebounds a year ago while Henning contributed 8.7 points and 4.2 rebounds per game. Both Mayes and Henning also blocked 13 shots.

Also back are Andrew Hickman (6-7, Jr., Woodward, OK) and Robby Trabling (6-3, So., Buffalo, WY). Hickman played in 25 games and scored 2.1 points per contest. Trabling netted 18 points in 24 appearances.

Stevens' first recruiting class includes four four-year transfers and three players who previously played for him at Central Wyoming.

Guard Chase Richards (6-2, Sr., Sandy, UT) fits into both of those categories playing at Central Wyoming before transferring to Colorado – Colorado Springs where he averaged three points a game in 23 contests.

Guards Antoine Proctor (6-3, Sr., Washington, DC) and David Arnold (6-2, Jr., Highlands Ranch, CO) and forward Taylor Stevens (6-7, Sr., Marysville, WA) all bring Division I experience to Billings.

Proctor played in eight games last season at Sacramento State, starting three and averaging 6 ½ points, four rebounds and 3 ½ assists before having to leave school due to personnel issues.

Prior to enrolling at Sac State, he earned JC all-region honors at Sheridan, Wyo.

Arnold played in 30 games in two seasons at Northern Colorado, including 21 in his freshman season when he logged six minutes per contest.

Stevens led North Idaho to two Scenic West Athletic Conference titles before transferring to Seattle University where he scored 27 points in 13 games.

Former Central Wyoming players on MSUB's roster in addition to Chase Richard include guard Preston Richards (6-3, So., Sandy, UT) and forward Cameron Cusworth (6-7, Jr., Aurora, CO).

Preston Richards played with his brother Chase at Central Wyoming during the 2008-09 season and averaged 11.8 points and 5.3 rebounds. He led the team in steals with 48 and ranked second to his brother in assists with 61.

Cusworth averaged 11.9 points and 4.7 rebounds at Central Wyoming in his sophomore campaign after playing his freshman season at Lamar CC (Colo.).

Other additions include Jimmy Hook (6-2, So., Belgrade, MT) who played at Palomar CC (Calif.) and Nick Mandic (6-7, Jr., Belgrade, Serbia), who previously played at Gillette College.

ALASKA FAIRBANKS Nanooks

Head Coach: Mick Durham, Montana State '79 (First Year; Overall, 246-213, 16 years)

Assistants: Eric Stang

2010-11 Record: 8-17

Conference: 5-13, 9th

Returning Letter Winners: 4

Returning Starters: Jarrett Miller (G, 5-11, Sr., 9.6 ppg, 1.4 rpg); Nico Matthews (G, 6-0, Sr., 5.8 ppg, 2.9 rpg, 2.0 apg, 2.4 spg)

Other Returnees: Mason King (G, 6-0, Jr., 8.8 ppg, 1.9 rpg, 24-53 3-pointers); Colten Growden (G, 6-0, Jr., 1.9 ppg, 0.5 rpg)

Transfers: Nikolaos Stathopoulos (F, 6-7, Jr., Athens, Greece – Eastern Wyoming); Stefan Tica (G/F, 6-7, So., Belgrade, Serbia – Panola); Carthal McDonald (F, 6-7, Jr., Los Angeles, CA – Compton CC); Sergei Pucar (C, 6-11, So., Bauja Luka, Serbia – Jacksonville); Dominique Brinson (G, 6-0, Jr., Juneau, AK – College of the Redlands)

OUTLOOK

Mick Durham, who won 246 games in 16 seasons at Montana State, inherited just four letter winners from last year's Alaska Fairbanks squad that won eight games.

Returning from last year's starting unit are three players – guards Jarrett Miller (5-11, Sr., North Pole, AK), Nico Matthews (6-0, Sr., Twenty Nine Palms, CA – College of the Desert) and Mason King (6-0, Jr., King Salmon, AK – Bristol Bay) – who started 10 or more contests.

Miller averaged 9.6 points last season and led the GNAC in free throw percentage converting on 93.5 percent (58 of 62).

Matthews joined the team at mid-season starting 12 of UAF's final 14 games and averaged 5.8 points and 2.4 steals per contest.

King started 10 contests and contributed 8.8 points per contest. He was UAF's No. 2 three-point producer making 24 of 53 from the arc.

Also back is Colten Growden (6-0, Jr., North Pole, AK – Ben Eielson), who scored 41 points in 22 contests.

One other squad member returns – Armand Burkhard (6-2, 175, Jr., North Pole, AK). He playing briefly in two contests, logging six minutes on the court.

Durham has filled in the roster with 10 newcomers, including five junior college transfers.

The recruits come from Panola College in Carthage, Tex., Eastern Wyoming, College of the Redwoods and Compton in California and Jacksonville JC in Florida.

Stefan Tica (6-7, So., Belgrade, Serbia) averaged 10 points and four rebounds at Panola and shot 44 percent from outside the arc to rank third in his region.

Tica, who averaged 28 points per game in his senior season in high school, will provide rebounding, outside shooting

and strong passing, “Stefan is a very versatile player – long and athletic,” UAF assistant coach Eric Stang said.

From Eastern Wyoming is Nikolaos Stathopoulos (6-7, Jr., Athens, Greece). Stathopoulos saw limited action at Eastern Wyoming after averaging 20 points and eight rebounds in high school.

Alaska native Dominique Brinson (6-0, Jr., Juneau, AK) played last season at the College of the Redwoods earning Golden Valley Conference all-conference honors.

Brinson, whose father Darnell averaged 21.3 points per game for Alaska Southeast in 1988-89, scored 13 a game during the 2009-10 season for Redwoods.

Carthal McDonald (6-7, Jr., Los Angeles, CA) was a starter at Compton CC, while Sergei Pucar (6-11, So., Bauja Luka, Serbia) played at Jacksonville averaging 10 points and five rebounds.

Among UAF's high school recruits are three from North Pole, Alaska – 6-0 guard Michael Keener, 6-5 guard Jesse Ward and 6-5 forward Jake Pulsifer.

They'll join prep recruits Ben Teer (5-9, Machias, ME – Washington Academy) and Daniel Shaw (6-9, Cambridge, England).

NORTHWEST NAZARENE Crusaders

Head Coach: Dave Daniels, Colorado Christian '95 (First Year; Overall, 80-95, 6 years)

Assistants: Jason Mejeur

2010-11 Record: 15-12

Conference: 10-8, 5th

Returning Letter Winners: 3

Returning Starters: None

Other Returnees: Anthony Golden (G, 6-1, Sr., 9.3 ppg, 1.5 rpg, 51-120 3-pointers); Kevin Rima (G, 6-6, So., 2.0 ppg, 1.1 rpg); CJ Shula (G, 6-3, Sr., 0.7 ppg, 0.5 rpg)

Transfers: J.B. Pillard (F/C, 6-7, Jr., Kirkland, WA – Whatcom CC); Keith Moilanen (F, 6-4, Jr., Brush Prairie, WA – LCC); John Hawkins (G, 6-3, Jr., Phoenix, AZ – Yavapai); Jordan Nicholes (G, 6-1, Jr., Goldbar, WA – Whatcom CC)

OUTLOOK

First-year coach Dave Daniels has a rebuilding job to do as the Crusaders return just three players off a squad that put together a seven-game win streak at the end of the 2010-11 season before losing to Central Washington in the conference semifinals.

Guard Anthony Golden (6-1, Sr., Portland, OR - Madison), who is the only returnee to start a game, averaged 9.3 points per game and also made 51 of 120 three-pointers, ranking sixth in the conference in percentage. Golden made five starts a year ago.

The only other two players back are Kevin Rima (6-6, So., Fairbanks, AK – Hutchinson) who scored 47 points in 23

contests and C.J. Shula (6-3, Sr., Puyallup, WA – Rogers) who had 13 points in 20 games.

Andy Maxwell (6-6, Sr., Nampa, ID – Skyview) was in school last year, but redshirted after previously playing at College of Idaho and Columbia Basin College.

Maxwell played in 31 games for the Coyotes in 2007-08 averaging 2 ½ points per contest.

Seven junior college transfers and three freshmen, including two from the Czech Republic complete NNU's roster.

Three of the transfers were all-stars at the junior college level.

J.B. Pillard (6-7, Jr., Kirkland, WA – Juanita) earned second team NWAACC Northern Division all-star honors at Whatcom where he averaged 13.9 points and 6.9 rebounds.

“J.B. is a beast inside,” Daniels said. “He has proven he can battle as a five-man or be versatile at the four.”

Pillard had a career high 29 points last season and posted five double-doubles scoring more than 20 points six times.

Forward Keith Moilanen (6-4, Jr., Brush Prairie, WA – Hockinson) was a first team Western Region all-star at Lower Columbia where he averaged 17.5 points, 4.5 rebounds and 2/3 steals.

“Keith is a scorer,” Daniels said. “He is athletic enough to get to the rim and he can really shoot it.”

Moilanen was the leading scorer in the 2011 NWAACC all-star game with 23 points and had a season-high of 30.

Guard Jordan Nicholes (6-1, Jr., Goldbar, WA – Sultan) also played at Whatcom earning second team NWAACC honors. He posted averages of 12 points, 3.3 assists and 4.8 rebounds.

“Jordan is a proven hard-nosed guard that makes us better immediately,” Daniels said.

Also among the transfers is point guard Jonathon Hawkins (6-3, Jr., Phoenix, AZ – Greenway) who averaged 9.4 points, 6.8 assists and 4.3 rebounds at Yavapai College in Arizona. Hawkins had five double-digit assists games and a 3.2 to 1 assist-to-turnover ratio.

“His unselfishness and ability to penetrate deep into the defense will be key to our success this season,” Daniels said.

Other additions are guards Jarett Boss (6-4, Jr., Tulsa, OK) from Cape Fear CC and Sy Nebeker (6-3, So., Melba, ID) from Treasure Valley and forward Charlie Hoffman (6-8, Jr., Vashon, WA) from Wenatchee Valley.

The freshmen recruits include guard Matyas Hering (6-3, Prague, Czech Republic), seven-foot center Michal Kurimsky (Liberic, Czech Republic) and guard Alex Duncan (6-2, Boise, ID).

SIMON FRASER Clan

Head Coach: James Blake, Victoria '00 (3-21, 1 year)

Assistants: Dan Emerson, Stefon Wilson, Jeff Drinkwine

2010-11 Record: 3-21

Conference: 2-16, 10th

Returning Letter Winners: 9

Returning Starter: Justin Brown (G, 6-0, Sr., 20.9 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 3.6 apg, 1.5 spg); Zach Frehlick (F, 6-5, Sr., 9.6 ppg, 4.8 rpg); Ibrahim Appiah (G, 6-6, So., 6.0 ppg, 5.9 rpg)

Other Returnees: Chris Paredes (F, 6-5, Jr., 4.8 ppg, 2.1 rpg); Connor Lewis (G, 6-1, Sr., 4.1 ppg, 1.4 rpg); Tallon Milne (F, 6-8, Sr., 2.8 ppg, 4.5 rpg); John Bantock (G, 6-3, So., 0.8 ppg, 0.8 rpg); Chris Evans (G, 6-1, So., 0.6 ppg, 0.4 rpg); Amrit Gill (F, 6-8, So., 0.0 ppg, 0.3 rpg)

OUTLOOK

Except for leading scorer Ricky Berry who averaged 23 points per game, Simon Fraser returns almost all its key players from last year.

The Clan struggled in its inaugural season in the GNAC winning just three games and finishing in last place in the conference with a 2-16 record.

Back this season are nine letter winners, six of whom started at one time or another, including guard Justin Brown.

Brown (6-0, Sr., Vallejo, CA – Salesian) was the conference's third leading scorer pumping in 20.9 points per game. He was also SFU's top playmaker with 78 assists and defensive leader with 33 steals.

Forward Zach Frehlick (6-5, Sr., Kelowna, BC) and guard Ibrahim Appiah (6-6, So., Montreal, QC) were also full-time starters for the Clan.

Frehlick scored 9.6 points per contest and was SFU's No. 2 rebounder averaging 4.8 per contest. Appiah scored six points and grabbed 5.9 rebounds per contest.

Forward Tallon Milne (6-8, Sr., Vanderhoof, BC – Nechako Valley) played just eight games, but started every one. He netted 22 points and had 36 rebounds.

Also making starts were forward Chris Paredes (6-5, Jr., North Vancouver, BC – Windsor) and guard Connor Lewis (6-1, Sr., North Vancouver, BC – Windsor).

Paredes took the court 23 times, four as a starter, and contributed 4.8 points per contest. Lewis played in all 24 games, two as a starter, and netted 4.1 points per contest.

Guards John Bantock (6-3, 180, So., Kamloops, BC – South Kamloops) and Chris Evans (6-1, So., Port Moody, BC – Gleneagle) and forward Amrit Gill (6-8, So.,

Vancouver, BC – St. George) also return after participating in eight, five and three games, respectively and combining for nine points.

The only other player listed on the roster is Nikolay Georgien (6-7, Fr., Coquitlam, BC – Pinetree), but he is expected to redshirt.

Previous Poll and Conference Champions

Year	Poll	Conference Champions
2001-02	Western Washington	Western Washington, Humboldt State, Seattle Pacific
2002-03	Humboldt State	Humboldt State, Alaska Fairbanks
2003-04	Humboldt State	Humboldt State
2004-05	Alaska Fairbanks	Western Washington, Alaska Fairbanks
2005-06	Western Washington	Seattle Pacific
2006-07	Central Washington	Seattle Pacific, Seattle
2007-08	Alaska Anchorage	Alaska Anchorage
2008-09	Central Washington	Western Washington
2009-10	Seattle Pacific	Seattle Pacific
2010-11	Seattle Pacific	Central Washington
2011-12	Alaska Anchorage	?????